

WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Westwood, Massachusetts

**SCHOOL START TIMES SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 13, 2022**

**Attendance and Call to Order**

The meeting, held both in the Westwood Public Schools District Administration Office Professional Development Room, and remotely<sup>1</sup>, was called to order at 3:31pm by Subcommittee Chair Anthony Mullin in-person.

Also present:

Tim Chant, K-12 Wellness Director / Elementary teacher representative (Remote)  
Amy Davenport, High School Principal (In-person)  
Sanaa Devgan (Gr. 10) High School student representative (Remote)  
Marian Donovan, Westwood Teachers Association / Middle School teacher representative (In-person)  
Matt Gillis, Athletic Director (In-person)  
Abby Hanscom, Director of Student Services (In-person, left the meeting at 4:12pm)  
Chris Hilton, High School teacher / Parent representative (In-person)  
Lemma Jn-baptiste, Director of Business and Finance (In-person)  
Kathy Lee, High School teacher representative (In-person)  
Donna Tobin, Martha Jones School Principal (In-person)

Absent:

Lateefah Franck, Director of Equity, Integration, and Partnerships  
Tammy McGowan, Parent representative  
Emily Parks, Superintendent of Schools  
Amanda Phillips, School Committee member  
Mike Redmon, Middle School Principal  
Jennifer Ryan Schultz, Parent representative

John Cianciarulo recorded the minutes.

**Discussion Items**

**Feedback from Parent Forum on Adolescent Sleep**

The Subcommittee was pleased with the forum and agreed that Dr. Owens' presentation was compelling.

**Initial Responses to Community School Start Times Surveys**

Director of Business and Finance Lemma Jn-baptiste shared resulting survey data to-date.

*Parents' Survey*

- Total number of responses: 399
- Number of respondents with a child in High School in 2023-2024: 203
- Number of respondents with a child in Middle School in 2023-2024: 173
- Number of respondents with a child in an elementary school in 2023-2024: 169

When asked which positive impacts of starting the middle or high school later made the most sense, the top three responses were:

- Allow students to sleep later
- Help students focus more during the school day
- Improve students' mood during the school day

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<sup>1</sup> Remote meeting held in accordance with an Act relative to extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the State of Emergency.

When asked which negative impacts of starting the middle or high school later made the most sense, the top three responses were:

- Starting after-school commitments (including sports) later
- Less free time in the afternoon
- Having to stay up later to get everything done

When asked about impacts to routines on specific start times, the majority responses noted:

- High School starting at 8:10am – Very positive
- High School starting at 9:00am – Very positive
- High School dismissing at 2:50pm – Very positive and neutral
- High School dismissing at 3:40pm – Neutral, very negative, and somewhat negative
- Middle School starting at 8:30am – Very positive
- Middle School starting at 9:00am – Very negative and somewhat negative
- Middle School dismissing at 3:07pm – Very positive and neutral
- Middle School dismissing at 3:37pm – Neutral and very positive
- Elementary Schools starting at 8:00am – Somewhat negative and neutral
- Elementary Schools dismissing at 2:20pm – Neutral

When asked whether a later start time would increase or decrease the need for school bus transportation:

- High School – Would not make a difference
- Middle School – Would not make a difference
- Elementary Schools – Would not make a difference

When asked whether a later start time would increase or decrease the need for a parent to provide transportation:

- High School – Would not make a difference
- Middle School – Would not make a difference
- Elementary Schools – Would not make a difference

If the elementary schools moved to an earlier start time, the majority indicated that they would not need to enroll their children in the Before School Program. However, the majority would need to enroll in the After-School Program.

There are approximately 1,750 families in the district, which calculates a response rate of 23%. School principals will communicate with their families asking them to respond.

The Subcommittee expressed concern about the challenge in scheduling secondary schools' sporting events and activities if there is a later school start time.

Response data from staff was shared with the Subcommittee.

#### Criteria to Use for Evaluating Options

The Subcommittee brainstormed criteria to use for evaluating options, which included:

- Ensuring the shift is large enough for students to increase sleep
- Bandwidth to absorb the change
- Cost of bus transportation
- Impact to athletics
- Number of hours students are at the Extended Day Program, and the resulting cost impact to families
- Capacity of the Extended Day Program to provide service to families
- Schedule alignment between middle and high schools

### Update on Traffic Study and Transportation Logistics

Three proposals from different firms have been received. Two are strong. Director of Business and Finance Lemma Jn-baptiste will be following-up with vendors to finalize a timeframe. However, with only six weeks to conduct a high-level analysis before June's School Committee meeting, a smaller study may only be able to be conducted.

Data on high school bus ridership is being collected.

### Timing of Next Forum

An interactive parent forum will be scheduled soon.

### New Business

#### Additional Meetings and Meeting Calendar

Chair Mullin indicated that some meeting dates may need to be moved to accommodate School Committee meetings. Information on changes will be forthcoming.

### Action Items

#### *Approval of Subcommittee Meeting Minutes*

**MOTION** made by Marian Donovan to approve the Subcommittee meeting minutes of March 30, 2022. Motion seconded by Amy Davenport.

Roll-call vote:

Tony Mullin: **Yes**  
Tim Chant: **Yes**  
Amy Davenport: **Yes**  
Sanaa Devgan: **Yes**  
Marian Donovan: **Yes**  
Lateefah Franck: Absent  
Matt Gillis: **Yes**  
Abby Hanscom: Absent  
Chris Hilton: **Yes**  
Lemma Jn-baptiste: **Yes**  
Kathy Lee: **Yes**  
Tammy McGowan: Absent  
Emily Parks: Absent  
Amanda Phillips: Absent  
Mike Redmon: Absent  
Jennifer Ryan Schultz: Absent  
Donna Tobin: **Yes**

**Result: 10-0-0 – Approved**

### Adjournment

**MOTION** made by Matt Gillis to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Marian Donovan.

Roll-call vote:

Tony Mullin: **Yes**  
Tim Chant: **Yes**  
Amy Davenport: **Yes**  
Sanaa Devgan: **Yes**  
Marian Donovan: **Yes**

Lateefah Franck: Absent  
Matt Gillis: Yes  
Abby Hanscom: Absent  
Chris Hilton: Yes  
Lemma Jn-baptiste: Yes  
Kathy Lee: Yes  
Tammy McGowan: Absent  
Emily Parks: Absent  
Amanda Phillips: Absent  
Mike Redmon: Absent  
Jennifer Ryan Schultz: Absent  
Donna Tobin: Yes

**Result: 10-0-0 – Approved**

The meeting adjourned at 4:21pm.

Documents/Exhibits Used at Meeting

- Draft meeting minutes March 30, 2022 for the Subcommittee’s review and approval
- School Start Times – Parents survey response data, as of April 13, 2022
- School Start Times – Staff survey response data, as of April 13, 2022