

Proposal to Adjust Middle and High School Hours (Bell Schedule) Beginning 2010-11

The Issue/Challenge

The current window of time between elementary and secondary school start times is inadequate causing many middle and high school students riding school buses to arrive at school after classes begin. As a result, these students miss important instructional time and interrupt class for all students. In the afternoon, middle and high school students riding the bus are also picked up well after the end of the school day.

Top Priorities

1. Eliminate missed morning instructional time for middle and high school students by getting bus riders to school on time.
2. Significantly reduce number of middle and high school students who must wait well after the end of the school day for school buses to pick them up.
3. Minimize the impact of the school time adjustment for students, parents, and employees.

Proposed Solution

A proposal is being considered to begin middle and high schools 15 minutes later beginning next school year (2010-11). This adjustment would increase the window of time between the morning start of elementary and secondary schools. School dismissal times for middle and high schools would also adjust 15 minutes later. Start and end times for elementary schools would not be impacted. Bus morning pickup times would not change for any K-12 student because of this proposed adjustment to school hours.

	<u>Now</u>		<u>Proposed</u>
Elementary:	8:00 am - 2:30 pm	to	8:00 am - 2:30 pm (No Change)
Middle:	8:15 am - 3:00 pm	to	8:30 am - 3:15 pm
High:	8:30 am - 3:30 pm	to	8:45 am - 3:45 pm

The State and school system have exhausted all other means to improve bus transportation including rerouting and adding buses when State resources allow. A thorough State study of the school bus transportation system for Greenville County Schools included a recommendation to adjust school start times as an essential step to improve bus transportation.

Mindful of the need for many parents to drop off their children en route to work, schools would establish acceptable morning drop-off/pickup times for car riders and adjust employees' morning and afternoon duty schedules to provide supervision of students. Afternoon duty time is expected to decrease. Length of regular work day for school employees would not change.

Lunch and other schedules within the school day can be adjusted if needed.

The change in school hours should not result in early dismissal of students for after-school activities. With the High School League realignment, most Greenville County schools participate in the same local regions so start times for after-school activities can be easily adjusted. In addition, start time adjustments can be accommodated as athletic fields are lighted and daylight saving time has been extended from the second Sunday of March until the first Sunday of November.

Questions or input? Call the GCS Service Center at 355-3100 or e-mail BellTimes@greenville.k12.sc.us.