

# Start Times Subcommittee Update

May 12, 2022  
School Committee



# Tonight's Agenda

- Review selected parent and student survey data
- Get input on draft criteria to evaluate options
- Timeline and next steps

# Context: Research Supports Later Start Times for Adolescents

- Research has determined a shift in sleep cycles (circadian rhythms) beginning in adolescence makes it more difficult for most adolescents to fall asleep early. Typical sleep cycles begin around 11 p.m. for teenagers and continue through 8 AM. This means that an early school start times not only allows for only 6 or 7 hours of sleep per school night, but also deprives adolescents of a critical part of their “deep sleep” that is part of their sleep cycle.
- Early school start times for adolescents contributes to sleep deprivation. Public health experts have declared that sleep deprivation is a national public health epidemic.
- Sleep deprivation in teens is a contributing factor for a number of health, development, mental health, well-being, and academic outcomes for adolescents. Incidences of anxiety, depression, obesity, high blood pressure, risky behaviors and motor vehicle accidents are all increased for sleep-deprived adolescents.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics urges middle and high schools to aim for start times of 8:30 AM or later.

Westwood Start Times page on district site  
has information on research

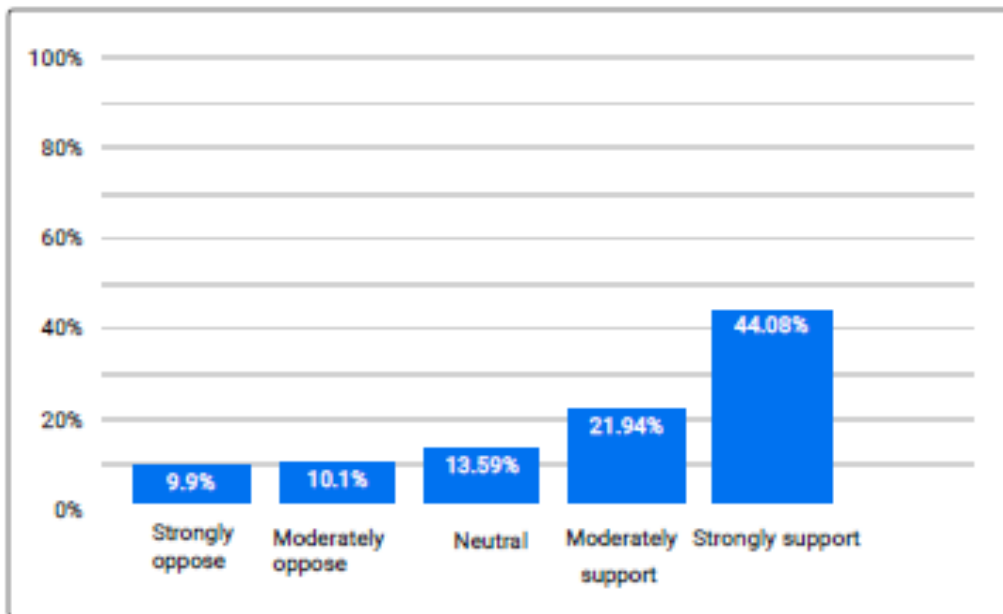
# Context: Tri-Valley League School Start Times

District	High School Times
Dover-Sherborn	8:35-3:10
Ashland	8:30-2:55
Bellingham	8:30-3:15
Holliston	8:15-2:43
Norwood	8:15-2:50
Medway	8:04-2:31
Hopkinton	8:00-2:30
Millis	8:00-2:20
Norton	7:40-2:09
Medfield	7:35-2:10
Dedham	7:35-2:10
Westwood	7:25-2:05



