

School Start Time Committee
Council Chambers
May 1, 2017
10:00 a.m.

Present:	J. Erardi	K. Joyce
	E. Aho	M. Ku
	A. Colangelo (absent)	M. Memoli
	D. Cruson	D. Roach
	J. Davila	L. Rodrigue
	R. Dufour	J. Vouros
	T. Einhorn	H. Werner
	J. Fonovic (absent)	1 Public
	T. Harrison	1 Press

The community forum on sleep study with Dr. Jennifer Kanaan will be held May 9 in the high school lecture hall at 7:00 p.m. Dr. Erardi encouraged committee members to attend if possible.

Jim Ross presented the survey results of the seventh grade students. Most students did not want a 9:00 start time and preferred keeping the present start time or a 7:45 start. Sleep was the biggest concern in changing the start time and sports and activities regarding the end times. Most students wake up between 6:00 and 6:30 and most would go to bed at the same time with any change.

Mr. Cruson felt that eighth grade responses could provide some valuable information. Mr. Ross said they would survey them this week.

Mrs. Davila spoke about the Adolescent Sleep, Health and School Start Times Conference which she attended in Washington, D.C. with Mrs. Ku, Mr. Vouros and Mrs. Joyce. They feel that both the middle and high schools should be involved in the change with at least 30 minutes to make the change worthwhile. Early start times are linked to academic performance as well as social emotion impact. When you look at any data between districts be sure you know what is different about your district compared to districts in the study.

Mrs. Ku felt the information was incredibly solid and reviewed her summary of the conference. Changing school start times is a public health issue. Most districts were prompted to change from the community driving the conversation.

Mrs. Joyce said we weren't alone in this. A number of Connecticut districts attended. The Seattle study indicated that they changed a few years ago and continue to make revisions.

Mr. Vouros said that with this being a public health issue for students we have to look at how change will make their lives better. The New Canaan superintendent was at the conference and their change a number of years ago was extremely beneficial. Their time frame for change was 18 months as they had to get all of the stakeholders on board or surveyed. The timing factor is individualized.

Mr. Roach felt if it's going to be a good decision for students he doesn't see how we will help the senior class next year if we wait 18 months.

Dr. Rodrigue wondered if the 30 minute later start time might allow students to not have to come in on certain days. She also feels eighth graders should be surveyed. It's not just about athletics or activities. Everything would be done at a later time.

Mrs. Davila referred to the zero period in the high school and that we also need to look at the homework policy and possibly have a nurse at one of our meetings.

Mr. Vouros felt we should provide information to parents regarding daycare services to help with time changes.

Dr. Erardi said we have meetings scheduled with school faculty and PTA's. The PTA Presidents have been invited to our May 8 meeting.

We know that a change of 15 minutes will not work and should look at an 8:30 start time. The Board will ask if this will be implemented in 2017 or 2018. The work needs to be predicated with the high school moving backwards from the 7:20 start time.

Mrs. Joyce said the majority of data we received was around an 8:30 start time.

Mr. Vouros asked the ramifications of the 8:30 start time.

Dr. Rodrigue said with that start time it would depend on the end time. It would move the elementary schools closer to a 4:00 dismissal. We need clarification moving forward on the number of minutes we are moving back.

Mrs. Ku said that 8:30 is the recommended time from the Center for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics. That doesn't mean it's the best time for us; 8:00 may be the better time for us. She spoke about option 4 and asked if we could switch the high school and middle school to the Reed time.

Mr. Dufour said the 8:30 time would have the elementary schools going first.

Dr. Erardi said that in both cases the youngest child would get home sooner than an older sibling.

Mrs. Joyce asked if we could do a survey for the community. We don't know how many people will be affected.

Dr. Erardi felt that before we send a survey he would like a couple of final options.

Mr. Dufour asked what parents would do with their children during that time.

Ms. Aho asked if the conference looked at elementary school transportation and what else was addressed.

Mr. Vouros said that daycare was addressed. Districts provided opportunities for parents and we need to factor in those issues and if it will cost the Board extra money.

Dr. Rodrigue said that in Seymour and Oxford the schools subsidize a program for child care due to school times.

Dr. Erardi said we will dedicate the next meeting to a consensus around our recommendation and what works for Newtown for the next or following year. This is a backwards design starting with the high school. We've heard back from students and athletics. We have to decide on what time the high school should start and why and then backfill transportation.

Mr. Vouros said we should give transportation what direction we want to go in using the 8:30 start time and look at what would be involved.

Dr. Rodrigue feels that if we do that we are discounting the voice of students.

Mr. Roach suggested looking at an 8:00 and 8:30 start time.

Mrs. Ku felt it was important to survey the community after Dr. Kanaan's presentation.

Mrs. Joyce was concerned about parents who won't be there.

Dr. Erardi aid we could direct parents to view the forum.

The meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

Submitted by: Kathy June