



Anne Arundel County Maryland Chapter
health, safety and equity in education

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ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD VOTES TO PURSUE OPTIONS FOR HEALTHY SCHOOL HOURS

By voting this week to add \$1.4 million to the existing \$600,000 appropriated to change bell times, the Anne Arundel County Public Schools Board of Education has demonstrated its commitment to the health and safety of its students. If approved by the County, this Fiscal Year 2017 budget will allow the school community to change school hours in the 2017-18 school year.

"Anne Arundel County has the earliest start times in the state," Board President Stacy Korbelak noted. "We've been talking about these unhealthy start times the entire time I've been on this board, and for many years before that.... As a parent who spent the last decade raising four high school students, I have seen firsthand how unhealthy a 7:17 a.m. start time is for teens."

The Board's commitment to exploring potential solutions, including those that may evolve from the use of the district's new transportation routing software, demonstrates the necessary leadership to end the county's two-decade long status as having the earliest high school start time in Maryland.

"When the Board submits its Fiscal Year 2017 budget to the county, we hope that County Executive Steve Schuh and members of the County Council — all of whom supported funding for later high school start times in the current year's budget — will continue to recognize the benefits of healthy and safe school hours for the entire community and honor the Board's request for the funding to make this happen by August 2017," said Start School Later Chapter Leader Lisa VanBuskirk.

VanBuskirk added that early school start times that require teens to awake one to two hours before sunrise and travel to bus stops in the dark is first and foremost a health and safety issue. "Start School Later is grateful to the Board of Education for its leadership," she said. "We are fully committed to working with the Board to attain the goal of meeting the recommendation from the American Academy of Pediatrics and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that the school day for our teens start no earlier 8:30 a.m."

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Start School Later Anne Arundel County is a chapter of Start School Later, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to ensure school start times compatible with health, safety, education, and equity. Please visit our website at startschoollater.net or startschoollater.net/md---anne-arundel-county.html.