# 80% of Parents Support or Neutral on Later Secondary Start Times

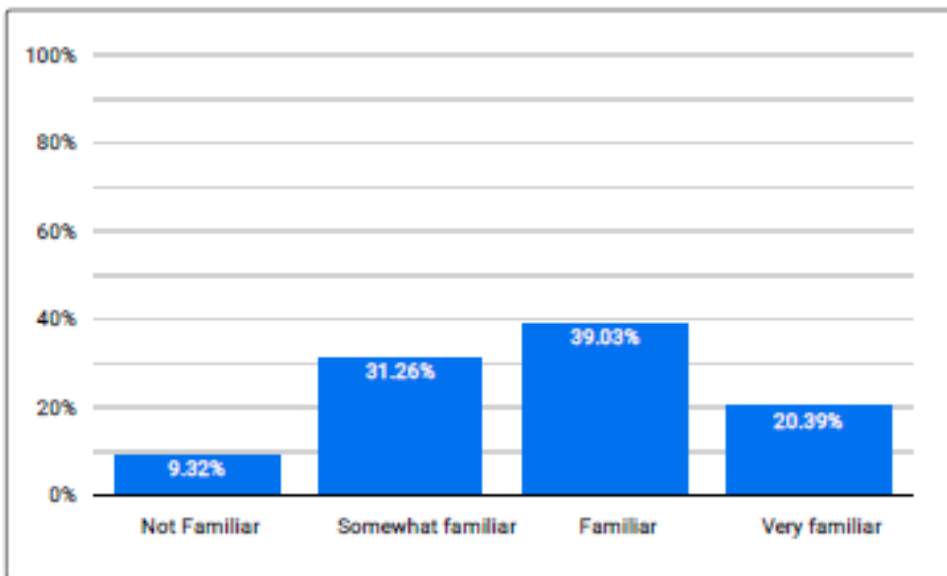
To what extent do you support later start times at the secondary level?



	WHS Only	WHS & TMS Only	K-5 Only
Support	74%	73%	49%
Neutral	7%	12%	25%
Oppose	19%	15%	26%

# 59% of Parents Very Familiar or Familiar with Research on Secondary Start Times

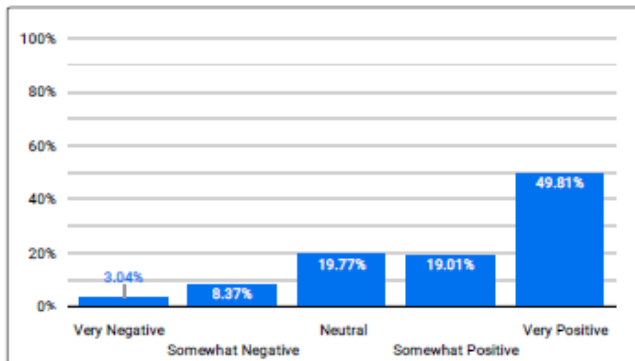
How familiar are you with current research and discussion about changing Middle and High School start times across the nation?



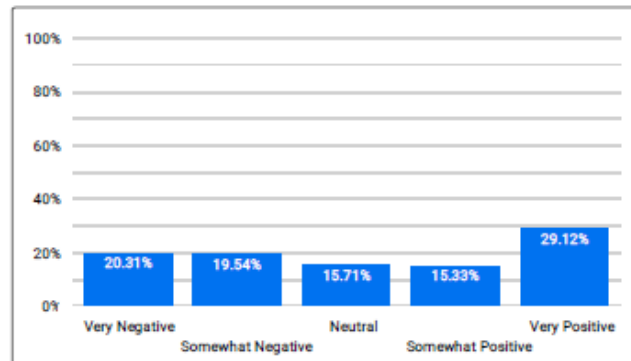
	WHS Only	WHS & TMS Only	K-5 Only
Very Familiar /Familiar	67%	71%	44%
Somewhat Familiar	30%	25%	34%
Not Familiar	3%	4%	22%

