

**Town Hall Combined
January 29 (LCMS) and 31 (TJMS), 2019**

Welcome - Superintendent Larry Linthacum

Thank you for attending, we are looking for ideas and inputs as we move forward.

Presentation -- Start and End Times of Schools

JCPS would benefit from running a tiered bus routing system. A single route costs \$44,320, two single routes cost \$88,640. A double route costs the district \$48,995. Therefore, a double route is \$39,465 less than two single routes.

The current bell schedule for secondary schools is 7:50 - 2:50 for High School, and Middle School is 8:00 - 2:50 p.m. Elementary schools vary from 8 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. The varied times make it difficult for Professional Development for staff as well as for tiered bus routes.

Ideally, 55-65 minutes is needed between routes. Currently secondary routes average 46 minutes. Routes for Callaway Hills, North, Moreau Heights, and Pioneer Trail cannot be tiered due to their start and end times. The district does have some tiered routes at East, South, Thorpe Gordon and West -- but the times are tight and do not always work.

The district currently has 26 single routes and 37 tiered routes. It would cost an additional \$1.5 million to convert double routes to single routes, and it would also require hiring an additional 37 bus drivers. There are already difficulties with hiring and retaining enough drivers as it is.

When Capital City High School opens in the Fall of 2019, the district will need to add 5-8 more routes to serve the new high school. This would add up to an additional \$350,000 per year. It costs the same regardless of who starts first (elementary or secondary).

Possible Scenarios (district would ultimately have to determine exact start times based on duration needed to accommodate all bus routes, but possible scenarios could look like this):

Option #1

7:50 - 2:50 - All elementary and SWECC

8:50- 3:50 - All MS, all HS

Option #2

7:50 - 2:50 - All MS, all HS

8:50- 3:50 - All elementary and SWECC

Elementary Schools Starting Earlier - *district list*

Pros

- Research shows the needs for later start times for secondary students
- Anecdotal evidence from elementary teachers about instruction difficulties late in the day for young students
- Morning bus stops would be later due to shorter routes with neighborhood elementary schools
- Additional 2nd tier routes allows for fewer students on board buses and shorter routes
- High school drivers not driving during morning rush hour
- High school schedule are more flexible allowing for voluntary zero hour courses
- Reducing amount of time on the bus

Cons

- Older siblings will not be home first to provide childcare for elementary students
- Students who work may not be available to work as early in the afternoon
- Changes the bell times for all students in the district except Callaway County elementary students
- After school activities go later in the evening
- Last student dropped off in the evening is later due to secondary routes being longer than elementary

Secondary Schools Starting Earlier - *district list*

Pros

- Older siblings will be home first to provide childcare for elementary students.
- Fewer schedules are changed (schools/students/parents)
- After school activities finish earlier

Cons

- Goes against research for optimal time for learning for secondary students
- Earlier morning bus stops due to longer routes for secondary buildings
- Older siblings not at home to assist elementary students ready for school

QUESTIONS FROM ATTENDEES (Post-it Notes)

What option is district favoring?

- *We are weighing pros and cons. Must comply with our three pillars of learning, partnerships and stewardship.*

Is the district considering not allowing early morning practices or activities

- *We allow our schools to do this now. There is a need to spread out use of gyms.*
- *Columbia schools allow their coaches and advisors to use the morning times.*
- *We do not provide transportation to early morning practices.*

I am a pediatrician and parent and happy to share information on the American Academy of Pediatrics research.

- *Around puberty circadian rhythms shift, difficult for adolescents to fall asleep.*
- *Many students are not getting the needed 8-10 hours of sleep per night.*
- *Research has determined there is decreased tardiness, decreased absenteeism, decreased rates of traffic among teenagers.*

- *Multiple studies supporting the benefits of secondary schools starting later.*

Have you considered all starting at same time?

- *It is an option but have not seriously considered this due to \$1.5 million expense in doing so. And we do not believe we could find an additional 37 bus drivers.*

How will you accommodate staff with children at different buildings?

