

New Canaan Public Schools
 School Start Times Implementation Committee
 September 30, 2021, Hawes Plaza
 Minutes

Attendance: Dr. Bryan Luizzi, Mr. AJ Albano, Ms. Jodie Azzopardi, Ms. Dionna Carlson, Ms. Davie Cedela, Dr. Jill Correnty, Mr. Steve Bloom, Mr. Bill Egan, Mr. Jay Egan, Ms. Lauren Erickson, Mr. Bill Flynn, Mr. David Gusitsch, Ms. Jaclyn Hoey Zhou, Mr. Matt Kascak, Dr. Jo-Ann Keating, Ms. Lydia Kremer, Ms. Joanne Lavista, Ms. Geri Mohr, Ms. Katrina Parkhill, Ms. Darlene Pianka, Ms. Julie Passios, Ms. Jan Murphy, Ms. Penny Rashin, Ms. Janet Reed, Mr. Alan Sneath, Mr. Bill Tesbir, Mr. Roy Walder and Ms. Kris Woleck

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:21A.M.

II. Scope and Charge of the Committee

Dr. Bryan Luizzi, Superintendent of Schools addressed the committee about the purpose and scope of the group. The intent is this committee serves as a flexible workgroup to generate ideas, suggestions and consideration related to changing school start/end times and how it affects the school and community ecosystem. The group is an integral part of the change process and creating a smooth transition for the NCPS and great community. The group will report to the Board of Education.

III. Review of Information in Progress on School Start Time Initiative

Mr. Roy Walder, Transportation Coordinator provided an update on the progress of transition school start/end time with Dattco. The start/end time scenario that the Board of Education selected requires adding seven to eight buses to the current fleet. Eight buses were purchased and the buses should arrive by March. However due to ongoing supply chain issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic the buses may be delayed.

Mr. Walder noted that the NCPS bus fleet is fueled by propane. If the newly purchased buses do not arrive by March and the Board of Education would like to pursue a April start, Dattco has agreed to lend NCPS eight diesel fueled buses. Fueling for these diesel buses will be troubleshooted if the new buses do not arrive.

Dattco is in the process of hiring an additional ten high quality drivers for the buses. Connecticut is currently experiencing a bus driver shortage, however Mr. Walder noted that NCPS has an excellent retention rate with our bus drivers and is a highly desired employer due to the culture of the district. Mr. Walder shared that he is currently training ten drivers. The training process takes several months and requires a lengthy DMV process for a bus drivers license. Mr. Walder shared that all of the bus routes will change with the implementation of new start/end times, but once the new drivers are hired, they will begin to learn the current routes so they become familiar with town roads.

IV. Consideration of Implementation Timeline

Dr. Luizzi asked the committee to make a “T” chart for the pros and cons for April and September implementation dates individually. Members were then asked to pair up and share their lists to generate additional ideas and considerations. Finally each member reported out their findings with are listed below:

April Implementation	
Pro	Con
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Allows for a “Trial Run” to work out issues prior to the 22-23 School Year (x13) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May be hard for teachers and parents to find/adjust child care mid-year (x10)

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students would receive the health benefits sooner (x6) ● There would be more time for reflection for adjustments (x4) ● All staff is readily available for adjustment discussion and brainstorming (x2) ● The springtime is a nice time for change and there are daytime hours for activities to adjust (x4) ● Students are already in the groove for schools and well established (x2) ● Finally get going! (x3) ● Develop new habits to prior to the new School Year ● There are fewer early morning programs in the spring, it is easier to adjustment ● Students will feel supported as they already have relationship with current teacher ● “Angst” of change will end ● Earmarked funds ● Follow-through on the BOE on plan and transparency ● Three elementary schools on the same schedule sooner ● Elementary schools can have faculty meetings for staff can take place in the evening ● Students get more academics in the morning at elementary school level ● May lessen shared staff issues in the elementary school ● No need for early birds programs sooner ● The Nature Center can have one start time for their after school program with elementary students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Changes that need to have to happen in each school schedule. Kids and staff have to adjust (x2) ● Challenges with shifting activities and programming mid-year (i.e. sports, music, theater, before/after school programs) (x10) ● Programs-difficult to move to after school ● Less time for planning (x2) ● Uncertain how this will impact shared staffing between Saxe, East, West and South (x2) ● Not everyone comes back on monday. It would make the transition a longer time ● Uncertain what the winter would look like, could snow days affect the break/timing of implementation (x2) ● COVID remains uncertain for the remainder of the 21-22 school year (x3) ● Rescheduling NC swim teams will affect other swim teams (x2) ● Fear staff would have to leave since this affect their childcare plans ● Athletics, reduces tuft fields for youth activities and push them later and reduce the amount of time athletes can seek help with teachers ● Drivers have to unlearn and relearn routes ● Mid-year bus route changes may be challenging/bus driver readiness (x5) ● Not everyone returns to school on Monday...choppy implementation ● Impacts of state testing? ● Change confusion ● Hard to staff community programs (x4) ● Community programs will have to issue refunds for items/programs that families already purchased (x2)
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September Implementation	
Pro	Con
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New year/new start/New routine/“Back to school mode” (x9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Another year before the students get the benefits (x7)

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">● More time to plan for NCPS (x6)● Time for families and employees to plan for childcare (x4)● Students and families have the full summer for them to prepare for the new schedule (x3)● Better time for hiring staff for both NCPS and community centers.● Programs have more time to align with new s/e times (x3)● Shared schedule will be on the same scheduled● Majority of students start on the first day of school so everyone would be adjusting on the first day together.● Able to maintain the new patterns, stability for school this year.● More time to work on 9:15 start● Gives more time to community centers to adjust their schedules as a response● Staffing for community centers would be better since the staff would know the schedule for the year. Y would work better in september as most of them are HS students● Pricing for community centers would be smoother, they would not have to issue refunds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lose momentum of implementation (x3)● September is already a very busy time, adding another change can be challenging● Middle and High School students have to wake up earlier for two more months● No trial period● Less time for reflection and adjustment● Staff is not as available for adjustment discussions in the summer.● Surge of traffic in the fall.● New drivers● Subject to budget approvals by town again● May cause more anxiety for students since there is a bigger change added to the regular back to school anxiety● Less daylight
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V. Roundtable

Ms. Parkhill, Board of Education Chair and Dr. Luizzi thanked the attendees for their input and service to the NCPS community.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45.