# High School Parents: Perspectives From 8:10 AM or 9:00 AM Start Times

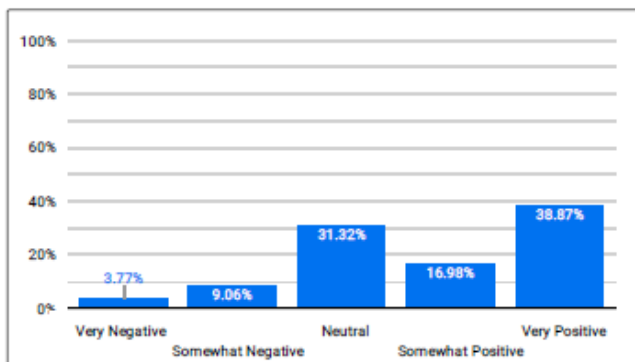
If the High School started at **8:10 am**, what would the impact be on your family's MORNING routines?



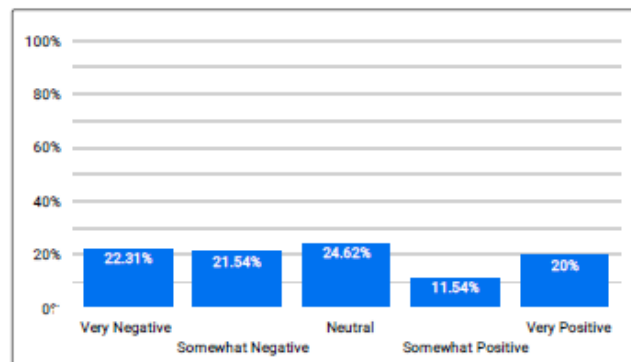
If the High School started at **9:00 am**, what would the impact be on your family's MORNING routines?



If the High School dismissed at **2:50 pm**, what would the impact be on your family's AFTERNOON routines?

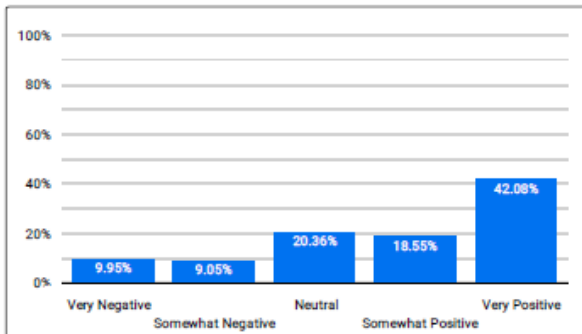


If the High School dismissed at **3:40 pm**, what would the impact be on your family's AFTERNOON routines?

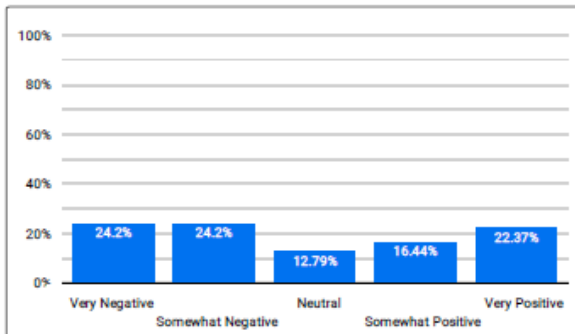


# Middle School Parents: Perspectives From 8:30 AM or 9:00 AM Start Times

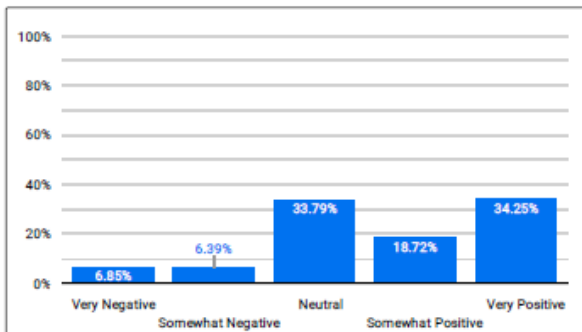
If the Middle School started at **8:30 am**, what would the impact be on your family's **MORNING** routines?



