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**PROPOSAL:**  
**2024-2025**  
**Daily School Start Times**

*Presented to the School Board*  
*Dec. 19, 2023*

# History of Daily Start Time Discussions

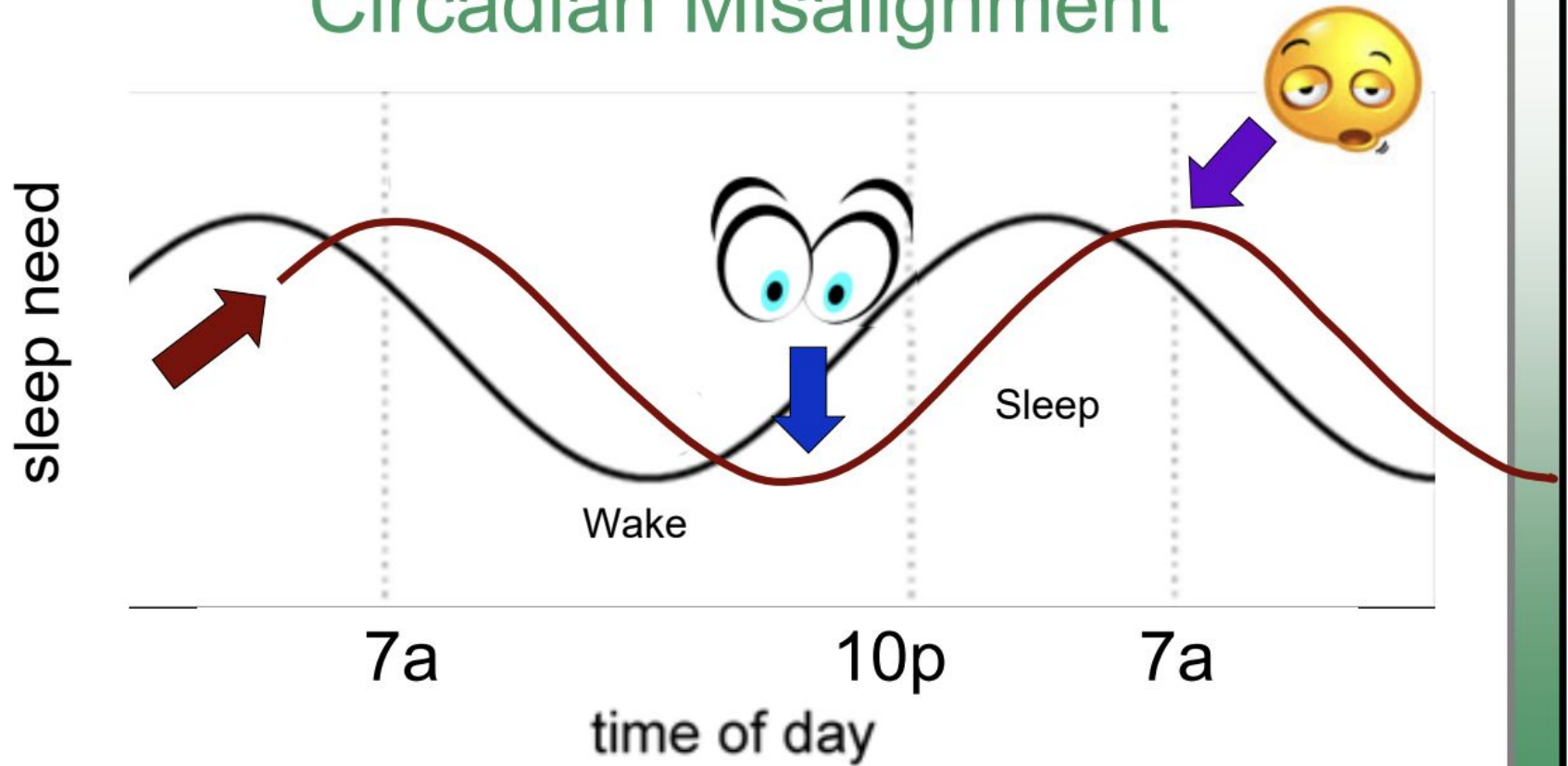


- Edina High School was the first in Minnesota to adopt later start times in the mid-1990s in response to research and medical evidence.
- Requests to change start times in Stillwater schools have been made by community, parents and students through various district surveys and conversations with building and district leaders.
- Start times were considered as part of both Vision 2014 and Bridge to Excellence strategic planning processes.
- In 2016-2017 a School Start Time Study was shared with school board. No action was taken at that time due to other district initiatives (grade reconfiguration, etc.).