- *We will look at each scenario and look for options on how we can accommodate staff.*

We know the average bus route is 46 minutes what is the longest bus route?

- *Our longest route is 1 hour and 45 minutes (for morning routes)*
- *Example shared that daughter rides for 1 hr 45 min with 6:05 a.m. pick up time*

Are we going to lose breakfast in the classroom?

- *I do not believe this will be impacted*
- *We are looking at expanding this to more schools*
- *Instead of having breakfast in cafeteria with all students you have breakfast in your class with your "community"*

What time will breakfast end if NCC starts earlier than JCHS? Then lunch starts 2.5 hours?

- *Sending schools do not eat breakfast or lunch at NCC*
- *The switch to 7 block schedule will accommodate time for lunch service*
- *We will work with principals in order to ensure we can provide food for our students*

Is the school board aware of youth programs in the community or child care options?

- *We have teachers who we pay to supervise students before school begins at late start*
- *We currently partner with the Boys and Girls Club and the YMCA*
- *We have had general conversations with these providers but no firm details until we know exactly which option is selected.*
- *We understand that if secondary goes later we will need to provide some before school care for our MS students.*

What will be done with financial savings? And what about the added expenses more parents will have to pay for child care (question via YouTube)?

- *Some of the savings is cost avoidance, but the savings are still significant.*
- *Our current needs outpace our resources, so we will continue to prioritize the needs and how to fulfill them.*
- *Focus is on teaching and learning*

Can extra money be used to fund teachers?

- *80% of our district budget is in salaries, so if there is a cost savings it would likely go towards salaries for teachers.*

Will secondary schools be open earlier if they are second?

- *We would anticipate the schools that begin later being open longer than 30 minutes in the morning in order to provide adequate availability for student drop-off.*

How do you plan to accommodate the families who work at 8:00 am?

- *In general, schools in the district open for drop-off 30 minutes ahead of start of school at a minimum. The early schools would continue to do so, allowing for drop off 30 minutes ahead (so 7:20 a.m. for the 7:50 schools)*
- *The later schools would have to explore the possibility of expanding before school care offered by other providers or expand offerings from our staff in order to accommodate working parents.*
- *We need to come up with a way to accommodate parents who cannot afford childcare*
- *District would need to work with partner programs like Ycare and Boys and Girls Club to expand number of available spots, or explore other additional options*

If middle school starts later, what could be done for students whose parents drop them off early? For example, this morning with a 2 hour late start we had kids dropped off at 9 a.m. and parents left.

- *The building opens 30 minutes before start time; some schools pay staff members to supervise students who arrive before school starts.*

Will the saved money from adjusting start times offset the cost of providing before and after school care?

- *We anticipate that expense increasing but not the whole \$500,000 we will save. Currently we spend \$15,000 per year on staff assisting with students before school.*

Where does the timing for middle schools fall into this plan as far as start and end times?

- *MS are part of secondary schools and would begin at the same time as the HS*

If we keep the start time schedule the same at the high schools do we have enough money in our budget to service the 2nd high school -- to pay for additional buses?

- *That cost was included in the numbers provided to us by First Student. If we kept things the way they are it would cost an additional \$300K for the extra routes.*

Is there any support for JCPS employees who will no longer be able to accommodate pick-up/drop-off and will need day care?

- *Currently the answer is no but we have discussed this with employees and our goal is to design a program to support this. We believe we can create some sort of program to supervise staff children. We are willing to look at this once we determine start times.*

What's your deciding factor for which schools start at which time?

- *Our current start times have evolved over the past few years. Over 25 years start times are all across the board based on student needs over the past few years*
- *Trying to keep all elementary and all secondary schools the same is our goal*

You have taken all of this feedback, what is your deciding factor?

- *Weighing pros and cons from our staff, community and our students. We are committed to looking at our 3 pillars -- learning partnership and stewardship.*
- *No decision has been made, we are weighing the pros and cons (are there more +'s or -'s will aid in our deciding factor)*

Is this Powerpoint available to view again?