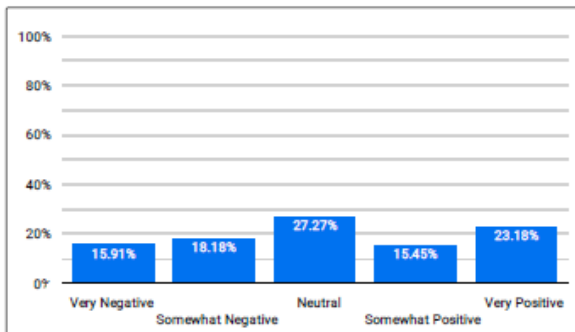
If the Middle School started at **9:00 am**, what would the impact be on your family's **MORNING** routines?



If the Middle School dismissed at **3:07 pm**, what would the impact be on your family's **AFTERNOON** routines?



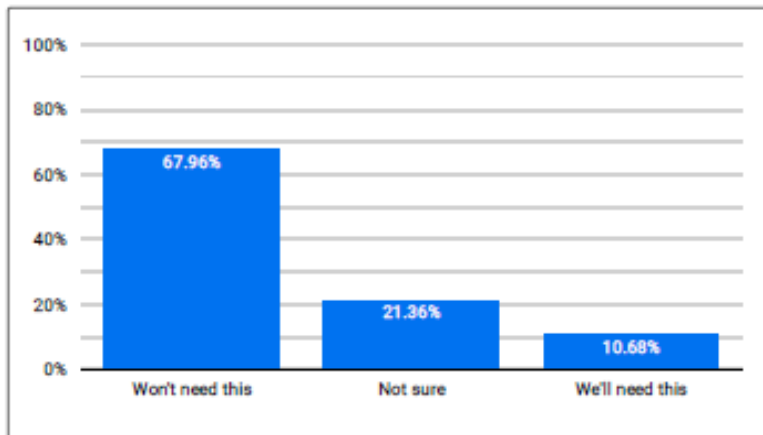
If the Middle School dismissed at **3:37 pm**, what would the impact be on your family's **AFTERNOON** routines?



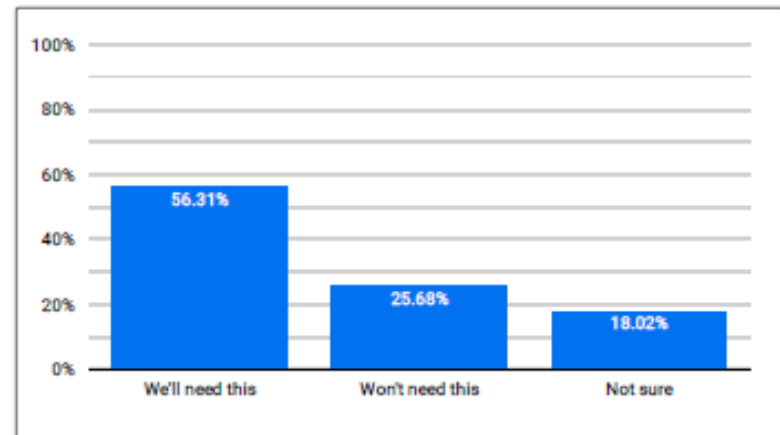


# Elementary Parents: Impact From Early Start Times on Busing and Child Care

If your Elementary School moved to an earlier start time, how likely would you be to enroll your child(ren) in the Westwood Extended Day **Before School Care Program?**



