

# RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

70 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** May 22, 2017

**TO:** Members of the Board of Education

**FROM:** Board of Education Strategic Planning Committee

**RE:** BOE Strategic Planning Committee Report on RPS School Start Times

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### OVERVIEW

The Ridgefield Board of Education reviewed select literature related to school start times and adolescent health in January 2016. Click link to view selected research: <http://bit.ly/sst-memo>.

The Strategic Planning Committee of the Board has led focus groups for students, parents, teachers and administrators in the district seeking to ascertain stakeholder perceptions, attitudes, and concerns related to a possible change in school start times in the district. The data review and partial analysis of the Focus Group data was presented to the Board on May 8, 2017. Overall wellness emerged as a theme, with participants expressing concern about stress and pressure as part of the student experience. Other key elements that emerged were: traffic safety, cost of transportation, elementary school start times, and the importance of a student's experience beyond the school day, including homework, clubs and activities, and healthy experiences that take place after school.

### HIGH - LEVEL PROJECT TIMELINE

PROJECT TASK	TIMELINE
Transportation Map Calibration and Elementary Route Optimization	May 2017
SST Website presence on RPS site	May 2017
School Start Time Steering Committee Developed *	Early June 2017 (first meeting 3rd week of June)

Secure Transportation Logistics Firm	June - August 2017
Policy Committee Revisions 6154 Homework 6142 Wellness 6146 Grading and Reporting 3541 Transportation	Ongoing
Develop Transportation Parameters & Cost Impact	June - September 2017
Develop RFP for Transportation Services RFP finalized and sent out RFP responses due	August - October 2017
Community Education Campaign Development and Implementation	June - September 2017
BOE and Superintendent attend BOF meeting and discuss potential impact changing start times (to include BOS)	September-October 2017 BOF mtg
Survey Design	June - September 2017
Survey Launch/Analysis & Communication of Results	October 2017
Board Implementation Decision	October- November 2017
Impact Analysis and Remediation (athletics, after school programming, day-care, etc.)	November 2017- June 2018

**\* School Start Time Steering Committee Broad Responsibilities**

- Outcomes research: Define desired results and identify and set up measures to understand before change and after -i.e. tardiness, extracurricular participation, early dismissals, feedback from school psychologists... (need to start measuring when school opens in August so that the results can be compared month to month/ season to season...)
- Outreach to community groups (over the summer): B&GC, youth athletic boards, (field use), police, Chamber of Commerce to further understand implications for them

- Outreach to other districts that have made the change or considering it - within our DRG and geographic area (not just administrators, but also parents, community members, athletic directors, BOE...)
- Transportation liaison
- Review viable bus time options with transportation group and identify implications for each. (Consider communicating nonviable options as NONVIABLE to illustrate options that have been considered but are not feasible in Ridgefield.)
- Review and provide input to Consultant on survey development, execution, compilation and reporting
- Community education, and marketing/PR throughout the 2017-18 year

### **RESOURCE ALLOCATION**

Project Management and Facilitation - EdAdvance Proposal (included)

Transportation Logistics Company Greenwich used School Bus Consultants (Tom Platt)

[http://www.transpargroup.com/school\\_bus\\_consultants](http://www.transpargroup.com/school_bus_consultants)

### **PROJECT DELIVERABLES**

Transportation and Changed Bell Times

- Stakeholder survey
- Research outcomes study framework
- Stakeholder/Community communication/ marketing pieces - education, and then implementation FAQs

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Strategic Planning Committee of the Ridgefield Board of Education recommends the following actions:

1. The Board of Education charges the Superintendent to create a School Start Time Steering Committee to research the possibilities of changing school schedules based on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and American Academy of Pediatrics research; The School Start Time Committee will be facilitated by the Superintendent in collaboration with the Project Management Consultant. The School Start Time Committee should include members of the district staff (selected by the Superintendent), representatives from the

Board of Education Strategic Planning Committee, (assigned by the Board Chair), and representatives from the community (appointed by the BOE Chair and Superintendent).

2. The Board of Education enter into a contract with EdAdvance for SST Project Management and Facilitation and a Project Timeline and deliverables are discussed, reviewed and approved by the Board of Education in June 2017;
3. The Board of Education receive a monthly report of the SST Project;
4. The Board of Education discuss, review and evaluate survey results, forum feedback, Steering Committee recommendations, transportation schedules, and financial impact, and make a decision relative to implementation of revised school start times for the 2018-19 school year by early November 2017.



