

**Implementing Healthy School Hours to Prioritize Student Well-Being:  
A Panel Discussion with Districts who are Champions for Change**

**Q+A**

- 1. Can you please clarify the start and end time for your districts? How much time was shifted or truncated? Thank you.**

**Chatham Old Times**

Grades K-3 = 8:35 - 3:05

Grades 4-5 = 8:40 - 3:10

Grades 6-8 = 7:55 - 2:30

Grades 9-12 = 7:40 - 2:35

**Chatham New Times**

8:55 - 3:25

9:00 - 3:30

7:55 - 2:30

8:20 - 3:00

Princeton pushed the start and end time of the high school only back by 30 minutes. Originally 7:50-2:51; changed to 8:20-3:21

**Radnor Old Times**

K-5 = 9:00 - 3:30

6-8 = 8:00 - 3:00

9-12 = 7:35 - 2:27

**Radnor New Times**

9:07 - 3:40

7:50 - 2:40

8:30 - 3:10

- 2. Can you tell us what start time you found and what you changed it to? Also, how about your middle schools? Thank you for being such strong advocates for the children!**

For Chatham, see above. The goal was to move the high school as close to 8:30 as possible. Surveys conducted over a number of years showed that our high schoolers were sleeping the least and most of our middle schoolers were sleeping a sufficient amount. Therefore, the priority was changing the high school time. In a perfect world, we would also start the middle school later, but that was not possible given transportation constraints.

For Radnor, very similar experience as Chatham. We didn't like that we had to start Middle School ten minutes earlier at 7:50. However, a full hour change at the high school outweighed the ten minute change at the middle school. The search for perfection can't stop the implementation of good improvements!

- 3. Can you please share concrete data on improved grades/outcomes, attendance etc**

Chatham: We will be gathering this kind of data this year, though given our current level of academic performance, I do not anticipate a change in grades/outcomes. Our greater concern is the mental health and wellbeing of students.

Princeton's data (surveys & attendance) showed that there were fewer tardies to school after shifting the start time, and students reported 30 minutes more sleep.

Radnor is one of the top school districts in PA. We never anticipated or thought we would see an improvement in scores since we were already ranked so highly. However, parents and students reported more sleep and healthier lifestyles with the change in start times. Our athletes reported better performances and credited the extra sleep. Over the last two years, Niche has ranked Radnor as the top school district in PA. Part of Niche ranking is based on parent and student surveys. Our parents and students are overwhelmingly supportive of the change we made.

**4. What was the change in cost for transportation when later start time was implemented?**

Chatham: \$0 because we maintained the same tiers of bus routes.

Princeton: It cost our sending district money, but did not affect the cost of our own busing as we combined middle and high school routes.

Radnor: We need one additional bus driver.

**5. Were any of the golf, tennis, baseball games, etc. moved to Saturday as an option for home games etc.? It may actually be less stress and afford more parents the opportunity to attend.**

Chatham: We did not make any changes to our athletic schedules. Most of our teams already compete on Saturdays.

Princeton: No changes to sports schedules. Students were released early for county and state games, but that also occurred before the start time change.

Radnor: We asked other schools to start games a half hour later. Some worked with us and others didn't. We also scheduled our athletes in a gym class during the last period of the day.

**6. With the prevalence of fitness trackers, can some of the conditioning part of sports practices be done independently and the student athletes could show the coach for example how much running they have done on their own and therefore shorten practice time?**

Chatham: We have not yet explored this. We have only lived through the fall season with the later start time, and so far we have not fielded any concern related to this from our coaching staff. Prior to making this change, our chief concern was how much daylight

would be available to winter track athletes. While they compete indoors, they practice outdoors and we do not have any lights at our facilities. We will navigate this in the coming months.

Radnor: We didn't do this, but it is an interesting idea. We did have discussions about the appropriate length of practice for high school sports. High School athletics are just one part of a student's day.

**7. For the teacher contracts, the districts represented here did not need sidebar or renegotiations on the calendar/start of the school year?**

Chatham: We did not need to alter or create a sidebar for our contracts.

Princeton: Start times were not in contracts so no need for negotiations or sidebars.

Randor: We didn't need to change anything in our contract.

**8. Did any of you have to ADD staff to implement later start?**

Chatham: No.

Princeton: No

Radnor: One bus driver and some additional support with traffic flow for the first few months of the change.