COMMUNITY MEETING
FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN AND HEALTHY START TIMES

Lower Merion School District
Balancing Priorities

Crisis Response & Safety
- BRMS Field Site
- Healthy Start Times
- Arnold Field Lights
- Pending Budget Litigation
- Full-day Kindergarten

Restorative Practices

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

All Forward Strategic Pathways for Lower Merion School District

Staff Recruitment & Retention
Balancing Priorities

- BRMS Field Site
- Healthy Start Times
- Arnold Field Lights
- Pending Budget Litigation
- Full-day Kindergarten
Healthy Start Times

- Important to Student Health
  - Along with reducing other stressors

- Recommendation in October 2019

- Board decision in October 2020 to approve a change dependent on lights on Arnold Field

Why new schedules?
With the onset of puberty, changes occur in the biological systems that regulate the sleep/wake cycle. Teens’ natural urge to sleep is delayed until later in the evening than younger children or adults. This shift, when coupled with early start times for middle and high school, makes the prospect of getting a good night’s sleep challenging for many teenagers. Major medical and health organizations, recognizing the toll that sleep deprivation takes on student health and wellness, recommend beginning middle school and high school classes no earlier than 8:30 AM... to give adolescents the best opportunity to get the sleep they need and to start the school day alert and ready to learn.

https://www.lmsd.org/all-forward/documents/sleep-school-start-times
Introduction to Full-Day Kindergarten and Healthy Start Times Conversations

Full-Day Kindergarten

- Exists for targeted students
- Requires multiple investigations
  - Facilities
  - Curriculum
  - Transportation
  - Staffing
  - Budget
- Community Impact
- Timing
All of these priorities are related and interconnected:

- Impact on Students
- Impact on Community
- Impact on Staff
- Facilities
- Transportation
- Budget
Healthy Start Times
## What Are The Current LMSD School Schedules?

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<td>8:15 a.m.</td>
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How Was The Initial Recommendation Developed?

- Over a two-year period (2017-19), the All Forward Research and Development Committee (R&D Committee) conducted research regarding school start times and possible options for change in LMSD.

- In March 2019, R&D Committee presented final summary of their work and possible options to the Board.

- Larger community was engaged through widely-distributed Sleep & School Start Times Infographic and opportunities for providing feedback. See slide 12.
What other options have been examined?

**The Two-Tier:** Increase the bus fleet size to allow schools to operate on two different schedules instead of three.

**The Re-Order:** Re-arrange the start order so that adolescents start later and disruption to extracurriculars are minimized (elementary-high-middle).

**The Push Model:** Maintain current start order and delay all schedules.

**The Flip Model:** Flip high school and elementary school start times, so the youngest students start school the earliest (elementary-middle-high).

**Adjust Calendar:** Start school later, but maintain current dismissal times; add days to the calendar to make up for lost instruction.

**The Current Schedule:** Per above.

March 2019

https://sites.google.com/lmsd.org/sleepstarttimes/r-d-presentations
How Was The Initial Recommendation Developed (cont.)?

- Beginning in May 2019 and building on the work of the R&D Committee, an advisory committee (Sleep, Health & School Schedules Advisory Committee – SHSSAC) comprised of LMSD staff, parents/guardians, students and community stakeholders worked through a structured, evidence-based decision-making protocol with a professional facilitation team from TregoEd.

- Larger community was engaged with updates and information regarding the considerations of the SHSSAC. District collected stakeholder input in a variety of ways including (1) designated email address, (2) community listening sessions, and (3) staff listening sessions.

- This committee narrowed down the options with the best balance of benefits and risks, and a Core Logistics Team comprised of district administrators examined the feasibility of these options.
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What Was The Recommended Schedule The Board Initially Considered in October 2019?

The final recommendation emerged as the schedule that most closely aligned with the decision-criteria created by the **Sleep, Health & School Schedules Advisory Committee (SHSSAC)** while remaining feasible.

This recommendation (presented to the Board in **October 2019**) was known as the “**Modified Re-Order**” because it involved a re-order of the schedule coupled with an adjustment of start times and length of school day. The **Modified Re-Order** performed the best against the three most important criteria or “wants”:

- Maximize student engagement, participation, learning, and academic performance.
- Maximize the safety of students commuting to and from school, whether by bus, car, or foot.
- Maximize opportunities for optimal sleep timing and duration.

This recommendation was also shared to the community via the [New Schedules Infographic](#) (see slide 17).
The Recommended Schedule The Board Initially Considered in October 2019 (cont.)?

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<td>7:45 a.m.</td>
<td>2:35 p.m.</td>
<td>6 hrs. 50 mins.</td>
<td>15 min. increase</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>8:25 a.m.</td>
<td>3:25 p.m.</td>
<td>7 hrs.</td>
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<td>4:05 p.m.</td>
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The “Modified Re-Order”
Recommendation from the SHSSAC

During a Special Meeting, the SHSSAC presentation to the Board on October 24, 2019, included a recommendation to make middle school and high school start later, and elementary school start earlier, beginning in September 2020. All community members were invited to the presentation. A video of the meeting is posted in the Board section of the District website and a 10-minute video summary is also available on our website at https://www.lmsd.org/about-lmsd/newsroom/videos/view?viewnode=d855ae5ce488d.
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Where Are We Now?

- **In October 2019**, the Board was expected to take action on the recommendation in spring 2020. At that time, the recommendation was for the new schedules to be implemented in Sept. 2020. In response to the initial recommendation, the Board and District received significant feedback over concerns regarding elementary first and middle last.