- *(YES! The presentation from previous board meetings is on our website and the revised version used at the Town Halls will be up soon. You can also watch the live stream video on our YouTube channel).*

How does starting earlier at elementary help kids who are tired later in the day? Won't they be tired late in the day? Won't they be tired after the same 6 hours of school? More elementary kids need to depend on after/before care if they school starts early, which means they will spend more time at school away from family than they do now

- *Yes, we do anticipate that will be the case. However, the research shows that younger students already wake up earlier. So for the largest population of our students the research shows it will be beneficial for the younger students to start school sooner and end by the time they would like to take naps or start wearing down for the day.*

If elementary school starts late, the child will get up earlier, go to school all day, and then have to spend additional time in an after school program. The younger child spends more time away from home because they can not stay home alone. Older kids time away from home will not change.

- *Dependent upon your family situation -- some families report this will hurt their family situation others have said this will help our family.*

Extra-curricular concerns -- how will later end times impact clubs, drama and other activities

- *According to CPS, they have more participation in co-curricular activities since moving to the later start time. Our goal is to do whatever we can to increase opportunities for all students*

Have you surveyed teachers?

- *We are holding staff meetings with all staff -- most buildings have shared their thoughts with us. But we will gather from all staff through meetings. We have 3 -4 still to meet with.*

Individual family will have to spend more money every month on child care - this also depends on number of elementary kids from each family. This expense could double or triple with the number of kids in elementary.

- *We understand that is a reality. We have heard from families whose costs will go up and others whose costs will go down. It is a hurdle. We don't have all the answers yet, but we are hopeful that child care providers will help adapt if a change is made. And we will also work with our staff to see how we can cover any areas that are in need of better coverage.*

Could you give a mock schedule of busses if the starting times changed? I've already made my schedule for next year but would like to have a heads up if it needs changed?

- *Frank could provide a mock schedule but we do not have at this point.*
- *Will have the scenarios added to the website when they are run and notify families they are available so they can start to look ahead.*

I feel like we are doing a good job at TJ of offering after school music programs and other activities and clubs that help students discover their talents and things they enjoy. I feel if secondary schools are starting later that teachers will not want to stay to facilitate these activities, especially since most are not compensated

- *This is possible - this is not something we have heard from staff at this point.*

Would this give more collaboration time between MS/HS for vertical alignment?

- *We would like more collaboration between MS and HS. A schedule change would not change this but we would like to make it a priority regardless of start time .*

Studies also show that younger kids need more sleep than older kids. Younger kids already go to bed early. Now they will have to go to bed earlier, while spending less time at home.

- *Some elementary students may very well get more sleep, but in general, most youth do not get enough sleep so there are plenty of ways in which we could improve.*

General comments:

What about like schools -- when do they start and end- have we looked at others. Have you looked into similar school districts to see what they have done to accommodate multiple high schools?

- *Have talked with Columbia Public Schools and learned a lot from them as to what difficulties they had when adjusting times. They shared that although it was uncomfortable, ultimately it was worth it.*
- *Important to take into consideration other districts with equivalent number of schools in addition to area that has to be covered by busing system. What other districts are there that are more comparable to JCMO and could that be researched more deeply.*
- *Columbia would be in the same activities conference along with Helias and both JCPS high schools.*

We need to reach out to colleges to see if they can help with childcare.

- *Need to work proactively to ensure more people are certified in child care to help with out of pocket costs in every way we possibly can.*

Did you consider having MS start at same time as elementary? What happens on early out days?

