



NORWALK
Public Schools

Transportation & School Start Times

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Current Conditions

- The start of the 2021-2022 academic year is the **first time** that all students attend school in person with the start times that were voted on in September 2019.
- We have 59 full capacity and 19 small buses on the road at the same time as commuters and parents dropping off.
- Because of COVID, more parents are choosing to drop-off students, adding to the congestion.
- Citywide construction projects have added to the delays (i.e. Eversource, State projects, paving, sidewalk repairs).



This has resulted in gridlock traffic causing severe delays, at times having students standing at bus stops for over an hour and parents waiting for students to arrive for nearly two hours.

Recapping School Start Times Study

Gaps to Consider

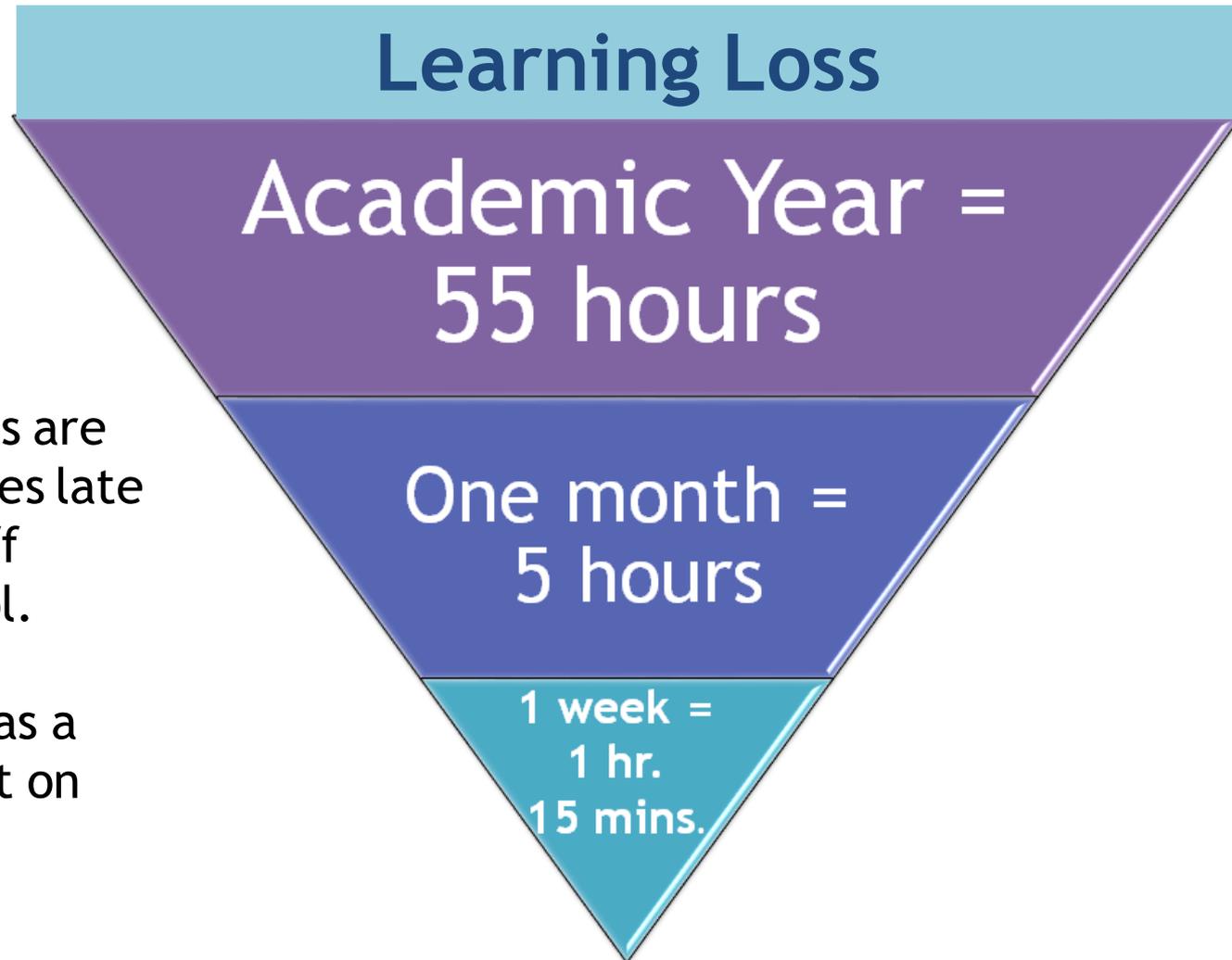
- For 18 months, a committee that included NPS staff, teachers, Board Members, parents, City staff, and consultants worked to put in motion a plan to give our high school students a later start time, because of the advantages to their overall health and learning.
- The committee studied several scenarios, and based on parent feedback and fiscal considerations, presented the Board with two options to choose from. Ultimately, the start times that we currently have in place were approved.
- New start times were implemented last year. However, Covid and remote learning resulted in fewer students needing transportation and reduced commuter traffic.
 - There was never a traffic study conducted that explored the current start times while schools were operating in full capacity, due to Covid.
 - Schools also staggered start times for safe reopening, which alleviated traffic on the roads and in our parking lots.

