



health, safety and equity in education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

American Sleep Association Calls for Later School Start Times Feb. 8, 2016

The American Sleep Association (ASA) has released a position statement calling for healthier school start times and announcing a new partnership with the national non-profit Start School Later.

Citing research on the changes in sleep patterns during puberty, the ASA, a coalition of sleep physicians and scientists, stated: “The American Sleep Association position on school start times is that middle school and high school should not start before 08:00. A time closer to 09:00 or later would be preferable.” The statement ends with the announcement: “ASA is excited to partner with Start School Later which advocates for later school start times.”

The partnership was facilitated by Jenny Cooper Silberman, outreach director at Start School Later. Silberman expects that the new collaboration will increase awareness about the negative impacts of early school start times on teen sleep and will accelerate policy changes at local, state, and national levels.

“The momentum for healthy school hours continues to build,” said Silberman. “Many school districts across the country have already adopted healthier schedules. This partnership between Start School Later and the ASA will help more districts and legislators do the same for their own communities.”

The American Sleep Association is now one of many groups that have called for healthy school hours to protect child health, safety, and learning. In early 2014 the non-partisan Education Commission of the States issued a policy brief outlining the large body of evidence supporting later school start times. In September 2014 the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a position statement specifically calling for middle and high school start times after 8:30 a.m., which was echoed in a 2015 joint policy statement by the National Association of School Nurses and Society of Pediatric Nurses. Other groups to speak on the issue include the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Thoracic Society, the National Education Association, and the Centers for Disease Control.

Start School Later is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with 60 chapters in 21 states working to ensure school start times compatible with health, safety, education, and equity. Visit www.startschoollater.net for more information about the science of adolescent sleep and how to get involved.

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ASA Position Statement: <https://www.sleepassociation.org/blog-post/healthy-school-start-times/>