



Franklin Public Schools

*Office of the Superintendent
355 East Central Street; Suite 3
Franklin, Massachusetts 02038
Phone: 508-553-4819*

To: Franklin School Committee
From: Sara E. Ahern, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools
Re: School Start Times Discussion 4/23/19
Date: April 17, 2019

I shared the following thoughts with the School Committee at the April 9, 2019 meeting regarding the proposal to adjust school start times. I look forward to continued discussion on April 23, 2019 at the regularly scheduled School Committee meeting.

I think it is important and valuable that Franklin, like many communities in Massachusetts, is investigating adjusting start times. We know that adolescent sleep schedules shift as a result of biology but our school start times do not coincide, leaving students less ready to engage in their studies as well as at greater risk for injury, mental health concerns, and other harmful effects. Change of this nature is complex and the School Start Times Advisory Committee did a phenomenal job in studying the prospect of change here in Franklin.

I proposed that the School Committee authorize me to begin what I would call phase 2, with the work of SSTAC representing phase 1.

As part of phase 2, I would seek to take the following actions:

- Review scenarios, including proposed new ideas generated from the community, for the Committee's consideration
- Host a second family education night for students AND parents/guardians to address healthy sleep and student wellness, being sure to address questions about sleep and elementary students
- Solicit additional feedback from focus groups of families, students, coaches/advisors, and faculty and engage specific groups in problem solving around challenges that have emerged
- Solicit feedback related to Lifelong Learning and Solutions to be better able to quantify the potential implications on morning and afternoon childcare from a data-supported basis
- Articulate and refine metrics of success with the administrative team
- Identify interim measures that might be more easily implemented to mitigate and address sleep in the meantime

I will commit to provide the School Committee and community with regular and predictable updates. I suggest that I return to the School Committee meeting on May 21, 2019 with the first update on the various scenarios which have been considered.