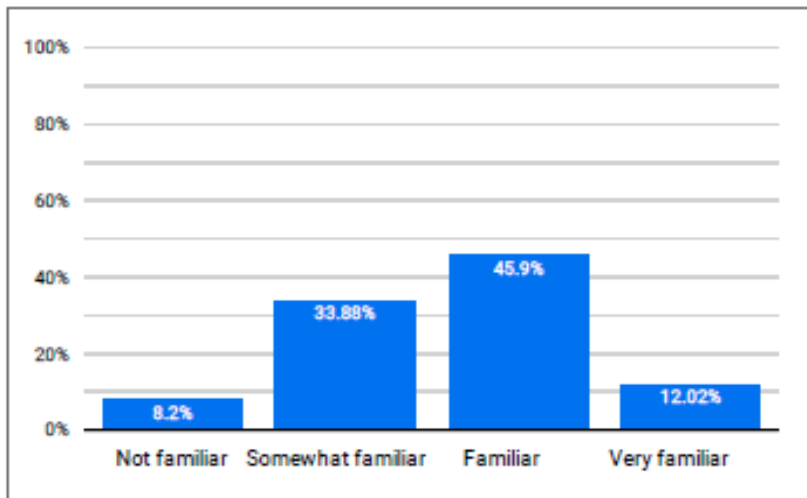
If your Elementary School moved to an earlier start time, how likely would you be to enroll your child(ren) in the Westwood Extended Day **After School Care Program?**



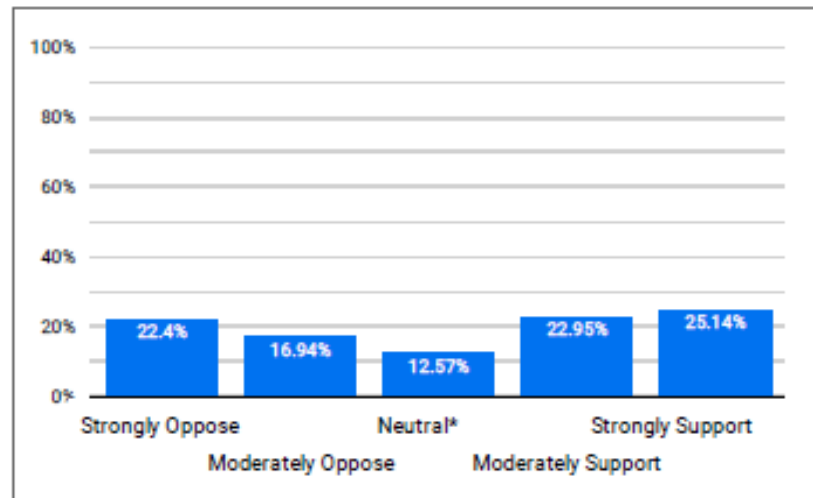
Impact on child care and parents work scheduled cited in comments as key concerns to shifting elementary start times significantly

# 59% of Students Support or Neutral on Later Secondary Start Times

How familiar are you with the research and discussion about changing Middle and High School start times across the nation?



To what extent do you support a high school start time after 8AM?



\*Neutral / Not Sure [IDK] / No Opinion [IDC]

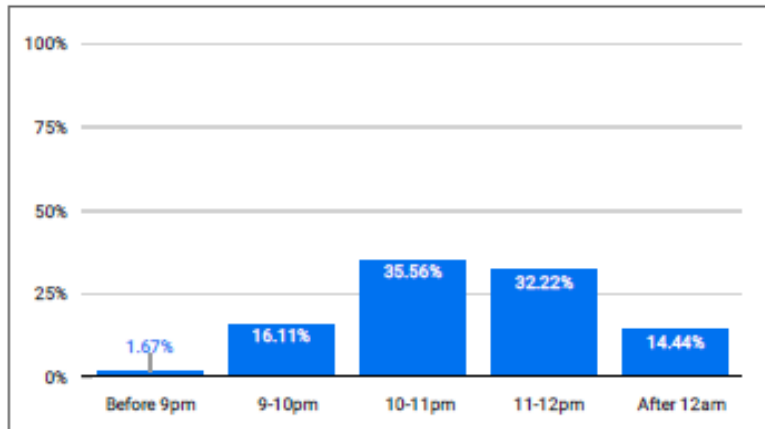
# After School Work Commitments the Top Concern of High School Students

Here are some reasons why some people say high school should NOT start later. Which of these reasons make the most sense to you? Choose all that apply.