Current Situation: What We Know

- We have been tracking data for each bus by school.
- During the first week of school nearly 85% of all buses arrived late when dropping off students to school.
- During the second week of school 75% of all buses serving our schools on the second and third tiers were (over half of our schools) were late in dropping off students for the start of their day.



Impact to Students



- On average, buses are arriving 15 minutes late when dropping off students at school.
- Over time, this has a significant impact on learning.

Impact on Student Athletes

Student Athletes and Early Dismissal from School:
378 Fall Athletes, each team plays half their games away

Fall Sports

- Field hockey, soccer, cross country and volleyball start at 4pm
- Golf starts at 3pm
- Football does not have a consistent time

Examples

- Volleyball game at Danbury -
4:00 JV, 5:30 V
Travel time is 45 minutes.
 - Pregame warm-up is 30 minutes.
 - Students need 10 minutes to change.
 - These students would be dismissed at 2:30 PM from class.
- Home Golf Match at 3pm
Travel time is 10 minutes.
 - Pregame warm-up is 30 minutes.
 - Students need 5-10 minutes to change.
 - These students would be dismissed at 2:10 pm.

Possible Remedies

- Standardize start times at all schools
- Increase the "deadhead" time in between routes
 - Allows time to navigate traffic concerns, handle unexpected delays, and stay on schedule
- Consolidating routes
 - Maintain route efficiencies



Follow the Science

For adolescents, the benefits of obtaining the proper amount of sleep include improved academic performance, cognitive function, creativity, athletic performance and mental health. Adequately rested teens are also less likely to be injured, involved in car accidents, engage in substance abuse, or commit suicide.

-Healthier School Start Times Report of the School Start Time Committee, September 2019

Elementary school children are much more likely to have a morningness circadian preference or chronotype and to be “morning larks” (fall asleep and wake earlier). The younger they are, the more likely this morning chronotype is their biologically based circadian rhythm. This is in direct contrast to adolescents who have a strong eveningness preference in association with pubertal onset.

-Dr. Judith Owens, Director of Sleep Medicine at Boston Children's Hospital, Updated May 2020

