



Health, Safety and Equity in Education

Press Release

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Seattle Schools Task Force Recommends New Bell Times

After eight months of considering all aspects of schedule changes for city students, Seattle Public Schools' Bell Times Analysis Task Force has finalized recommendations. These recommendations will go to Superintendent Nyland and the school board. The group of 32 community members—including academic sleep experts, teachers, city and school transportation planners, public health and school nurse representatives, parents, and others—strongly recommended, by an ~85% majority vote, implementation of the “Modified Flip” option, which will shift middle and high school start times later (after 8:30 a.m.) and move elementary starts earlier (8:00 or 8:50 a.m., depending on the school). A summary of the recommendations is included.

Six members of Start School Later Seattle served on the task force. After more than three years of advocacy, SSL Seattle views the task force recommendations as a major step forward. Arrival at the recommendations required compromise as SPS has staunchly maintained that the optimal Two-Tier solution (8:00 starts for elementary students, and 8:50 a.m. starts for middle and high school students) would increase the transportation budget by \$11-15 million.

Superintendent Nyland will hold community meetings in the fall and the board vote is expected by November 2015.

Start School Later Seattle members are available to speak to the media regarding the bell time recommendations and the significance of what they will have, if implemented, for SPS students and families.

Martha M. Bosma, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Biology
marti.bosma@gmail.com

Dianne Casper
Seattle Council PTSA Secretary
glen_casper@hotmail.com

Catherine Darley, ND
Director, The Institute of Naturopathic
Sleep Medicine
drdarley@naturalsleepmedicine.net

Samara Hoag, MN RN
Seattle Public School Nurse
Seattle School Nurses Association
skhoag@gmail.com

Horacio de la Iglesia, Ph.D
Professor of Biology
horaciodelaiglesia@gmail.com

Cynthia Jatul, NBCT
Biology Teacher
Seattle Public Schools
jatul3563@msn.com

Maida Lynn Chen, MD
Associate Professor of Pediatrics | Division of
Pulmonary and Sleep Medicine
Director, Sleep Disorders Program
Seattle Children's Hospital | University of
Washington School of Medicine

206-987-2174 For PULMONARY/SLEEP
MEDICINE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

206-987-5072 For SLEEP DISORDERS
PROGRAM OFFICE

206-987-2639 FAX