

# Dear Mashpee Public Schools Community

It's time (in fact, it's *past time*) to ---->



**The following organizations and experts are on board.  
We hope you will be on board as well.**

## **American Academy of Pediatrics**

"The evidence strongly implicates earlier school start times (i.e., before 8:30 a.m.) as a key modifiable contributor to insufficient sleep, as well as circadian rhythm disruption ... Furthermore, [a substantial body of research has now demonstrated that delaying school start times is an effective countermeasure to chronic sleep loss and has a wide range of potential benefits to students with regard to physical and mental health, safety, and academic achievement.](#) The American Academy of Pediatrics strongly supports the efforts of school districts to optimize sleep in students and urges high schools and middle schools to aim for start times that allow students the opportunity to achieve optimal levels of sleep (8.5–9.5 hours) and to improve physical (e.g., reduced obesity risk) and mental (e.g., lower rates of depression) health, safety (e.g. drowsy driving crashes), academic performance, and quality of life."

## **National Education Association**

"The National Education Association believes that overall health and performance are best achieved with adequate rest on a regular basis. [The Association supports school schedules that follow research-based recommendations regarding the sleep patterns of age groups.](#) The Association further supports programs within the education framework that promote understanding of the importance of adequate rest."

## **Education Commission of the States**

"Sleep loss associated with early school start times can damage adolescents' learning and health. Later starting times, by contrast, are associated with longer sleep, better learning and reduced health risks. [Research from the past 20 years has consistently supported these findings ... education start times requiring waking at 7 a.m. or earlier – which is like adults waking at 4 a.m. every day – cause chronic sleep loss.](#) Losing sleep through the week on this scale leads to poorer academic achievement and increased health risks ... [Despite the substantial body of evidence from scientific, medical and education research supporting later school starts, almost all adolescent education in the United States currently has early start times. This leaves states, school districts and other responsible bodies in the untenable position of defending a current practice that has been demonstrated to be detrimental to student learning, health and safety.](#)"

## **American Thoracic Society**

"For adolescents [we suggest that school start times be delayed](#) to align with the physiological circadian propensity of this age group."

## **National Sleep Foundation**

The consequences of sleep deprivation during the teenage years are particularly serious. [Teens spend a great portion of each day in school; however, they are unable to maximize the learning opportunities afforded by the education system, since sleep deprivation impairs their ability to be alert, pay attention, solve problems, cope with stress and retain information.](#) Young people who do not get enough sleep night after night carry a significant risk for drowsy driving; emotional and behavioral problems such as irritability, depression, poor impulse control and violence; health complaints; tobacco and alcohol use; impaired cognitive function and decision-making; and lower overall performance in everything from academics to athletics."

*Continued >*

**Brown University School of Medicine, Mary A. Carskadon, Ph.D., Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior**

"Even without the pressure of biological changes, if we combine an early school starting time — say 7:30 a.m., which, with a modest commute, makes 6:15 a.m. a viable rising time — [with our knowledge that optimal sleep need is 9-1/4 hours, we are asking that 16 year olds go to bed at 9 p.m. Rare is a teenager that will keep such a schedule. Schoolwork, sports practices, clubs, volunteer work, and paid employment take precedence.](#) When biological changes are factored in, the ability even to have merely 'adequate' sleep is lost."

**Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, University of Minnesota**

Research reveals [“empirically-based positive outcomes for adolescents whenever the start time of their high school is moved to a later time — with the starting time of 8:30 a.m. or later clearly showing the most positive results.”](#)

*From Examining the Impact of Later School Start Times on the Health and Academic Performance of High School Students: A Multi-Site Study*

**Contemporary Pediatrics**

“Traditionally in the United States, the school day in high school begins earlier than in middle schools or elementary schools, and often the start time is before 8 a.m. [The conflict between adolescents' inherent circadian phase delay and rigid school start times results in chronic sleep deprivation. In 1997, school districts in Minnesota delayed high school start times by at least 1 hour. Benefits of this change included increased nightly sleep \(approximately 1 more hour of sleep per night\), improved attendance, decreased tardiness, increased daytime alertness, improved student behavior, and trended toward improved academic performance.”](#)

**Scientific American**

“No amount of bribing or threatening can make an adolescent fall asleep early. Don't blame video games or TV. Even if you take all of these away ... and switch off the lights, the poor teen will toss and turn and not fall asleep until midnight or later, thus [getting only about 4-6 hours of sleep until it is time to get up and go to school again....](#) Instead of forcing teenagers to wake up at their biological midnight (circa 6 a.m.) to go to school, where invariably they sleep through the first two morning classes, more and more schools are adopting the reverse busing schedule: elementary schools first (around 7:50 a.m.), middle schools next (around 8:20 a.m.) and high schools last (around 8:50 a.m.). I hope all schools around the country eventually adopt this schedule and quit torturing the teens and then blaming the teens for sleeping in class and making bad grades.”

**Education Next**

“Delaying school start times by one hour, from roughly 7:30 to 8:30, increases standardized test scores by at least 2 percentile points in math and 1 percentile point in reading. The effect is largest for students with below-average test scores, suggesting that [later start times would narrow gaps in student achievement.](#)”

Additional statements, resolutions and calls for starting school later can be found at <http://www.startschoolater.net/position-statements.html>



**Mashpee Community: Please support our students by supporting a later start time for MMHS students—beginning in 2017-2018**