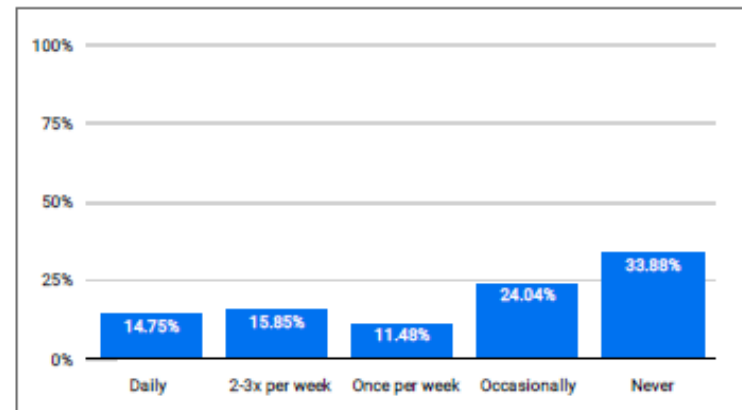
Students would have to start homework later.	25	13.66%
Students would have less free time in the afternoons.	29	15.85%
Students would have less time for after-school jobs.	41	22.40%
Students would have to start after-school commitments (including sports) later.	29	15.85%
Students would have to stay up later to get everything done.	24	13.11%
Students might have to miss classes at the end of the day because of sports.	23	12.57%
None of these.	3	1.64%

# Highs School Students Sleep Patterns

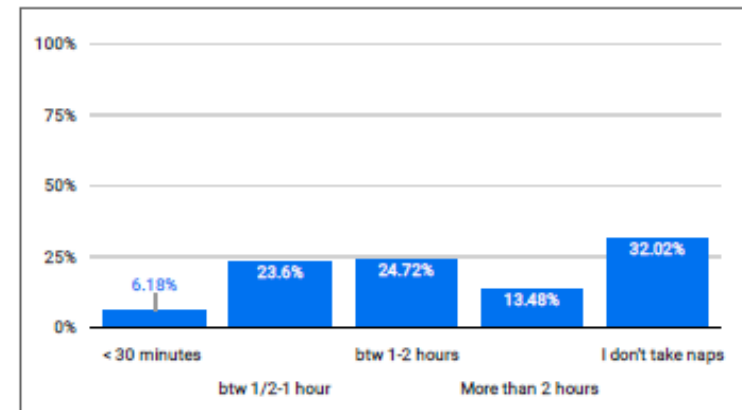
Which of the following is closest to the time you typically fall asleep on school nights IN THE WINTER?



I take naps after school:



If I take naps after school, they are most often:



# Conclusions

- Overall high level of support from parents for change to secondary start times
- 8:10 to 8:30 generally seen positively as start times for secondary, with 9:00 having more mixed feedback
- Need to continue to educate community on research supporting later secondary start times, especially elementary parents
- Biggest concern if moved elementary start times before secondary start times is impact on child care and parents' work schedules
- Need to analyze changes in busing demand and traffic impacts
- High School student's perspectives mixed on change to start times, with after school commitments, especially work being a top concern

# Criteria for Evaluation of Options

- Degree of change in secondary start times that leads to increased sleep
- Financial cost
- Impact on parents/staff work schedules, particularly impact on child care
- Potential impact on athletics and after school activities including high school work schedules
- TMS/WHS schedule alignment
- Degree of disruption/change

# Next Steps

- May: Communication to community on survey results, FAQs and updated timing of decision
- September: Community forum to get input on different options
- October: School Committee discussion and vote on changes to start times
- 2022-2023 School Year: Work through implementation logistics
- Fall 2023: Planned implementation of new start times at start of 2023-2024 school year