



West Chester Area School District

OUR MISSION IS TO EDUCATE AND INSPIRE OUR STUDENTS
TO ACHIEVE THEIR PERSONAL BEST



School Start Time Task Force

March 9, 2020

Final Report to Education Committee

- **Student voices**
- **Process to complete the study**
- **Survey data**
- **Costs**
- **Recommendations**



*What are WCASD
students
saying about
high school
start times?*

West Chester Area School District high school students talked with Superintendent Dr. Jim Scanlon about the possibility of later start times.

What would you do if you got more sleep in the morning?

What are some areas we need to consider if we make this change?



Timeline

April 29, 2019 – Kick off meeting with community and staff

July and August – Committee meetings

September, 2019 – Sleep expert presentations to high school and community

October and November – Committees met

December 4 – Community Update

January 8, 2020 – 6:30 p.m. – Committees meet

February, 2020 – Administration prepares final report

March 9, 2020 – final report presented to Board Education Committee



Districts that have changed find teens *are* sleeping more



Teens get more sleep and more "overnight therapy" sleep



Absenteeism reduced by 25% and graduation rates go up



Standardized test scores in math and reading go up by 2 to 3 percentage points



Students and families are happier and less stressed



Car crash rates go down

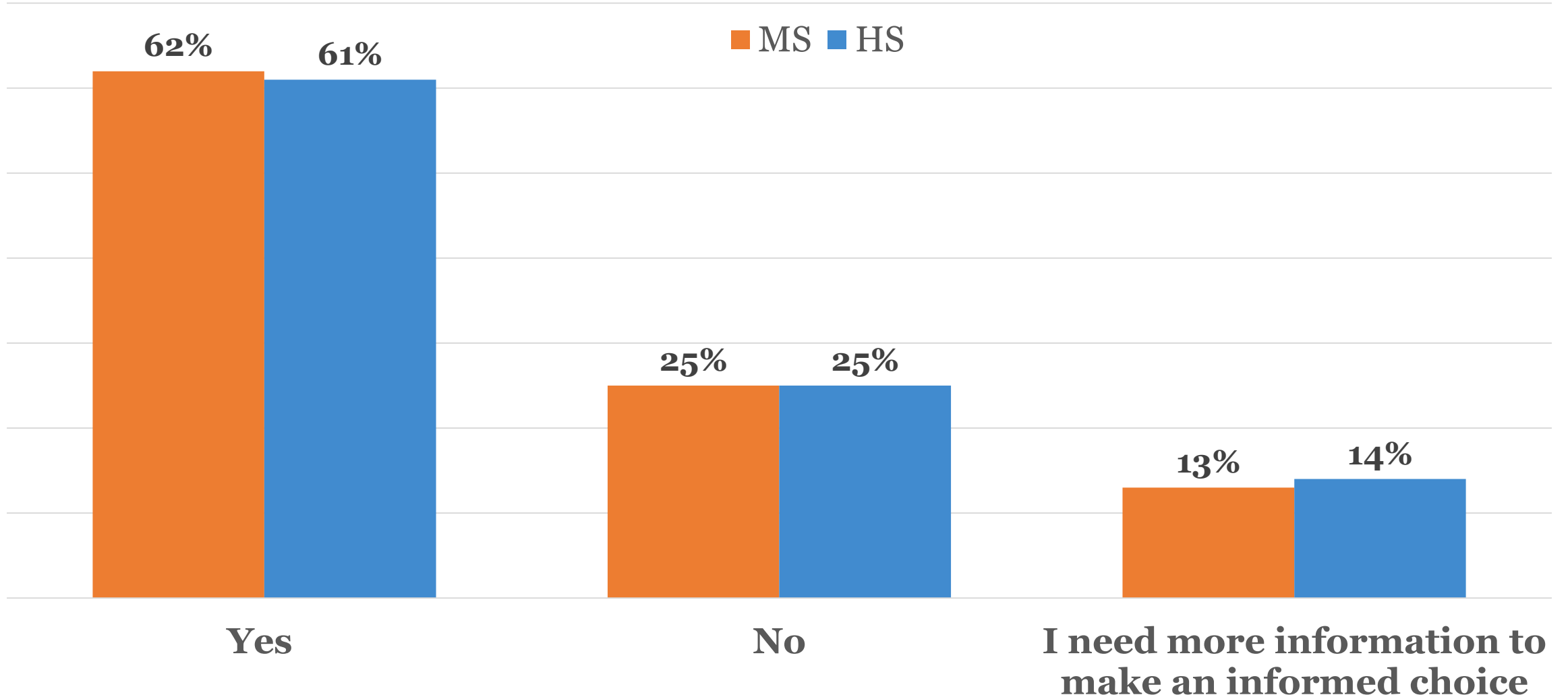


Potential economic benefits



Should the West Chester Area School District consider starting school later for secondary students?

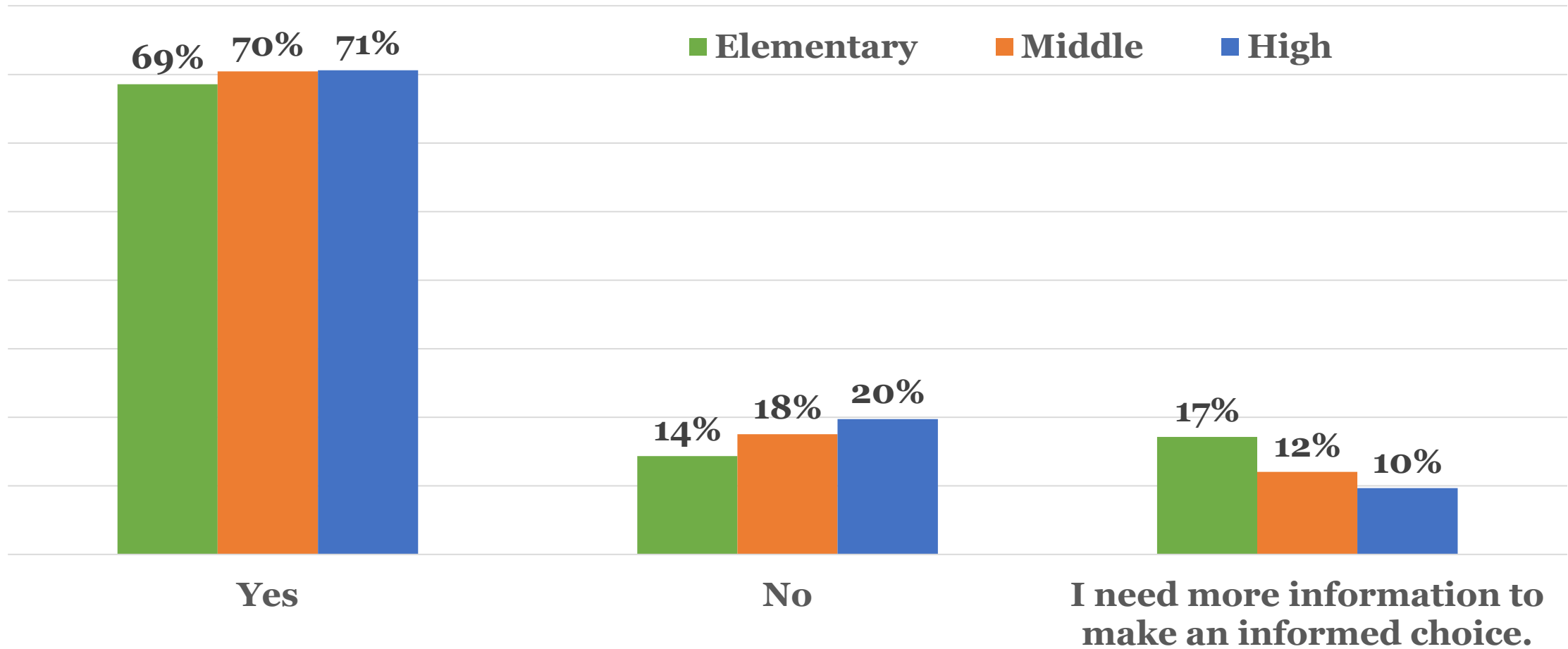
Student responses in April, 2019 (n= 2,287)





Should the West Chester Area School District consider starting school later for secondary students?