*Technical Assistance Proposal  
Managing the Start Time Transition Planning  
For the Ridgefield Public Schools*

**Overview**

The Ridgefield Board of Education discussed and reviewed select literature related to school start times and adolescent health in January 2016. The Strategic Planning Committee of the Board has led focus groups for students, parents, teachers and administrators in the district seeking to ascertain stakeholder perceptions, attitudes, and concerns related to a possible change in school start times in the district.

The data review and partial analysis of the Focus Group data was presented to the Board on April 24, 2017. Overall wellness emerged as a theme, with participants expressing concern about stress and pressure as part of the student experience. Other key elements/concerns that emerged as important considerations as the district moves forward are: a. traffic safety, b. cost of transportation, c. impact on elementary school start times, d. high school logistics with after school activities and athletics.

The following is a project management proposal designed to follow the Board's timeline and critical benchmarks for success as it plans to make the transition to a new, more aligned school start time schedule.

**HIGH - LEVEL PROJECT TIMELINE**

PROJECT TASK	TIMELINE
1. Approve timeline and project management outline.	June, 2017
2. Form Representative Steering Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Review charge (decide on and manage the implementation of a recommendation for revised school start time schedule in Ridgefield)</li> <li>· Create meeting schedule</li> <li>· Create communications and engagement sub-committee</li> <li>○ Ensure transparency and open communication</li> <li>○ Web presence and distribution strategies</li> <li>○ Plan for and prepare a monthly report to the full Board of Education on planning and process progress</li> <li>· Create purpose statement and decision making criteria –</li> <li>○ Improve conditions of learning</li> <li>○ Improve quality of life</li> <li>○ Improve achievement</li> <li>○ Align structures of learning with best practice research</li> <li>○ Minimize disruption of community structures and practices</li> <li>○ Minimize Cost of transition and transportation</li> </ul>	June, 2017
3. Secure Transportation Logistics and Planning Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Transportation parameters and cost impact explorations</li> <li>· Request specific scenario cost projections (see step 5)</li> </ul>	June, 2017
4. Existing research and focus group review and synthesis and complete data collection/ research gathering. Include Center for Disease Control and Prevention and American Academy of Pediatrics research; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· What does it say?</li> <li>· Benefits/drawbacks</li> <li>· Recommendations</li> </ul>	June/July, 2017

<p>5. Develop four options for consideration with focus on decision making criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Status quo</li> <li>· Change option one</li> <li>· Change option two</li> <li>· Change option three</li> </ul>	<p>August/September, 2017</p>
<p>6. MD (s) to present research/rationale/findings and options to community – Sept. 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Four options survey development with criteria and options</li> </ul>	<p>September, 2017</p>
<p>7. Analyze findings and make final recommendations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Sub Committee discusses and votes on final recommendation to BOE</li> </ul>	<p>October, 2017</p>
<p>8. Board of Education considers the subcommittee’s work and makes final decision on the structure and timeline of recommendation.</p>	<p>November, 2017</p>
<p>9. Sub Committee Creates Decision Implementation Management (if needed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Create a transition/communications plan</li> <li>· Assist with transportation logistics</li> <li>· Lay out the steps and process for a successful transition</li> </ul>	<p>November, 2017</p>

**ITEMIZED BUDGET**

The identified costs represent the fees due for planning support, electronic resources access, planning materials, and technical assistance support for the duration of this process. Costs are figured based on a full day cost of \$1,200 and a half-day cost of \$800. They do not represent the cost of food, facilities or other meeting incidentals or the cost of additional external experts or professional services. The rates will not change for the duration of the proposal but total costs may be impacted if the work expands beyond the parameters of the provided plan.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST
<b>Commitment &amp; Support</b>	Fee for securing dates, planning process design and electronic resource support.	<b>\$1,500</b>
<b>In-Person Facilitation</b>	Planning, facilitation and support for Representative Steering Committee (for up to 8 in-person meetings of up to four hours each).	<b>\$6,400</b>
<b>Research and Survey Development/Support</b>	Planning, facilitation and support for the collection and analysis of research based on the key issues related to this topic as well as the development of a community-wide survey to explore preferences on proposed solutions (for up to 5 days of technical assistance)	<b>\$6,000</b>
<b>Additional Support</b>	Tactical and practical support based on needs of the process (for up to three days of communications, transportation, and strategic support)	<b>\$3,600</b>
<b>Total Proposal Costs – Not to exceed (unless there is an alteration to this plan)</b>		<b>\$17,500</b>