



School Start Time Board Committee

Recommendations

Presented on March 18, 2025

School Start Time Board Committee

Purpose

The School Start Time Board Committee is a representative group of School District of Elmbrook stakeholders charged with exploring options that better align sleep research and academic performance with school start times. The School Start Time Board Committee will produce one or more recommendations to the Board of Education by March 18, 2025.

Membership

60 actively engaged members; representing students, parents, teachers, administrators and the school board

Committee Timeline

Meeting	Agenda Items
Wednesday, November 13, 2024	Committee Introductions & Expectations; Review of Sleep Research; Current Status and Background Information
Tuesday, December 3, 2024	Contributing Factors; Benchmark Comparisons; Considering Options
Wednesday, January 15, 2024	Evaluating Start Time Options
Tuesday, February 18, 2025	Narrowing Start Time Options; Consider Policy Changes; Identifying Survey Needs
Tuesday, March 11, 2025	Review Survey Feedback; Reach Consensus on Recommendations

Critical Success Factors

- ✓ Create a shared understanding of the current environment and all contributing factors
- ✓ Establish a school start time recommendation for elementary, middle, and high school based on sleep research, student performance data, Committee member perspectives and values, family and staff feedback, and human and financial constraints
- ✓ Consider and recommend changes to any related School Board policies necessary to successfully implement the school start time recommendation(s)

Forecasting Next Steps

March 18

1. Board accepts the School Start Time Committee's Report
2. Board recognizes the Committee's work and disbands the Committee
3. Board directs administration to develop an Implementation Plan based on the Committee's recommendations

June 10 (Board Meeting)

1. Administration presents a draft 2026-27 Implementation Plan for Board discussion. Based on that discussion, the Board of Education could ask for more information, additional research or community engagement, alternative scenarios, more discussion, or eventually move forward to action. Because of the scope of this potential change, it is anticipated there will be several Board discussions before any decision reached.

Study of Research, Legislation & Current Environment

Research and Position Statements

- American Psychological Association Summary [Article](#)
- American Academy of Sleep Medicine's [Position Statement](#)
- American Academy of Pediatrics 2014 [Position Statement](#)

State Legislation

- [California](#) legislation effective 2022 - Middle & High School Start after 8am
- [Florida](#) legislation effective 2026 - High School after 8am, Middle after 8:30am

WI State Statutes Regarding:

- Private and Parochial School Transportation Requirements
- Hazardous Zones
- Instructional Minute Requirements

District Data

Transportation Data

- Bus Ridership
- Expenditures
- Drivers and bus constraints
- Pickup, Dropoff, Parking

Attendance and Co-Curricular Participation Data

After School Care Capacity and Needs

2025 Elmbrook Stakeholder Start Time Survey

Other Information

- History of Start Time Studies or Alternative Consideration (1998, 2017)
- Regional Benchmark Start Times
- Sample Districts who have recently transitioned to a new start time (Madison, Northern IL)

Start Time Recommendation

2-Tier Busing Model

- 1st - Elementary School Routes
- 2nd - High School/Middle School Combined Bus Routes with staggered start times

	Elementary	High	Middle
Tier	1	2a	2b
Start Time	7:40 AM	8:14 AM	8:24 AM
End Time	2:30 PM	3:28 PM	3:38 PM
Start Difference	-70 Min	+19 Min	+66 Min
End Difference	-73 Min	+18 Min	+67 Min
Length of Day	-3 Min	No change	+1 Min

Key Factors in support of the Recommendation

- Aligned to research-based start time (after 8am) recommendations for students ages 12+, and better supports research targeting 9 hours of sleep for adolescents
- On average, Elmbrook Middle and High School students reported 7-8 hours of sleep on school nights
- 72% of all Elmbrook stakeholder survey respondents (5,199 total) supported an 8am or later start time for middle and high school (11% neutral)
- Elementary students - wake earlier, can more easily adjust bedtime, and are more alert and ready to learn in the morning than mid-afternoon
- Reduce before school child care needs of elementary families

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Key Concerns to be Addressed in an Implementation Plan

- Waukesha County Sheriff study of possible walk/no transport zones to reduce ridership and budget impact (estimated between \$420,000-\$910,000)
- Early elementary dismissal and the increased need for after-school child care or programming options
- Impact to Private and Parochial School bus routes and start times
- Logistics of combined busing and ride times for middle and high school students
- More precise school end times to better estimate impact on high school and middle school co-curriculars (busing, absences)

Board Policy Consideration & Recommendations

Based on its two-tier, start time/busing recommendation, the Committee recommends the following School Board Policy consideration and changes to Transportation Policy and Practice Statement 3541.1:

Consideration

Work with the County Sheriff's Department to assess the feasibility of walk/no transport zones for all elementary, middle and high schools in the District and, based on the results of the feasibility study, implement walk/no transport zones for at least middle and high school students.

Practice Statement Recommended Changes

1. Modify the Maximum Walking Distances to the Bus Stop for Grades 6-12 to the Middle School Standard of $\frac{1}{4}$ Mile.
2. Modify the maximum number of students on a bus for Grades 6-12 to the Middle School Standard of 56 Students.

Implementation Plan and Guidelines

Because of the many contributing factors to changing school start times, it is suggested that the Board direct administration to develop an **Implementation Plan** in order to provide details to the Committee's recommendation. To help inform the development of the Plan, the School Start Time Committee identified several guidelines based on its research, analysis and engagement activities.

1. Bus Routes should begin at 7am or later
2. Middle and High School start times should be at or after 8am
3. All Elementary, Middle and High Schools should end school by 3:45pm
4. Additional strategies (carpool incentives, crossing guards) to safely reduce bus ridership should be developed
5. The District should engage community partners to build a more robust, before- and after-school care network, or, to expand after-school activities and programming
6. The District should identify ways to transport more efficiently in order to save costs, reduce ride time, and create greater flexibility in support of co-curricular activities
7. The District should continue to allow for staff voice in the annual teaching assignment process in order to consider start time change assignment conflicts



Questions or Comments