



health, safety and equity in education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Teens in Hilliard, Ohio Deserve Sleep, Health, and Safety

Hilliard chapter of Start School Later launched

Hilliard, Ohio Feb 1, 2016

A new Ohio chapter of the national non-profit Start School Later, Inc has been launched in Hilliard.

"It's time for a change in Hilliard. For the sake of our children's health and safety, we need to get in line with the CDC and AAP's recommendations of starting school later for 6th, 7th & 8th graders. Surrounding districts start those grades much later," says Chapter Leader Leslie Drexel.

Drexel became involved in advocating for healthy school start times after seeing the changes in sleep cycle in her own children and the impact it was having on them. Because of a later shift in sleep cycle that occurs during puberty, early school start times directly interfere in adolescent sleep according to experts. Chronic sleep loss is associated with increased teen car crashes, sports injuries, diabetes, substance abuse, aggression, depression, suicide, and other health and behavioral concerns. Groups that have called for middle and high schools to start after 8:30 a.m. include the Centers for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association of School Nurses, the Society of Pediatric Nurses, and more.

The earliest bus pick up at Hilliard is currently 6:04 a.m.. A later start time could eliminate the need for pre-teens walking or biking to school or to bus stops in the dark. According to police records, 26 accidents in Hilliard have occurred between 6:20 a.m. and 7:50 a.m. at or near schools, or involving children on their way to school, since January of 2015. The school district is forming a task force to explore the issue. Hundreds of districts nationwide, including many in Ohio, have adopted healthier school start times. Local advocates believe that by working with Hilliard City Schools to examine multiple options, this public health issue can be successfully addressed.

To learn more about the topic or to get involved, community members can visit the chapter's Facebook page at "Start School Later Hilliard, OH" and sign a petition at www.tinyurl.com/SSLHilliardOH.

Start School Later is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to ensure school start times compatible with health, safety, education, and equity. Visit their website at: www.StartSchoolLater.net.

Local Contact: Leslie Drexel, Chapter Leader, Hilliard Start School Later Chapter Tel: 614-361-0722

National Contact: Stacy Simera, Communications Director, Start School Later, Inc

Email: stacy@startschoolater.net Tel: 330-389-9133

###