



health, safety and equity in education

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More Teens Going Back to School at Healthy Hours: Schools in at least 22 states to delay bell times this year

School districts in at least 22 states plan to delay morning bells this year according to the national non-profit Start School Later (SSL). Topping the list are 5 districts in Ohio, 5 in Pennsylvania, and 4 in Massachusetts and Colorado.

“Every year, we see more districts moving bell times back to more reasonable hours in response to the research,” observes SSL’s Executive Director Terra Ziporyn Snider, PhD. “Health professionals have been telling us for years that teenagers cannot get healthy sleep when they have to wake at 5 or 6 a.m. for class. It’s gratifying to see so many communities prioritizing student health and safety by turning these recommendations into school policy.”

The many organizations calling for later start times include the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and (with endorsement by both the National Education Association and National PTA) the Society for Behavioral Medicine. All of these groups recommend that middle and high schools start class no earlier than 8:30 a.m. While not every district delaying bell times this year meets this goal, notes Snider, all are moving to schedules that are healthier and safer for many more students.

Districts announcing plans to start school later for the 2019/2020 school year include, by state:

California: Francis Parker, San Diego USD, Vallejo City

Colorado: Boulder Valley, Coronado, Fort Collins
(Poudre School District), Mesa County Valley

Connecticut: Rocky Hill

Delaware: Christina School District

Florida: Pinellas County, Volusia County

Georgia: Jefferson County

Illinois: Woodland District 50

Indiana: Concord, Noblesville, Westfield
Washington

Massachusetts: Belmont, Mashpee, Scituate,
Wayland

Minnesota: Brooklyn Center School District, St.
Paul, Westonka

Mississippi: Oxford School District

Missouri: Affton School District

New York: Katonah-Lewisboro, Webster Central

Ohio: Ashtabula, Brecksville-Broadville Heights City
Schools, Cincinnati, Mason City, North Ridgefield

Oklahoma: Bixby Public Schools

Oregon: Bend, Centennial School District

Pennsylvania: Phoenixville, Pines-Richland, Radnor, South
Middletown, Tredyffrin/Easttown

Rhode Island: Barrington

Tennessee: Wilson County

Texas: San Angelo ISD

Washington: Anacortes, Tacoma, Walla Walla

Wisconsin: Big Foot, Madison

While no private or government group officially tracks U.S. school start times, SSL regularly watches progress toward healthier school-day start times and provides support to communities making these changes. To learn more about the research and success stories, visit SSL’s website at www.startschoollater.net.

National Contact: Stacy Simera, Communications Director

Email: stacy@startschoollater.net

Tel: 330-389-9133

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Start School Later® is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working to ensure school hours compatible with healthy, safety, and equity.

Healthy Hours is the research and education arm of Start School Later, Inc.

Start School Later, Inc. • P.O. Box 6105 • Annapolis, MD 21401 • www.startschoollater.net