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# Circadian Misalignment



# Research: Impact of later starts on teens

- **Academic outcomes with later start:**  
Significantly improved grades, reduced tardiness, reduced absenteeism, improved graduation rates.
- **Social/emotional and other outcomes with later start include:** Statistically significant less reported depression, fewer discipline incidents, fewer emotional outbursts, reduced risky behavior, and fewer car accidents.

## Research Examples:

- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [American Association of Sleep Medicine](#)
- [American Medical Association](#)
- [Minnesota Sleep Society](#)
- [University of Minnesota Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement](#)



# Research: Impact of earlier start for preK-5

- Younger children are able to modify bedtimes forward to compensate for the earlier wake up time; this is biologically difficult in older adolescents (*Appleman, et al., 2015*).
- Unlike teens, elementary-aged children are biologically capable of falling asleep earlier in the evening and thus can awaken early as well, with no ill effects (*Facts About Sleep, Iber & Wahlstrom*).
- An early start will increase prime morning instructional time, which is advantageous to elementary-aged students, especially children with emotional and behavioral disorders (*Wahlstrom, 1998*).
- Research suggests that the academic achievement of elementary aged children is not negatively affected with earlier start times (*Dupuis, 2015*).





## Our Goals:

- Improve **student success**
- Address student and staff **mental and physical health**
- Operate in a **fiscally responsible manner**



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# Focusing On What Matters

- Literacy
- School Culture, Equity and Inclusion
- Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health



## 2023-2024 PONY PLAN

*Developed by the students, families and staff of Stillwater Area Public Schools*

<b>Our Purpose</b> Why we are here	To inspire curiosity and the love of learning in every child. To provide a wide range of engaging learning opportunities to build the resilience and empathy learners need to successfully navigate their futures.
<b>Our Beliefs</b> What we stand for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Everyone belongs</li><li>• Everyone has a voice</li><li>• All students deserve an excellent education</li><li>• The whole child matters</li><li>• Curiosity thrives here</li></ul>
<b>Our Personality</b> Who we are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Inclusive and welcoming:</b> Belonging is woven into the fabric of our community. No matter who you are – or where you were born – we welcome you!</li><li>• <b>Curious:</b> We ask questions. We challenge ourselves and each other to dig deeper and look at things differently.</li><li>• <b>Resilient:</b> We have grit and determination. We try harder, and never give up.</li><li>• <b>Empathetic:</b> We care. Feelings matter. And we learn how to look at the world from other peoples' perspectives.</li><li>• <b>Spirited and enthusiastic:</b> We have contagious enthusiasm that is unparalleled. Together, we are Ponies.</li></ul>
<b>Strategic Directions</b> What we commit to creating	<p><b>Direction A:</b> Ensure the learning process is adaptable to meet individual student needs</p> <p><b>Direction B:</b> Foster a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all staff and students</p> <p><b>Direction C:</b> Utilize systems and align resources in an efficient manner to support learning</p> <p><b>Strategic Direction D:</b> Develop strong partnerships with the communities we serve</p>
<b>Pony Community Commitments</b> How we work together	<p>As individuals working, serving and interacting within the Stillwater Area Public Schools, we commit to always:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Foster a culture of belonging</li><li>• Use our voices for good and listen with empathy</li><li>• Demonstrate respect for all</li><li>• Have high expectations and seek feedback with openness and curiosity</li><li>• Embrace new ideas which improve our students' experiences</li></ul>
<b>Key Initiatives</b> Where we will focus our resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Literacy</li><li>• School Culture, Equity and Inclusion</li><li>• Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health</li></ul>

# Student Mental Health & Well Being

Students who report ...	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 11
Feeling down, depressed or hopeless	43%	41%	54%
Increase since 2019 survey	+8%	+5%	+5%
Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge	59%	63%	69%
Increase since 2019 survey	+8.3%	+12%	+4%
Not able to stop or control worrying	43%	48%	52%
Increase since 2019 survey	+6%	+12%	+4.7%

