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2nd Hour

### **Later School Start Times**

Waking up every morning at six o'clock in the morning in order to get ready for school can get very tedious. For me this is always difficult and I often find myself falling into a deep sleep mid-way through Chemistry. The life of a typical high school student is usually spent at school, during extra curricular activities and also socializing with friends. Some argue that school start times should not be changed, but there is significant evidence that supports why they should be later. The United States must make an effort to make school start times later in order for students to become more aware and improve academics significantly.

One benefit of later school start times is students become more engaged in class and learning when they get a full night of sleep. According to Start School Later, Inc, early school hours prevent adolescents and teachers from getting the 8.5-9.25 hours of sleep per night that young adults need (about 2/3 of students get less than 7 hours of sleep). Later school start times would improve many aspects of an adolescent's lifestyle. Some of these include improved alertness, memory, attention, and processing skills. These are all very important in order for students to gain academic success. Academic performance and attendance improved as well as tardiness rates declined with school start times later than 8:35am. School start times must be later because many kids have extra curricular activities and around 3 hours of home each night. Later times would allow kids to get homework done and prepared for the next day. Kids who get at

least 8 hours of sleep every night have a higher rate of graduation and academic success further down the road, compared to kids that experience problems with sleep. Overall later school start times would lead to improved academic success.

Furthermore, adolescents are more at risk for getting sleep deprivation which can lead to many serious consequences. Some of these consequences include; depression, obesity, stress and increased risk of injury. These are all reasons school start times should be later because it would improve all of these consequences. A student who is sleep deprived is more likely to fall asleep in class and unable to maximize their learning opportunities. Sleep deprivation impacts a student's ability to problem solve, pay attention, and cope with stress. Also the amount of obesity in America could also be significantly impacted. According to Nurses' Health Study, women who slept less than 5 hours per night had a 15 percent higher chance of being obese compared to women who sleep at least 7 hours. Pushing back school start times would improve obesity in America and also improve many other consequences of sleep deprivation.

On the other hand, many say that school start times should remain the same. One reason they should remain the same is for transportation reasons. Later times would mean school bus drivers have a longer day. There are also problems with traffic and parents have a harder time getting to work on time. Also many parents have to be at work and cannot get their kids to school any later because their work also starts early. Many kids also have after school activities and cannot go to them any later then they are scheduled. Lastly, later school start times would make the school day longer and wouldn't give students a sufficient amount of time to do homework. Overall school start times should remain at the same traditional times.

All things considered, school districts need to push towards later school start times because they will lead to improved awareness and academic success. Later start times would also make America greater by improving, obesity rates, graduation rates and many other important aspects of an adolescent's life. We need these later school start times in order for more people to be successful.

**Citations:** "What's the Big Deal?" *Start School Later*. Web. 10 Apr. 2016.

<<http://www.startschoollater.net/whats-the-big-deal.html>>Backgrounder; Later School Start Times., N. P., n. D, Web. 27 Mar. 2016.

<<http://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-helos/backgrounder-later-school-start-times>>.