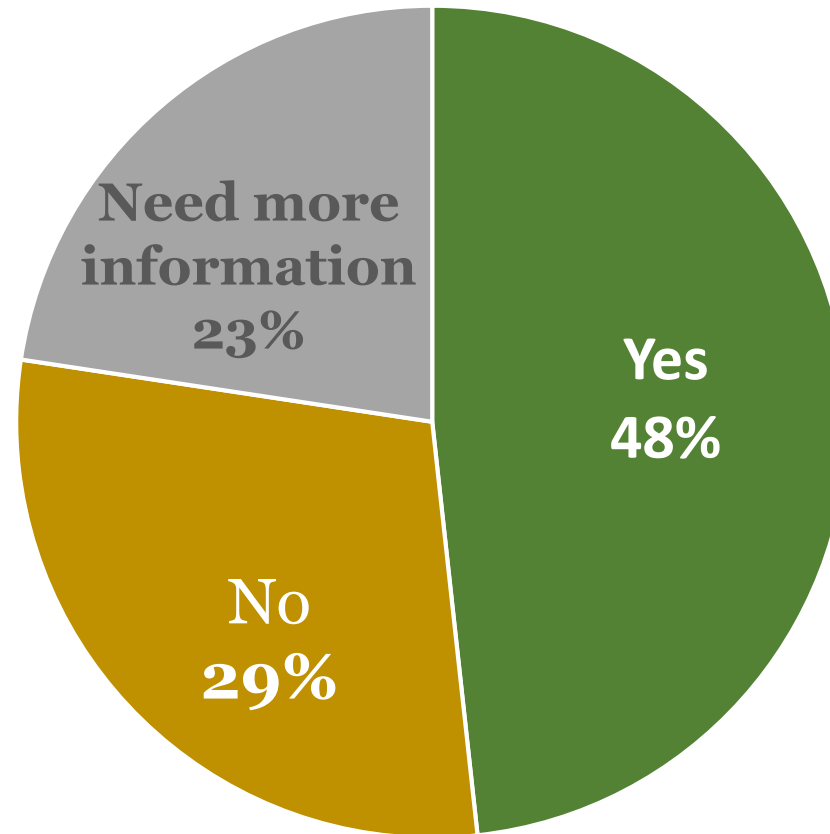
Parent responses in April, 2019 (n=2,515)





Should the WCASD consider starting school later for secondary students?

Staff responses in April 2019 (n=460)





Current Schedule

Schools	School Day
EHS, HHS, RHS, FMS	7:30 am – 2:15 pm
PMS, SMS	8:05 am – 2:50 pm
EBE, EGE, EXE, GAE	8:40 am – 3:10 pm
FHE, HDE, MCH, PWE, SWS, WTE	9:10 am – 3:40 pm



Possible options/scenarios

Option 1

Schools	School Day
SMS, PMS	8:05 am -2:50 pm
EHS, HHS, RHS, FMS	8:30 am – 3:15 pm
ALL ES	9:10 am -3:40 pm

Option 2

Schools	School Day
ALL HS/MS	8:15 am – 2:55 pm
EBE, EGE, EXE, GAE	8:40 am – 3:10 pm
FHE, HDE, MCH, PWE, SWS, WTE	9:10 am -3:40 pm

Option 3

Schools	School Day
ALL HS/MS	8:30 am – 3:15 pm
ALL ES	9:10 am -3:40 pm



Findings

Impact on Transportation

Option 1 – \$4,152,432 - 56 additional buses/drivers for regular education and 14 for special education. Also requires 2 additional special education aides.

- *Tax implication per average homeowner - \$99 (2.4%)*

Option 2 - \$4,521,000 – 61 additional buses/drivers for regular education and 14 for special education. Also requires 5 additional special education aides.

- *Tax implication per average homeowner - \$107 (2.6%)*

Option 3 - \$6,867,000 – 99 additional buses/drivers for regular education and 18 for special education. Also requires an additional 3 special education aides.