- **In October 2020**, after a series of community listening sessions, the Board passed unanimous motion demonstrating their commitment to starting high schools in the 2nd position within the three-tiered schedule, pending approval of permanent lights on athletic fields.

- **As of today**, the District’s proposed installation of athletic field lighting at Arnold Field remains in litigation. The Zoning Officer had ruled the lights could be installed. The Zoning Hearing Board ruled in favor of the Wynnewood Civic Association, who argued against the lights.

  - The proposed lighting would be the minimum necessary to ensure the safety of student athletes and the ability to use Arnold Field in the evenings. It would enable the District to move forward with plans to implement later school start times for high school students, to better align with adolescent sleep patterns and improve the mental and physical health of thousands of students each year. Without the lights, LM’s student athletes (approximately 50% of students) will not able to practice and compete safely throughout the fall sports season if later start times were to be implemented.
Where Are We Now?

SHSSAC criteria were:

- Maximize student engagement, participation, learning, and academic performance.
- Maximize the safety of students commuting to and from school, whether by bus, car, or foot.
- Maximize opportunities for optimal sleep timing and duration.

Lights:

- **Maximize** academic performance as students will not need to leave school early to participate in practices and games.
- **Maximize** student opportunities to safely participate in athletics and activities that rely on outdoor venues.
- **Maximize** opportunities for optimal sleep timing and duration as it would eliminate any need to schedule morning practices in order to provide the full complement of opportunities as they currently exist.
Key Pending Issues

TIMING

ORDER

The “Modified Re-Order”

Elementary

High

Middle

Middle

High

Elementary

The “Secondary Swap”

Core Logistics Team/Operational Issues

Sleep, Health & School Schedules Advisory Committee (SHSSAC)
Next Steps

- Administration and Core Logistics Team will continue review order of Modified Re-Order plan in light of LMSD K-8 reorganization and potential full-day Kindergarten as well as other equity considerations.
  - Reconvene Sleep, Health & School Schedules Advisory Committee (SHSSAC) for review and feedback of “Secondary Swap.”

- In concert with the foregoing, prepare recommendation to Board with implementation plan. (Spring 2023)

- Implementation of plan. (Pending timeline of installation of lights and priorities/fiscal feasibility assessment)
Full-Day Kindergarten
Extended Day Kindergarten (EDK) across all schools

- Began in 2013-2014 School Year
  - Designed for a small group of Kindergarten students (6-8 students) in each school who have significant literacy needs.
- Runs annually from December to June
K Plus Program

- Began in 2021-2022 School Year
  - Targeted full-day program at Belmont Hills, Penn Wynne, and Penn Valley
  - Designed for a small group of Kindergarten (8-12 students) in each school who would benefit for additional academic and social/emotional support.
K Plus Program (cont.)

- Help identify and close any achievement and opportunity gaps on entry to school.
- Targeting Full-Day Kindergarten as an early intervention in the schools with the highest populations of historically underperforming subgroups.
- Advance District equity goals and dedicate resources according to identified needs.
Full-Day Kindergarten Investigation Areas

❖ Enrollment/Staffing
❖ Facilities
❖ Transportation
❖ Type of Curriculum Build
  ❖ Kindergarten Screener
  ❖ Unified Arts Classes and Curriculum
  ❖ Core Curricular Resources and Materials
Full-Day Kindergarten Investigation
Enrollment/Staffing:

- Initial space considerations were derived from a previous enrollment study which showed a need for additional classroom space K-12.
  - The new middle school was built to alleviate overcrowding due to actual and projected growth.
- The 2022 enrollment study reflected a decrease in enrollment which could possibly be due to COVID.
- Forecasting kindergarten enrollment has begun to occur.
  - Contracted with Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) - August 2022 Board Agenda
  - Full Day K Committee will create a survey
Initial Estimates

Professional Staff (classroom teachers/unified arts): 22.5 Fulltime Employees additional

- Estimated initial cost $2.475 million
- Does not yet include professional and paraprofessional support services staff, cafeteria/recess aides, transportation staff, etc.
Full-Day Kindergarten Investigation

Facilities:

- Estimated addition 17 classrooms required to transition to full-day Kindergarten
  - Classrooms gained from 5th grade move are being used
  - Modular classrooms at Merion and Penn Wynne were removed
- Furniture and function of facilities must be age appropriate

**Facilities Usage Evaluation to occur**
Full-Day Kindergarten Investigation Curricular:

- Phonics pilot adoption through ESSR occurred at the start of the 2022-2023 school year
- Current program re-articulation happening this year
- Evaluation of Years 1 & 2 K Plus
- Development of full-day curriculum across subject areas
- Expansion of special area curriculum
- Expansion of student services programming and support

(Associated costs TBD)
Establishment of the Full Day Kindergarten Committee

❖ Comprised of Staff, Administrators, Teachers, Parents/Guardians, and Community Members

❖ Monthly meetings of the committee beginning this month
Proposed Timeline for Full Day Kindergarten Consideration*

- **September**
  - Established a committee to research the potential of full day kindergarten
- **October**
  - Began work with Demographer to project K enrollment
  - Send survey out to preschool parents to gauge interest
- **November**
  - Visit full day kindergarten program to begin to conceptualize the curricular build
- **December**
  - Estimate Staffing for budgetary purposes
  - Assess facility capacity for a full day program
- **January**
  - Visit full day kindergarten program to begin to conceptualize the curricular build
- **February**
  - Conversation with the school board

*Proposed Timeline for Full Day Kindergarten Consideration*
Balancing Priorities

BRMS Field Site
Healthy Start Times

Arnold Field Lights
Pending Budget Litigation
Full-day Kindergarten
Questions?

Email: info@lmsd.org