



SCHOOL COMMITTEE

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Andover School Committee Votes to Change School Start Times
Changes will go into effect for the Next School Year

Andover, Mass. – The Andover School Committee voted to change start times at their June 17, 2021 School Committee meeting. New start times take effect when school begins in the fall for the 2021-22 school year.

The unanimous vote follows three years of study by the district and input from the community, including most recently a survey distributed to APS students, families, and staff with almost 1,700 responses and informal listening sessions for the community. Andover’s School Start Time initiative is based on the recommendation of many professional medical organizations that start times be delayed for adolescents in response to biological changes in sleep patterns and circadian rhythms during this stage of development. The guiding principle of district’s work has been to provide the opportunity for a positive impact on student well-being and enhancing physical and mental health.

“Throughout the pandemic, we heard from many students, staff and families, expressing concerns about student well-being and mental health,” notes Andover School Committee Chairperson Susan McCreedy. “We share in these concerns and today’s vote affirms our extensive efforts that puts the focus on students first in Andover Public School policies and operations.”

For the 2021-22 school year, start time for Andover High will remain at 8:15 a.m., middle schools will move 30 minutes later to the same 8:15 a.m. start, and elementary school times will shift 15 minutes later to begin at 9:00 a.m. These times were developed from extensive stakeholder feedback, and attempt to balance the benefits of later start times for middle and high school students with the goal of minimizing schedule impacts on elementary families.

“We are so appreciative of the efforts of all who worked so diligently on this initiative over the last three years; our students, families, faculty, staff, APS Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Sandra Trach, our former and current transportation coordinators Mary Lu Walsh and Cindy Button, our principals and administrators,” adds McCreedy. “We recognize that any deviation from what the schedule has been for many years in Andover will affect everyone, and believe that the science, balanced with the feedback over these last years, will bring benefits to our students’ learning and overall mental and physical health.”

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