

October 19, 2020

Bell Times Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Remote Meeting

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

15 members attended

Welcome and Introductions

Assistant Superintendent, Monty Sabin welcomed everyone to the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Members in attendance introduced themselves and shared their role on the committee.

Purpose and Leading with Equity

Monty Sabin shared the purpose of the advisory committee was to determine if changing to a later start time for the high schools is feasible for the district and beneficial for our students.

He also asked the group to assess all options through an equity lens and to ask the following questions about the proposals: How does this issue connect with our strategic plan and the goals of the district? Will this decision ignore/worsen existing disparities or produce unintended consequences? If so, how? Finally, does this proposal support the message of inclusion? He referred the group to the district’s Equity Resolution and EL-11 Policy, Race and Equity for guidance.

Transportation Follow-up

Deanna Maddux shared a spreadsheet comparing the 5 plans that were reviewed as requested in meeting #2

She shared pros and cons with the various scenarios that were reviewed.

Study 1	HS at 8:40 to 3:10	Study 2	HS at 8:40 to 3:10	Study 3 (three ES start times)	HS at 8:40 to 3:10	Study 4 (two ES start times)	HS at 8:30 to 3:00	Study 5 HS 9:30 to 4:00
Elementary #1 Tag Program	7:15am to 1:45pm 7:15am to 12:45pm	Elementary #1 Tag Program	7:30am to 2:00pm 7:30am to 1:00pm	Elementary #1 Tag Program	7:15am to 1:45 pm 7:15 am to 1:15pm	Elementary #1 Tag Program	7:45am to 2:15pm 7:15am to 1:30pm	Did not proceed due to: Impacting Students abilities to have jobs Student sports not being able to leave until 4:00-5:00pm or later
Elementary #2	8:00am to 2:30pm	Elementary #2	8:15am to 2:45pm	Elementary #2	7:50am to 2:20 pm	Elementary #2	8:00am to 2:30pm	Inability to participate in AM Session (7:50-10:20) @ New Market Skills Center Parents not having anyone for child care of younger siblings
High School	8:40am to 3:10pm	High School	8:40am to 3:10pm	Elementary #3	8:00am to 2:30 pm	High School	8:30am to 3:00pm	Higher frequency of very late time students would get back from sporting events Middle schools sports stay within the district, HS leaves the district
Envisions HS	8:50am to 2:50pm	Envisions HS	8:50am to 2:50pm	High School	8:40am to 3:10pm	Envisions HS	8:40am to 2:40pm	Traffic concerns trying to go north or south between 3 and 6pm Ability to get referees for both MS and HS The length of time missed for class if they have to depart at 2 for league games
Middle School	9:30am to 4:00 pm	Middle School	9:30am to 4:00 pm	Envisions HS	8:50am to 2:55pm	Middle School	9:20am to 3:50 pm	
Aspire	9:00am to 3:30pm	Aspire	9:00am to 3:30pm	Middle School	9:30am to 4:00 pm	Aspire	8:50am to 3:20pm	
Driver times would be between 6-8 hours a day - All Preschools on the same bell time		Reduces drivers time to 4-6 hours a day, will be hard		Aspire Pre-School Routes are all on later tiers	9:00am to 3:30pm	All Preschools on the same bell time		
Pre COVID: Increases routes by about 4 = \$800,000		Pre COVID: Increases routes by at least 13 = \$2,600,000		**Did not proceed with study due to traffic limitations we are seeing in current model, making the timing tight & significant need to drivers		**Did not proceed with study more than doubled our need for drivers and buses		Harder to find drivers with the extremely late trips and early morning starts for the drivers
Post COVID due to adding in cleaning time: Increases routes by about 12 = \$2,400,000		Post COVID due to adding in cleaning time: Increases routes by about 16 = \$3,600,000				Was asked to revisit this model but at 7:30 see study #2		
Changes Operational budget from 7.8 to 10.2 million, current we are funded at 7.8		Changes Operational budget from 7.8 to 11.4 million, current we are funded at 7.8						
Considerations			Changed From					
Aspire will have to ride in with HS students, then shuttle to ESL for High School students will have to shuttle to MS in PM and ride home with HS students and ride in with ES school students			They currently ride in with ES students Currently ESL students get a direct ride home after school, and ride in with HS students and shuttle over, because we can drop HS off earlier (30-35 min before the bell)					
Intermittent and changing ridership is inefficient to devote driver for HS time period.			Currently having HS first allows us to help with field trips, have HS in the middle means gaps in routing					
ESL for MS student will be at least a double shuttle in the AM and PM and may be not be able to provide service to New Market time will not match up for HS students			single shuttle or direct pm transport					
Athletes may lose more class time to leave earlier for sports. Could be competing for fields with our own Middle Schools. Could be competing for refs with our own Middle Schools.								

Questions and comments from the committee followed:

- Was there a consideration to expand the walk zones around schools?
 - Walk Zone boundary changes would require a committee to process, also increased walk zones decrease ridership and transportation is funded by the number of riders.
- If we change nothing - wouldn't we still need to add additional routes due to COVID?
 - No – more parents are choosing to transport, so there is additional buffer time to allow for cleaning. Some routes will be adjusted and run later like in the valley or Johnson Point Area.
- When the comparison shows that we need to add 4 more routes, would we need to add busses too or do we have spare busses to support the routes?