Correcting the Issue by Changing Route Times & Bell Times

Metrics	2019-2020	2021/22	Option # 1	Option # 2
Bell Times	Elem Sch: 8:00 – 2:50 Elem Sch: 8:50 – 3:25 Elem Sch: 9:05 – 3:40 High Sch: 7:30 – 2:15 Mid Sch: 8:15 – 2:50	Elem Sch: 8:00 – 2:35 Elem Sch: 8:50 – 3:25 Elem Sch: 9:15 – 3:50 High Sch: 8:30 – 3:15 Mid Sch: 8:15 – 2:50	Elem Sch: 7:45 – 2:20 Elem Sch: 8:30 – 3:05 High Sch: 8:30 – 3:15 Mid Sch/K8: 9:15 – 3:50	Elem Sch: 7:45 – 2:20 Elem Sch: 8:15 – 2:50 High Sch: 8:30 – 3:15 Mid Sch/K8: 9:10 – 3:45
Elementary School Groups	<u>Elementary at 8:00</u> Fox/Jeff/Mrv/Nar <u>Elementary at 8:50</u> Brk/Tra/Ken <u>Elementary at 9:05</u> Col/Crn/Row/Sil/Wlf	<u>Elementary at 8:00</u> Jef/Ken/Mrv/Nar <u>Elementary at 8:50</u> Brk/Tra <u>Elementary at 9:15</u> Col/Crn/Fox/Row/Sil/Wlf	<u>Elementary at 7:45</u> Brk/Fox/Jef/Ken/Mrv/Nar Tra/Wolf <u>Rideshare:</u> Parochial/Silver mine <u>Elementary at 8:30</u> Cran/Row	<u>Elementary at 7:45</u> Brk/Jef/Ken/Mrv/Nar/Tra <u>Elementary at 8:15</u> Cra/Fox/Row/Sil/Wolf

Previous, Current, and Proposed Times

NPS BELL TIMES 21-22			Proposed Bell Time Change with Option 1		Proposed Bell Time Change with Option 2		SY 2019-2020
SCHOOL	BELL TIME	DISMISSAL TIME	BELL TIME	DISMISSAL TIME	BELL TIME	DISMISSAL TIME	BELL TIME
BMHS & CGS	8:30	3:15	8:30	3:15	8:30	3:15	7:30-2:15
NHS & P-Tech	8:30	3:15	8:30	3:15	8:30	3:15	7:30-2:15
NHALE	8:15	2:50	9:15	3:50	9:10	3:45	8:15-2:50
PONUS	8:15	2:50	9:15	3:50	9:10	3:45	8:15-2:50
ROTON	8:15	2:50	9:15	3:50	9:10	3:45	8:15-2:50
WROCKS	8:15	2:50	9:15	3:50	9:10	3:45	8:15-2:50
COLUMBUS K-8	9:15	3:50	9:15	3:50	9:10	3:45	9:05-3:40
BROOKSIDE	8:50	3:25	7:45	2:20	7:45	2:20	8:50-3:25
CRANBURY	9:15	3:50	8:30	3:05	8:15	2:50	9:05-3:40
FOX RUN	9:15	3:50	7:45	2:20	8:15	2:50	8:00-2:50
JEFFERSON @ Ponus	8:00	2:35	7:45	2:20	7:45	2:20	8:00-2:50
KENDALL	8:00	2:35	7:45	2:20	7:45	2:20	8:50-3:25
MARVIN	8:00	2:35	7:45	2:20	7:45	2:20	8:00-2:50
NARAMAKE	8:00	2:35	7:45	2:20	7:45	2:20	8:00-2:50
ROWAYTON	9:15	3:50	8:30	3:05	8:15	2:50	9:05-3:40
TRACEY	8:50	3:25	7:45	2:20	7:45	2:20	8:50-3:25
WOLFPIT	9:15	3:50	7:45	2:20	8:15	2:50	9:05-3:40
SILVERMINE	9:15	3:50	7:45	2:20	8:15	2:50	9:05-3:40
NECC	9:00	3:30	8:15-11:15	11:45-2:45	8:15-11:15	11:45-2:45	9:00-3:30

Possible Next Steps

- Run new routes for a third time on 9/16
- Communicate new start times to families
- Allow families time to adjust plans to accommodate new times
- Post new routes and orient families to possible new stops and/or bus numbers
- Work with After the Bell to provide additional before and after school care as needed



Questions?



TRANSPORTATION AT NPS