Nearly **30%** of our middle and high school students indicated they have **long-term mental health, behavioral or emotional problems**

Source: 2022 Minnesota Student Survey (Stillwater specific results)



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# 13-18 year olds need 8.5 to 9.25 hours of sleep each night

% of Stillwater are students who get the recommended amount of sleep

Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 11
14.5%	9.6%	4.3%

Source: 2022 Minnesota Student Survey

**3 out of 4 teens**  
in the U.S. are significantly  
sleep deprived

**45%** of our 11th graders  
are getting less than  
6 hours of sleep per night

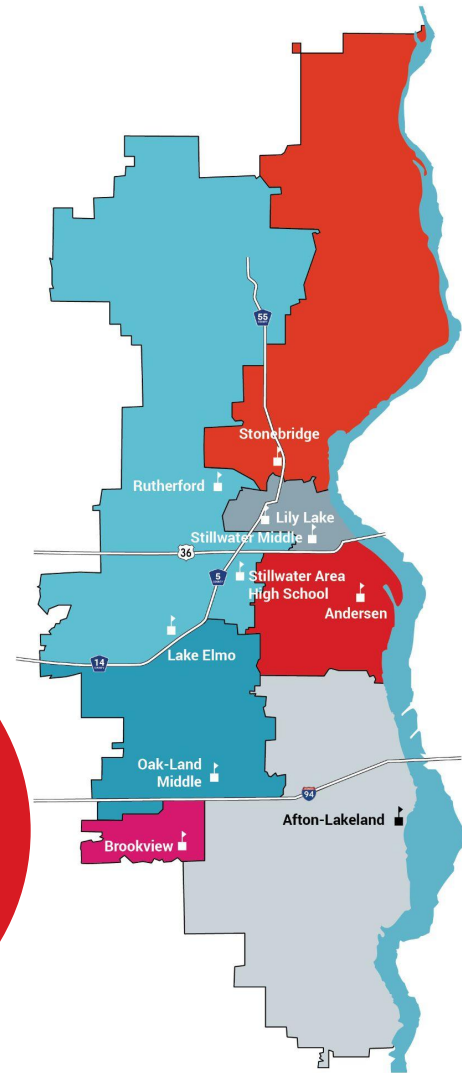


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# Logistics of Start Time Change

- Tiered busing system keeps costs down by using the same number of buses for numerous routes
- Due to size of our district, we need about 1 hour to complete each tier

**Did You Know?**  
Our district  
covers about 150  
square miles



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# Current School Start Times

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<p>High school 7:40 a.m. - 2:10 p.m.</p> <p>Middle schools 7:50 a.m. - 2:20 p.m.</p>	<p>Elementary schools 8:45 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.</p>	<p>Charters/ Non-Publics Varies 9:05-9:30 a.m. - 3:40-4:00 p.m.</p>



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# Proposed Start Times 2024-2025

<b>Tier 1</b>	Elementary schools 7:45 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.
<b>Tier 2</b>	Middle schools 8:35 a.m. - 3:05 p.m.  High school 8:45 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
<b>Tier 3</b>	Charters/Non-Publics TBD



- Keeps start times the same for each level
- Allows for shuttle from middle to high school
- Starts teens after 8:30 a.m. (the “sweet spot” as indicated by research)

# Other School Start & End Times



School District	Elementary	Middle Schools	High Schools
Eden Prairie	Varies 7:45 am - 2:15 pm to 8:40 - 3:10 pm	9:25 a.m. - 4:07 p.m.	8:35 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.
Edina	7:50 a.m. - 2:25 p.m.	9:20 a.m. - 4:05 p.m.	8:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
Forest Lake	9:15 a.m. - 3:40 p.m.	7:35 a.m. - 2:13 p.m.	7:55 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Mounds View	Varies 8:35 am - 3:15 pm to 9:30 am - 4:00 pm	7:45 a.m. - 2:25 p.m.	8:35 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
Roseville	Varies 8:55 am - 3:20 pm to 9:35 am - 4:00 pm	8:05 a.m. - 2:40 p.m.	8:10 a.m. - 2:40 p.m.
Robbinsdale	7:45 a.m. - 2:05 p.m.	9:20 a.m. - 4:05 p.m.	8:35 a.m. - 3:25 p.m.
South Washington County	Varies 7:45 am - 2:15 pm to 8:40 - 3:10 pm	7:50 a.m. - 2:26 p.m.	8:30 a.m. - 3:06 p.m.
<b>Stillwater (PROPOSED)</b>	<b>7:45 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.</b>	<b>8:35 a.m. - 3:05 p.m.</b>	<b>8:45 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.</b>
White Bear	7:45 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.	9:15 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	8:25 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.

