



Revised Bell Time Schedule

Questions and Answers

Q: Why do we need to change school start times for middle and high school students?

A: Currently we have more than 6,600 bus riders at the middle and high schools who arrive late for the start of school every day. These students miss significant instructional time over the course of the year and their entry late to class disrupts instruction for other students.

Q: Why don't these buses arrive on time?

A: The State Department of Education provides regular and special needs route buses and sets rules for their operation and assignment to routes. The rules require that we utilize these buses to transport students at all levels. Except in very unusual circumstances this means we are only provided enough buses to transport elementary students to school, then using the same buses transport middle and high school students on a second run.

In our current schedule, the windows (time) between elementary school start/dismissal and middle school start/dismissal are not sufficient to travel the route to deliver elementary students, run the route again and deliver to middle schools on time nor to cover the time needed to travel the distance from middle schools to high schools.

Q: Why not start bus routes earlier?

A: An earlier start would require our youngest students to be at their bus stop 15 minutes earlier than currently scheduled and would still necessitate moving either middle school or high school start times by 15 minutes to provide adequate time to travel between those locations. Our earliest current pick-up time for a regular route is 5:45 am. We believe it would be an undue burden on families to begin even earlier.

Q: Will my child have to be at the bus stop 15 minutes earlier next year because of this change?

A: No, the change in the bell schedule will not require any change to pick-up times. It is however important to note that changes occur annually in routes due to changes in the number and location of riders.

Q: With my current work schedule I can't drop my child off 15 minutes later. What can I do?

A: Middle and high schools will maintain their 2009-2010 morning supervision times for the coming school year, so you may continue to drop off at the same time.

Q: As a teacher or school level employee will my hours be longer?

A: No, the length of your work day will not change, but at the secondary level the start of your instructional day and its ending time will change by 15 minutes.

Q: As a teacher or school level employee will I have additional supervision responsibilities?

A: Duty schedules are established at each location by that school's principal. These may vary each year. While the revised bell times will alter the time of supervision, it should require no greater amount. There will be a need for additional morning supervision, but significantly less in the afternoon.

Q: My child attends another GCS program such as a career center, fine arts center, or child development center. Will their schedules be affected?

A: Yes, schedules for these programs will be adjusted to meet the new bell times but by no more than 15 minutes.

Q: What activities or opportunities will my middle or high school student have in the morning before school starts if students can be dropped off at the same time?

A: Those opportunities will vary from school to school but may include: media center use, tutorial programs, supervised study, club meetings and other activities. You should inquire of the principal at your school regarding specifics.