1) Highlights from the Study performed in January:

a. Traffic control at the HS bus exit onto Farm Road in the afternoon and at Saxe. This is working well – while it’s not a game-changer, we’re learning that it saves a few minutes and eases the traffic for everyone once the busses are rolling.

b. If we add additional busses, where to put them remains a question, since the HS lot is at capacity. There is an option to park some additional buses in the back of Saxe, approximately six along the tree line separating the rear of the school from personal property and/or playing fields. We would need to relocate approximately 15-16 passenger cars presently parked along the tree line. Once consideration is converting the grassed island area in the rear of the middle school into a passenger car parking area.

c. There has been some preliminary conversation about a road from the back of the high school into Waveny to ease some congestion in the morning and afternoon at the high school. These conversations are preliminary.

d. If the elementary schools are on the first tier at or around 7:35, we would have to add a few busses b/c we couldn’t expect kids to walk to school in the dark.

e. The physical limitations at Saxe for embarkation of students in the afternoon is challenging, and creates a need for Saxe to be the third tier if it is to run on one schedule. As such, morning busses can drop and roll so they are staggered. In the afternoons, a first wave of busses would transport those students from Saxe who reside or are being transported to the north end of town. The second wave of dismissals would transport students to the south end of town. This would get students home at approximately the same time. This is a theory, however, subject to routing and where students live. It also required additional supervision for those students who are in the second wave, since they won’t be dismissed until approximately 10 minutes after school ends.

f. An alternative to the two waves at Saxe is a capital project to increase substantially the bus parking areas around the middle school. This could permit one wave of dismissals if large enough.

g. Late dismissal of the middle school will have an impact upon some parents and some after school activities such as religious instruction classes, little league, lessons, dance classes, etc. However, with time to prepare these classes/practices could be moved to the morning at times with transportation.
provided by parents, and perhaps in the future using high school busses and shuttling to the MS.

2) We've been doing quite a bit of work trying to develop scenarios that have the first wave beginning at 8:00 and the last wave beginning no later than 9:10.

   a. Without a significant investment of busses, this doesn’t work.

   b. We need 40-45 minutes between each tier

      i. It’s OK in the morning – you drop and roll

      ii. In the afternoon:

         1. HS busses take 8-10 minutes from the last bell to load and leave the lot

         2. There are 125 miles of roads in New Canaan

         3. Busses cannot transport students home and get to the next school

   c. Therefore, a scenario that has no school beginning before 8:00 requires either:

      i. A move to a two-tier system (what Newtown did) which will cost approximately $1.5 million/year

      ii. The third tier beginning at 9:25-9:30, and ending at 3:55 or 4:00.

   d. Wherever we place the first tier, without significant investment, expect 40-45 minutes between the second and third. Additional busses may shave two-four minutes, but really not much more because of the location of our schools in the south end and the 125 miles of roads.

3) High School teachers and students:

   a. There is a group of teachers at the high school interested in learning more about school start and end times. I met with them earlier, and they put together a quick questionnaire for students and teachers to gather some feedback. Primarily, the teachers put their commutes into Waze to ascertain the impact of a time change, and those data were gathered. The students were asked their opinions of a change. While these results do not come from a normed instrument, they do provide some information about how the current students are thinking. However, as you’ll see in our next steps, we’ll be surveying them again in the spring for more specific feedback.
4) Next steps:

   a. Continue reviewing and discussing scenarios understanding the constraints above

   b. Develop a survey for students, parents, staff members, and community members that includes some scenarios and costs for feedback. We are targeting May for the survey so that it comes after the presentation and provides feedback to the Board in June. Prior to administration, we’ll be bringing the questions to the Board for your discussion and feedback.

   c. June remains our target for guidance from the Board prior to the summer