

Tomball ISD - School Start Time Committee Minutes

Tuesday, November 30, 2021

Dr. Steven Gutierrez, Chief Operating Officer, opened the meeting at 9 am at the TISD Staff Development Center. Dr. Gutierrez thanked everyone for attending and supporting the district with their participation on this committee. Committee members were selected for their experience in the district and the participation will be interactive.

The purpose of this committee is to consider restructuring the start times of the TISD campuses. There will be a series of five meetings to facilitate this process. Dr. Gutierrez asked the committee members to go out into their communities to solicit input and feedback on this process.

Dr. Gutierrez began the discussion with a warm-up activity to encourage conversation about members' experiences with Transportation Services and their knowledge of a tiered bell schedule.

Dr. Gutierrez then asked everyone to introduce themselves. Each table presented their combined experiences with transportation and tiered bell schedules. Both Lauren Thompson, Principal of TCES, and Jeff Bailey, Principal of TMHS, have worked in districts with tiered bell schedules and gave information about their experiences.

Dr. Gutierrez presented transportation information about ridership, routes, drivers and seniority of drivers. He also presented data regarding the factors that have impacted transportation services throughout the district, positively and negatively.

Sandy Dillman, Director of Transportation, and Dr. Gutierrez discussed immediate actions taken since the beginning of the school year to optimize transportation services. Brian Weisinger, Transportation consultant, presented information regarding our pay scale for drivers. He also discussed options for long-term relief for numbers of routes and drivers needed to serve the district. He continued by sharing information about rider eligibility (distance to stop), hazardous routes and private roads.

Dr. Gutierrez discussed the benefits of a tiered bell schedule and potential reactions from the community to changes. Guiding principles for the committee decision-making affecting district transportation services were discussed in small groups.

Each table reporter presented their group's priorities for guiding principles for this committee. Dr. Gutierrez will consolidate and prepare the guiding principles to begin the next meeting.

Dr. Gutierrez presented a review of the upcoming meeting schedule and overview of each meeting. He shared that a similar presentation will be made to the Board and communication will be going out to the community so there will be full transparency regarding possible changes. Dr. Gutierrez asked for feedback on how this communication should be conveyed.

Chris Scott, Principal of THS, suggested considering moving the timeline for sharing information to the community earlier in the spring semester, to allow more time to process their questions. Also, this impacts hiring teachers and their considerations for employment. Kim McKinney, Principal of GLJH, suggested this timeline would need to be implemented before staffing planning in the spring, before spring break if possible. There was further discussion about pros and cons of putting transportation change options into the community. Ms. Dillman encouraged all communication be presented in a positive way that emphasizes the benefits of these options to the community. A survey was suggested to go out prior to the Christmas break to allow the community time to begin processing options and the impact to their families.

Dr. Gutierrez agreed that the committee timeline would be adjusted to be ready for final proposals by Spring Break instead of mid-April.

The next meeting will have an overview of district initiatives that could impact the options and several tiered schedules that could be considered. Ms. Dillman encouraged questions to the transportation department. Dr. Gutierrez thanked the group again for their attendance and adjourned the meeting at 10:48 am.

Presentation:

☐ SSTC #1