



SENATE BILL 149

SMART START

"An Act relating to the start time of a day in session for public high schools."

WHAT SB 149 DOES

- Changes the start time for high schools in Alaska so that the school day begins at 8:30 a.m. or later.
- A later start time would help address adolescent sleep deprivation and is aimed to improve classroom results.

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION

- Negative impacts on health, behavior, and safety of adolescents.
- Sleep-deprived teenagers are not adequately prepared for the demands of the school day.

NATIONAL SLEEP FOUNDATION

- The biological sleep patterns of adolescents result in a late-to-bed, late-to-rise cycle.
- In adolescence, the brain chemical melatonin is secreted from 11 p.m. until 8 a.m.
- Early school start times interrupt the natural sleep pattern of teenagers.

“THE SCIENCE OF ADOLESCENT SLEEP” (2017)

- Perri Klass, M.D.
- Teen drivers become a significant hazard to themselves and others when driving while drowsy.
- “Sleeping less than four hours puts you at the same risk as driving with double the legal alcohol limit”

THE SCHOOL START TIME STUDY

- Two Minneapolis-area districts changed their high school start times from 7:20 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. in one district and from 7:20 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. in another. The study discovered many positive benefits:
- Improved attendance and enrollment rates
- Less sleeping in class
- Less student-reported depression
- Fewer student visits to school counselors for behavior and peer issues
- More even temperament at home

THE SCHOOL START TIME STUDY

- Additional findings:
- A follow-up study five years later revealed that the positive benefits continued to persist over time.
- After the later start time was implemented, students continued to go to bed at the same time.
- The later start time did not affect enrollment in after-school sports and activities or increase transportation costs.

SETTING STUDENTS UP FOR SUCCESS

- The Oxford Handbook of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Sleep and Behavior:
- “High school students tend to perform better in courses that meet later in the day and perform better on cognitive tests when they are given in the afternoon.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

- The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends that teenagers aged 13 to 18 years should regularly sleep 8 to 10 hours per day for good health. Adolescents who do not get enough sleep are more likely to
 - Be overweight.
 - Not engage in daily physical activity.
 - Suffer from symptoms of depression.
 - Engage in unhealthy risk behaviors such as drinking, smoking tobacco, and using illicit drugs.
 - Perform poorly in school.

LATER SCHOOL START TIMES IN JUNEAU

- Juneau-Douglas High School: 9:15 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.
- Thunder Mountain High School: 9:15 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.
- Yaakoosgé Daakahídi High School: 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT SURVEY

- Fairbanks Daily News Miner:
- “65 percent of respondents indicated they would be ‘supportive’ or ‘very supportive’ of changing start times.”

PAST PROPOSALS TO IMPLEMENT LATER START TIMES

- A 2018 KTUU article discusses the Anchorage School Board's consideration of a proposal to change school start times. The proposal consisted of changing:
 - High school start times to 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
 - Elementary schools to 8:45 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.
 - Middle schools to 9:30 a.m. - 4 pm.
- “ASD said later start times would improve performance, attendance and graduation rates for middle and high school students.”

QUESTIONS?

- Please email your comments to Senate.Education@akleg.gov