- *Tax implication per average homeowner - \$163 (3.8%)*



Other Possibilities

Option 4

Schools	School Day
ALL HS/MS	8:00 am -2:45 pm
EBE, EGE, EXE, GAE	8:40 am – 3:10 pm
FHE, HDE, MCH, PWE, SWE, WTE	9:10 am -3:40 pm

Option 5

Schools	School Day
SMS, PMS	7:30 am – 2:15 pm
FMS, EHS, HHS, RHS	8:05 am – 2:50 pm
EBE, EGE, EXE, GAE	8:40 am – 3:10 pm
FHE, HDE, MCH, PWE, SWS, WTE	9:10 am -3:40 pm



Findings

Impact on Transportation

When considering variations of certain options, we can reduce the cost for bus transportation:

- ***Option 4 (Variation of Option 2) – \$4,258,131** - 61 Additional Buses/Drivers for regular education and 11 for special education. Also requires 1 additional special education aide.
 - ***Reduces cost from Option 2 by \$263,000.***
 - Tax implication per average homeowner - \$101 (2.4%).
- ***Option 5 (Variation of Option 1) - \$3,277,554** – 44 additional busses/drivers for regular education and 12 for special education. Also requires 1 additional special education aide.
 - Maintains four tiers of school starting times.
 - ***Reduces cost from Option 1 by \$874,878.***
 - Tax implication per avg. homeowner - \$78 (1.7%).

**** The assumptions used to determine costs were based on current contract rates with bus carriers. Future considerations will need to be made with respect to re-negotiating contracts based on average daily use.***



Other Possibilities

Option 6

Schools	School Day
FMS, EHS, HHS, RHS	8:30 am -3:15 pm
SMS/PMS	7:45 am – 2:30 pm
EBE, EGE, EXE,GAE FHE, HDE, MCH,PWE, SWE,WTE	9:10 am -3:40 pm

Option 7

Schools	School Day
SMS, PMS	8:05 am – 2:50 pm
FMS, EHS, HHS, RHS	8:30 am – 3:15 pm
EBE, EGE, EXE, GAE FHE, HDE, MCH, PWE, SWS, WTE	7:45 am -2:30 pm



Findings

Impact on Transportation

Two options that were not part of the parameters but generated many questions during the process:

- **Option 6 (Start Middle School at 7:45 a.m.) – \$2,675,099**
 - Tax implication per average homeowner - \$64 (1.6%).
- **Option 7 (Start Elementary School at 7:45 a.m.) - \$2,527,072**
 - Tax implication per avg. homeowner - \$60 (1.5%).

**** These are not recommended since they are beyond the scope of the parameters established for the committee.***



Findings

Impact on Transportation

- **Sample bus runs during new times found routes to be one to seven minutes longer.**
- **Facility Use rental would not be impacted with change in ending school times.**
- **Transportation contracts may need to be revised to attract additional drivers.**
- **Cost of adding bus runs is dramatic.**



Financial Implications

The cost of moving start times range from \$3.2 to \$6.5 million per year.

To raise the funds to pay for this, we would need to:

- Enact a one-time tax increase (1.7% to 3.8%) above the Act 1 Index, which would require a voter referendum.*
- Find additional revenue.*
- Reduce programs.*



Possible ways to raise the money

1. Go to voter referendum to ask voters to approve a 2.4% tax increase. (\$98 per homeowner) – *Would generate \$4.2 million.*
2. Work with legislators to increase transportation funding.
3. Work with legislators to change the requirement for transporting beyond our borders for non-public, non-special education students – *Would save approximately \$1.5 million.*



Reasonable ways to raise the money

1. Use savings from the WCASD Cyber diploma program to go towards transportation – *Would generate \$1 million.*
2. Begin a fund balance account and implement once we reach the necessary funds. *(note – It has taken three budget cycles to save \$4 million in a fund balance to open the new elementary school)*



Recommendations

The Start Time Task Force believes there is value in starting schools later, but recognizes fiscal realities of budget planning in the Pennsylvania Act 1 environment

- 1. Begin a fund balance account and implement once we reach the necessary funds of \$4.2 million.** This will provide necessary funding to start all secondary schools at 8:15, or two middle schools at 8:05 and four secondary schools at 8:30. It would also maintain the current elementary starting times of 8:40 a.m. or 9:10 a.m.
- 2. Seek a voter referendum** for the necessary funding
- 3. Commission another group** to study the ramifications of starting elementary school at 7:45 a.m.