# Online Feedback Form

- Respondents mixed on the idea of start time changes
- Concerns about how change would impact individual families
- Biggest impact of a change on families:
  - Work schedules
  - Extracurricular activities
  - Childcare
  - Getting kids to or from school

## Who We're Hearing From:

**1,162 responses**

- 58% families
- 21% staff
- 17% students
- 4% other

Majority of responses  
(60%) from elementary  
perspective



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# Online Feedback Form: Key Themes

- Availability and/or cost of childcare
- Family logistics (getting kids to and from school; older siblings caring for younger siblings, etc.)
- Little kids waiting for buses in the dark during winter months
- Later release time for high school students
  - Work schedules
  - Extracurricular activities
  - Teens going to bed later



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# Student Survey: Key Themes

- Students would just stay up later
- Disruption to current schedules
- Some interest in later start, but not later dismissal
- Concerns with later dismissal time
  - Activities would go later into the evening
  - Impact on after-school jobs
  - Less time for homework, social activities

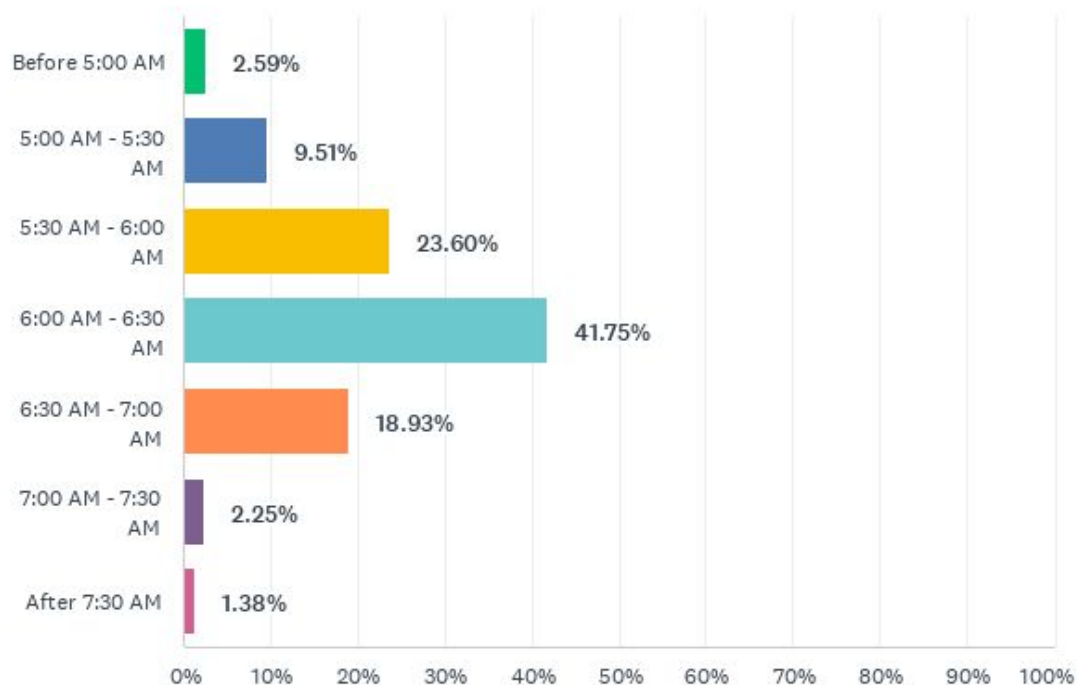
1,258 high  
school  
students  
responded to  
Start Times  
Student  
Survey



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## What time do you typically wake up in the morning on a school day?



