



health, safety and equity in education

PRESS STATEMENT

by

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For Immediate Release
August 6, 2015

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Non-profit Start School Later Lauds CDC's Attention to Unhealthy School Start Times

The national non-profit Start School Later lauds the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) attention to unhealthy school start times, highlighted in today's [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#). We are delighted to see that the CDC is shedding light on this issue, which we consider a matter of public health that has been treated too long as a negotiable school budget item.

Health professionals have long considered sleep to be a public health issue given the links between chronic insufficient sleep and immune system dysfunction, more aggressive forms of cancer, diabetes, substance abuse, depression, car crashes, sports injuries, and more.

Experts have also long recognized early school start times as a primary contributor to adolescent sleep loss due to a later shift in sleep cycle and changes to the sleep drive that occur during puberty. In 2014 the American Academy of Pediatrics released a [position statement](#) calling for middle and high school start times after 8:30 a.m., followed by a similar [consensus statement](#) by the National Association of School Nurses and the Society of Pediatric Nurses.

Unfortunately, as noted by the CDC's report, more than 4 out of 5 middle and high schools in the US start their day before 8:30 a.m. Our greatest natural resource is our youth, and we encourage all superintendents, school board members, and state and federal lawmakers to act now to ensure school start times that protect child health, education, and safety.

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Start School Later is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to ensure school start times compatible with health, safety, education, and equity. Please visit our website at: <http://www.startschoolater.net>.