

## **Tomball ISD - School Start Time Committee Minutes**

**Tuesday, December 14, 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. For those who missed the first meeting, the presentation is available.

Dr. Gutierrez gave a brief recap of the Transportation update presented at the Board meeting last night. The guiding principles of the committee were shown and explained. These were derived from the table discussions from the first meeting.

Guiding principles for this committee will be:

- Safety of students
  - Prioritize student safety above all else.
- Family impact
  - Consider and minimize adverse impact of families
- Extracurricular implications
  - Provide adequate time in the afternoon for student participation in extracurricular activities.
- Transportation routing efficiency
  - Bus routes should be as efficient as possible to account for driver shortages and district growth, while giving consideration to minimizing student ride time. Also consider the impact program placement has on routing efficiency.
- Maximize instructional time
  - Make necessary adjustments to ensure students arrive to school on time despite driver shortages and other challenges.

Chris Scott mentioned that there had been feedback to utilizing a delayed start once a week to benefit the Master Scheduling discussion that is currently taking place. Chris emphasized that what this committee decides to do should be coordinated with other district planning. Dr. Gutierrez agreed that we must work together with other planning.

Dr. Gutierrez introduced Danielle Fair, who was recently promoted to Routing Manager. Sandy Dillman presented information about tiered schedules for other districts. Danielle presented the current campus bell schedules and routing schedules for morning and

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afternoon. Trip abbreviations were listed to show route structure. There was also information regarding numbers of students on each route.

Dr. Gutierrez asked the committee to discuss the other districts' tiered bell schedules and scenario possibilities for TISD. There was discussion from Sandy Dillman regarding the preferences of the Board in keeping our bus stop distances as they are currently.

Tables then presented their questions and perspectives. The following concerns are listed below:

- Shared staff are more difficult to share with different campus schedules.
- Students attending junior and high school classes will be more difficult to schedule.
- Junior and high schools don't compete in the same districts because there are so many more junior highs. This complicates alternate schedules.
- Look at the geography of the district instead of having all junior highs start at the same time; however, there is a disadvantage of waiting time for athletic schedules.
- Tomball Star Academy schedules (Kim McKinney) - details needed here.
- If all shortages were filled, the tiered schedule would still be a cost-saver. The least impact to the district should be the goal. Growth and TIC adds complexity and constraints.
- This should help retain Transportation employees by increasing the hours worked each day.
- High schools must be on the same schedule to maintain class schedules.
- Will extracurricular activities be able to maintain schedules with tiered schedules? Yes, there are always some drivers available for athletic games or other activities.
- Campus administrators were asked to keep close count on operational and instructional minutes as the Calendar Committee continues work on instructional calendars for 2022-23 and 2023-24.
- Scenarios 1 and 2 allow service to the neighborhood campus of CPJH.

The group tables then ranked the scenarios as follows:

Table 1 (Kim McKinney): 3, 2 and 1. Scenarios 4 and 5 should be eliminated. In #4, the junior highs start too late. In #5, teacher movement would increase, especially for GLJH and GOES.

Table 2 (Keri Williams): 5, 1 and 2. Scenario 5 is most efficient for Transportation.

Table 3 (Teresa Sullivan): 3 is best due to the elementary dismissal time of 4 pm. Parents pick up students early if dismissal is later than 4 pm. The disparity between

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campuses that dismiss at 3:30 and 4:10 would be a hard sell to staff. Also, the practice of buses coming back to campus after they leave must end.

A suggestion was made that rural campuses could have later dismissal times and neighborhood campuses have earlier dismissal times. Junior highs cannot be released at 4:10 pm due to extracurricular event schedules.

Dr. Gutierrez confirmed with the group that scenario 4 should be eliminated from consideration. He asked campus leaders to meet with their colleagues at the administrator level to learn additional feedback on these options.

The next committee meeting is planned for Tuesday, January 18. Dr. Gutierrez adjourned the meeting at 10:50 am.