**Source:** Start Times Student Survey; Stillwater Area High School, Dec 2023



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**50% of Stillwater high school students** said they occasionally or frequently find it difficult to stay awake or attentive during first-period classes

**Source:** Start Times Student Survey; Stillwater Area High School, Dec 2023

On a scale of 1 to 5, how well-rested and alert do you feel when you arrive at school in the morning?

3.1★

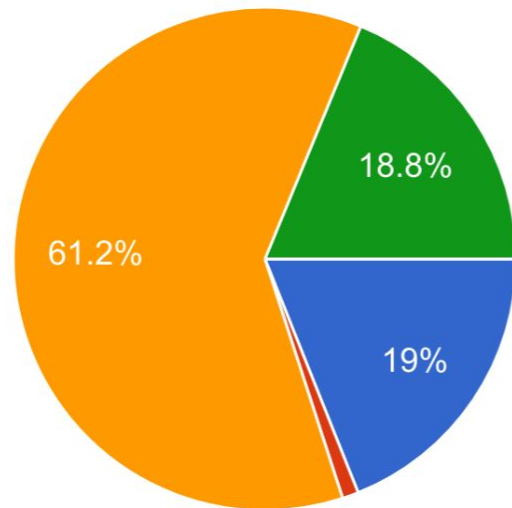
average rating



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# Childcare Impacts

- Expect significantly less care needed before school
- Expect increased need for after school care
- Our current Adventure Club wait list = 325 students
  - 57 of them are partially enrolled



## If school hours changed:

- No care would be needed
- Before school care would be needed
- After school care would be needed
- Both before school and after school care would be needed

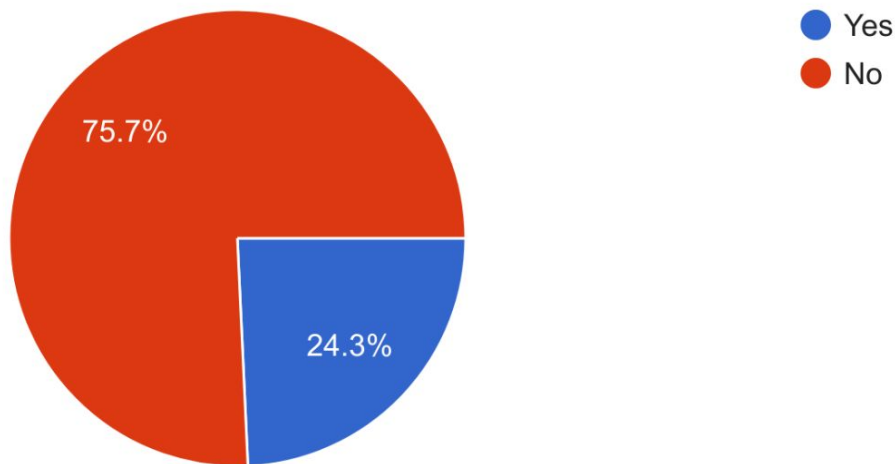


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# Childcare Needs

Does your family currently rely on older children to care for younger siblings after school?

577 responses



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# Strategies to Address Childcare Needs

## Adventure Club staffing

- Targeted recruitment
- Combining positions to provide full-time opportunities
- Student workers/work release as part of Pathways Career exploration

## Other considerations:

- Increasing Youth Enrichment and Targeted Services programming after school
- Engaging community groups/organizations



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# Current Adventure Club Rates

- Before School care (6:00 a.m. - 8:40 a.m.) = \$14.00 per child, per day
- After School care (3:10 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.) = \$14.50 per child, per day

Financial aid is  
available  
through  
Washington  
County



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# Middle School Supervision

Exploring opportunities for before school  
“breakfast study hall” option for families who need  
to drop kids off prior to start of school day



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# Bus Routes

- Earliest elementary bus pick-up would be around 7 a.m.
- Elementary students could be at bus stops in the dark ([prior to Civil Twilight](#)) during December and January (about 35 school days)
  - As always, families are encouraged to accompany younger students at bus stops.
- Most secondary routes would begin at 7:50 a.m.
- Currently our earliest bus routes start as early as 6:20 a.m.