- We would need to purchase additional busses to cover the extra routes.
- We would also need to add additional drivers, which would increase the need for substitute drivers. Substitute drivers are very difficult to find – and there is a shortage of school bus drivers across the state and has been for the last 2-3 years.
- How would the TAG busses be impacted by these changes?
 - TAG would operate in a similar way, but the students would just need to have a longer bus ride to school. Probably a 6:00 am pick-up.
- ESL Middle School students may need a double shuttle run?
 - Yes, the students would need to take three busses to get to school.
- How many students in the ESL program would be impacted by the change?
 - It varies, last year it was around 100 students.
- ESL students – how long does it currently take them to get to school?
 - Currently an extra 15 – 20 minutes for their AM shuttle. If a double shuttle is needed it could add 1 ½ hours to the bus ride.
- Deficit due to COVID and the additional cost of implementation the change, and the impact on students who are furthest from educational justice and the ones we need to be particularly sensitive too in supporting. Students may decide that the ELL support isn't worth the 1 ½ hour bus ride. That is a concern.
- Budget was concerned due to the decrease of enrollment there is a \$12 million dollar gap due to a large decrease in student FTE. The revenue outlook is uncertain. Decrease in enrollment this year has a negative impact on the budget for next year as well such as the levy equalization funds and other ways. Additional costs at this time are a definite concern to the district.
- Transportation is funded based on the number of students transported, the number of miles covered and the destinations we go and then based on efficiency there is an algorithm that determines funding. For the approximately 14,000 students typically transported each day the funding is \$7.8 million. In small groups, the district is currently transporting approximately 120 students. There will be a drastic impact for funding both this school year and next year.
- Timing of things? We should look at ways to improve and weigh these types of decisions, but we are in an unstable time right now. Daycare concerns and other issues are extra for families. Is this a good time to make a change?
- The ultimate goal is what is best for the students. With the current economic uncertainty for the district and for parents of students in our district – is it a greater good for the students to delay this change until things are more fiscally comfortable – change may hurt students, parents, staff or community. It is sad because older students may benefit from later start times.
- Is timing just a mechanical issue? If we determine that this is something that is good for students – we could still determine that and decide the implementation timeline as a separate item. If we decide this really does help students would we see savings in other areas that may off set the additional transportation costs? Are there programs that we are spending money on now if students are better off sleeping in? Timing shouldn't impact whether or not we decide this is a good course for students.
- With the amount of students that have been unenrolled this year due to remote learning, are more families going to unenroll students and put them in private school because it is cheaper than paying for before and after school daycare because siblings are unable to help watch younger students.

Community Activities

Jenn Burbidge, Parks & Recreation Director, City of Lacey – shared that overall, Lacey Parks & Recreation does not see a significant negative or positive impact in regards to community programs but rather programs would need to be shifted to accommodate, which is easily done. We see impacts in three main areas:

SPORTS: If high school start times are moved later, community field use and sports start times may need to be moved later by an hour. This could create challenges with the amount of daylight available. The potential for before school intramural sports could be pursued if facility space was available and it's something that were to become a priority to offer to kids.

YOUTH PROGRAMS: There could be a need for more afterschool programs identified if elementary kids are starting school earlier.

AQUATICS: This is the area we see the most impact. We don't see any advantages in moving high school start times later. Some disadvantages are other schools that use the NTPS pools would be bumped to a later practice time (6-8pm) during girls swim season, we would not be able to offer aquatics fitness classes at RRHS during girls swim season (starting after all the swim teams at 8pm would be too late), we would need to eliminate some evening swim lessons time slots during the high school swim seasons, and one of the swim clubs would need to shorten their practice time by at least 1-2 hours every night (M-F) during both girls and boys swim seasons. We could try morning programming however that has not been successful in the past since our customer base is working families. People who want to exercise during the day, especially water exercise, are most likely at the YMCA or LA Fitness. In addition, we could look into the possibility of renting pool time to a swim club in the morning.

If there was to be a change to the bell schedule, Lacey Parks & Recreation would be committed as always to pivoting and filling community needs.

Patrick Costello, Executive Director of Youth and Community Development, South Sound YMCA shared a presentation on the childcare programs available in NTPS facilities, provided by South Sound YMCA, the Boys & Girls Club, and Together!

The presentation is available for review on the district BTAC website.

Discussion followed:

- What about the impact to community use of district facilities, specifically youth sports. With a later end time would elementary students be out later to be able to participate in youth sports and then be faced with an even earlier morning to catch the bus for the earlier elementary start times?
 - Most of the indoor youth sports programs typically use the elementary gyms so they could actually start earlier with an earlier start time.
 - For outdoor sports, the availability of lighted fields can be a concern. Definitely a consideration.
 - Youth football and cheer would definitely be impacted to compete for field use with the district's MS and HS use.
 - Not an insurmountable problem, probably need to pivot and shift things around – but it could be figured out.
- Speaking with colleagues in other districts that have made the switch to an earlier start time, they have reported problems similar to the concerns we've been looking at, but they worked themselves out and after an adjustment period the change was positive. The study materials that were sent didn't include any fiscal impact to other districts that had made the change or fiscal impacts to the community due to the start time change.
 - We will see if we can find any studies that address the fiscal impacts of the earlier start time.
- Before school childcare for elementary students would be very difficult to staff because it would be for a very short period of time – some families would be definitely be impacted. We currently have approximately 100 families who utilize an early morning drop-off program for Y-care.
- It would be good to look at the number of high school students who work after school and would they be able to make their shift with a later start time.

Future Topics / Meeting Schedule

Monty Sabin shared that future topics would include:

- District Activities
- Staff & Community Survey
- Food and Nutrition
- Academic Research

Meetings are scheduled for:

- November 11th
- December 14th
- January 18th
- February 23rd – Board Meeting

Closing

Monty shared that he would be emailing materials for review before the next BTAC meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm.