

Norwood Public Schools

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Norwood Public Schools to Implement New School Start Times Districtwide in Fall of 2022

NORWOOD -- Superintendent David Thomson announces that the Norwood School Committee voted to approve new start times for the district's eight schools during the Feb. 9 school committee meeting, with the changes to be implemented at the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

The work to begin the process of adjusting school start times began in February 2017 under the recommendation of Superintendent Jim Hayden and with unanimous approval from the School Committee to create a subcommittee for research on start times. From May 2017-June 2018, the subcommittee conducted research, forums and surveys to help inform the process.

Currently, Willett Kindergarten starts at 9 a.m., Norwood elementary schools start at 8:40 a.m., Coakley Middle School starts at 7:25 a.m. and Norwood High School starts at 7:40 a.m.

It is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) that middle and high schools start school at 8:30 a.m. or later. Work on the start time shifts began for the Norwood Public Schools with this objective in mind and with the goal of not shifting elementary school start times by more than one hour.

In June 2018, the school committee unanimously agreed to continue the work and directed the creation of a comprehensive task force. The task force's work was paused during the pandemic, resuming in the fall of 2020.

There were many factors considered throughout the process, including bussing requirements and timing, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Time on Learning requirements, the district budget and more.

Initial start times were approved in March 2021 and it was noted that the accompanying end times could shift by 5-10 minutes based on ongoing analysis of bell schedules and transportation. The school committee also approved the implementation of the new start times for September 2022 to give staff members and the community time to prepare for the changes.

September 2022 Approved Start Times

The new start times, beginning in September 2022, were finalized by the task force and received a vote of approval from the school committee Wednesday.

The new start times for students will be as follows:

- Elementary schools: start time of 7:50 a.m., dismissal time of 2:05 p.m.
- Willett School: start time of 8:10 a.m., dismissal time of 1:40 p.m.
- High School: start time of 8:15 a.m., dismissal time of 2:50 p.m.
- Coakley Middle School: start time of 8:45 a.m., dismissal time of 3:20 p.m.

There are no changes to the Little Mustangs Preschool Academy schedule.

With these changes, no student in the district will be at the bus stop as early and no

student or staff member will be required to be in any school building as early as is required with the current start times.

Extended Day Programs

For September 2022, the Extended Day programs will be offered at the five elementary schools for students grades K-5 from 7 a.m. to 7:35 a.m.

After-school Extended Day will be offered at all five elementary schools and the Willett school. A tiered system will be available, and families can register for either a 2:05-4 p.m. or 2:05-6 p.m. block for their students in grades 1-5, and a 1:45 p.m. to 4 p.m. or 1:45 p.m. to 6 p.m. block for their students in kindergarten.

There will be no fee increase for Extended Day in the 2022-2023 school year. The fee will remain \$7 per hour as previously approved by the school committee.

An expansion of the Extended Day program is being planned, and morning Extended Day is also expected to be offered at Coakley Middle School. Analysis of these changes and their exact hours of service is being conducted. Additional updates on Extended Day programs will be sent to families as they become available.

"This has been a comprehensive process that took into account many different factors as well as input received through forums and surveys. I would like to thank everyone who provided feedback throughout the process, as well as the task force and subcommittee for their diligent and thorough work," Superintendent Thomson said. "We believe that this change to start times is a positive step forward that is in line with recognized best practices, and we continue working to make additional opportunities available to parents to assist in the transition."

Additional information from the School Start Time Subcommittee, including past presentations, family surveys, FAQs and more can be found [here](#).

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A message from the Norwood Public Schools

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