# Extracurricular activities

- Clubs and sports will continue to meet after school
- Student athletes may need to be released early for non-conference contests with longer traveling distances
- Clubs, activities and sports will not be held before school

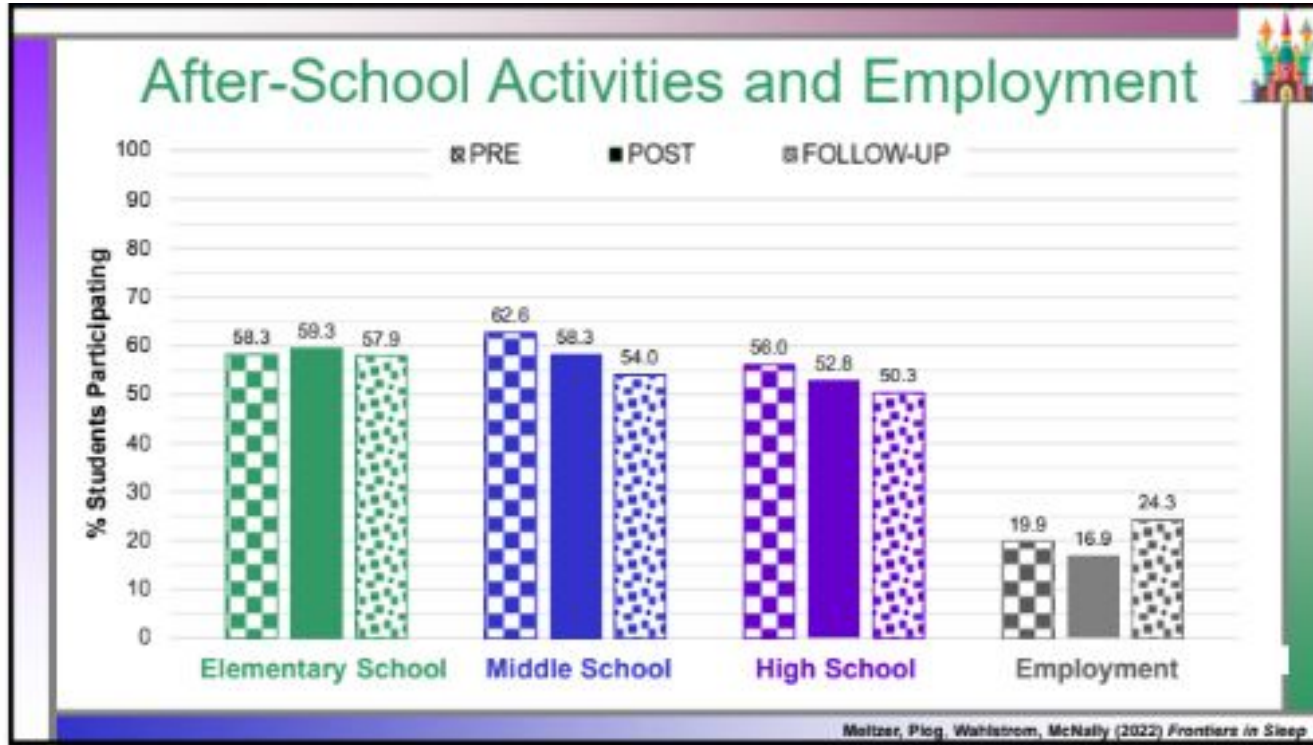
Most of the schools in our athletic conference already have later start times

Varsity contests typically start at 7 p.m.

Lower levels typically start at 4 p.m.



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## Employment Considerations:

- Work release as part of Pathways Career exploration
- Engaging local businesses



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# Professional organizations that have endorsed “healthy school start” times:

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
- American Academy of Sleep Medicine
- American Medical Association
- American Psychological Association
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Minnesota Medical Association
- National Association of School Nurses/Society of Pediatric Nurses
- National Parent Teacher Association
- Society of Behavioral Medicine

# Next Steps

**Jan. 4:** Community Conversation;  
6 p.m. at Oak-Land Middle School

**Jan. 11:** Community Conversation;  
6 p.m. at Stillwater Middle School

**Feb. 20:** School Board Meeting:  
Vote on Daily School Start Times

*If approved, new start times would be implemented  
for the Fall of 2024*

Scan to share your feedback:  
**SCHOOL START TIME**



[stillwaterschools.org/start-times](https://stillwaterschools.org/start-times)



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# Questions?



[stillwaterschools.org/start-times](https://stillwaterschools.org/start-times)



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