



The Arlington ISD formed a committee in the fall of 2014 to research and discuss school start times. The committee consisted of 39 individuals and included parents, students, teachers and administrators. They looked at the current school start time at all levels and the impact it has on academics, operations, family/community and extracurricular activities. The committee also looked at the start time of other high-performing school districts that have a later start time than the AISD.

After forming four subcommittees to review research and articles referencing impacts on start time, the committee as a whole decided the pros of the current school start times are:

- The current start time is already routine
- Childcare
- Junior high students are allowed extra sleep time
- High school students are mature enough to start early
- There is time for extracurricular activities after school
- High school students have time for a job after school
- Making a change wouldn't be beneficial because high school students would still go to school early for extracurricular programs, clubs/organizations or extra academic help

The cons to the current school start times are:

- Sleepy, lethargic high school students
- Teachers are challenged with teaching complex content to sleepy high school students
- The tardy/absence rate is higher during the first period of the day in high school
- Students are using energy drinks, caffeine and the like to stay awake
- The transition from junior high to high school is a challenge

The committee reported that there is some research to support a later start time. Additional discussions and considerations included:

- Educating and then receiving input from the greater community prior to making a decision to change start times
- Having all schools start after 8 a.m.
- Changing the order in which the schools start as well as the time they start
- Analyzing the cost impact on changing school start times
- Providing an opportunity for a zero hour at high school if the time is pushed back
- Impacting junior high students going to the high school for credit classes and taking zero-hour classes
- Staying true to the commitment – if start time is changed to a later time for high school students because of the biological and physiological impact it has on students, do not allow any extra/co-curricular activities to take place before the first academic class starts
- Remaining cognizant of working parents and how a change would impact them
- Starting elementary and junior high schools at the same time and starting high schools later
- Leaving the start times for all levels as they are now

Starting all schools at a unified time would cost up to \$32 million for additional buses and staff. Other considerations include:

- Increase in bus insurance costs for additional buses
- Increase in fuel costs to run additional buses
- New bus lot to park 290 new busses and park personal vehicles for the additional staff
- Reduce the ability to fully staff drivers (only three hours guaranteed versus the current six hours), which could

negatively impact services to students

- Increase the shop space and the number of mechanics to work with the larger fleet
- Increase the number of fueling stations required to service larger fleet
- Increase in miles
- Academic impact on junior high students taking zero hour classes at the high schools
- Increase in administrative costs required to manage the additional drivers, attendants and routes

Other options for start times (e.g., staggering all start times, etc.) may cost significantly less but would have considerable implications as noted prior.

At this point, the district has completed the initial review of this topic and has not made adjustments to school start times.