- *Having consistent start times would allow students from all schools to meet together more easily and may eliminate some needs for early out/PD days for staff.*

PROS & CONS DISCUSSION (Elementary Starting Earlier) - feedback from attendees

- *Most of the Y cares are booked so we are concerned on where they students can go and who will take care of them*
- *Will there be a variety of students pulled for the focus groups?*
 - *Focus group will be comprised of students from LCMS, TJMS, Simonsen and JCHS. Are hoping to talk with students who work after school, students who do not work after school, students who are in activities, diversity of income, ethnic, grade, etc. Looking for a true cross section of students. Optimistic that will allow us to get good, real-time feedback directly from the students.*
 - *Important to get feedback from single parent homes when the sibling is responsible to watch students before & after school.*
- *For high school students, when you participate in activities you will get home even later and you also have significantly more homework. So they will have to stay up late to get done (because they will not get up in the morning to do so).*
- *Families that don't spend money on day care now will have to start paying for it if elementary schools start earlier.*
- *Less family time for the younger students who have to go to school earlier, then will likely go into day care after school instead of spending time with parents (who will still be at work).*
- *Implementing a zero hour puts kids back into the morning traffic so that defeats the purpose of moving the start time backwards for secondary.*
- *Younger siblings attending later events/activities*
- *Could you provide a "homework hour" to allow students to work on homework after school.*
- *Family time may decrease in the evening with getting home later--*
- *Elementary students getting on the bus early is a safety concern.*
- *A student who previously attended Battle Elementary in CPS had to get on the bus at 6:40am, parents worked until 5:00 and did not get home until 5:30. Student was home alone for long periods of time and was tired from a long day at school (including bus time).*

- Socioeconomic status is an undeniable factor for many JCPS families. Studies don't always take into account the additional challenges for single-parent families or for parents who work multiple jobs.
- Would increase the extracurricular activities for middle school kids. Right now if students are done with activities before 5:00 parents can't come to pick them up, but if the activities went from 5-6 instead of 4-5 it might increase the number of students who could participate. Would also potentially increase club participation as well.
- Elementary starting earlier would be great for young kids who are tired by the end of the day as it is.
- Seems like there are trouble with buses, need to reduce amount of time on the bus. Important priority to address and help students be ready to learn.
- Important to think deeply about how this impacts families that don't have a lot of flexibility with their schedules and who will shoulder the costs of before/after school care.
- Would like to better understand how the financial impact is being considered.
- Parents report to First Student when there is an issue. Maybe having parents report issues to the school to make sure school is aware of the issues.
- District needs to be sure that we do a better job working with parents on busing issues; First Student does not always adequately address issues and would be nice if the district took a more active role.
- We cannot depend solely on Boys and Girls Club and the YMCA to provide before/after school care. We need to reach out to other programs to help.
- You cannot depend solely on Boys and Girls Club and Y care -- look for ways to find new partners.
- Quite a few bus issues -- we need to work on bus issues.
- We need to understand how this impacts families and our budgets, this passes costs onto our families--want to understand more about the child care options that will be available to families
- Parents report bus issues to first student -- maybe the district needs to be contacted instead.

PROS & CONS DISCUSSION (Secondary Starting Earlier) - *feedback from attendees*

- Most focused on the extra academic time that students on sports team would be missing to get to events & competitions.
- Less time in the evenings who work to do homework.
- Traffic issues with students driving to two locations
- NCC classes - lots of issues with traffic that would be a pro
- Secondary student does not mind starting a little later and getting some extra sleep, but moving the time forward for secondary would impact the amount of time for homework after school and how that fits into activities. If school runs later there won't be as much time for activities AND homework in the evenings.
- Currently students have time to do homework after school before evening practices this might not be in place if we have later dismissal times.
- Local church has historically run a bus ministry in the afternoons and staggered elementary dismissal times has allowed them to go from school to school. If all elementary schools dismiss at the same time it might impact the churches' ability to continue that service. Would be nice for churches to get that information sooner than later so they can plan accordingly. Is going to impact the services churches will be able to offer, but there is a willingness to work with the district and continue services if possible.
- Thank you for providing us with time to make necessary changes.

Summary

- Need to give consideration to how changing times would impact ability to provide breakfast and breakfast in the classroom.
- Need to continue to make efforts to work with and talk with local before/after school providers to ensure there will be opportunities for continued participation from as many families as possible.