

# School Start Times: Task Force Update and Recommendations



School Committee Meeting  
March 10, 2021

# Today's Agenda

- Introductions and Roles of the Task Force and SC
- Recommended School Start Times
- Elementary Parent Surveys
- Middle School Parent Surveys
- High School Parent Surveys
- Athletics
- Transportation Analysis
- SC Discussion and Vote

# Task Force Members

Dr. Hugh Galligan, HS Principal

Dr. Margo Fraczek, CMS Principal

Bryan Riley, Prescott Principal

Nancy Coppola, Cleveland Principal

Ryan Quigley, Grades 6-12 Wellness Chair

Catherine Connor-Moen, Fine Arts Director

Jonathan Longley, Athletics Director

Al Bishop, Transportation Director

Kristen Capezio, Extended Day Director

Eli Norris, Food Services Director

Paula Flanagan, Parent Representative

Jhostin Baez, Student Representative

Sigalle Reiss, Department of Health Director

Dr. David Thomson, Superintendent

Teresa Stewart, SC member

# Introduction

- The Task Force was charged with determining how school start times could be adjusted while remaining budget neutral for NPS.
- A number of budget neutral options that aim to meet the AAP and CDC recommendations were analyzed; and a recommendation is being made as to the optimal way to move forward, should the School Committee wish to make adjustments to district times.
- Since the last presentation to the Committee in January 2021, families have been surveyed again regarding changes to school start times and this feedback will be shared tonight.

# Tonight's Goals

- The work of the School Start Time Task Force has concluded.
- We've been able to answer the guiding question (can start times be adjusted in a budget neutral fashion that meets the AAP and CDC recommendations) and gauge the community's reaction to the findings.
- Tonight we'll share our findings but also "pass the baton" to the School Committee. As the policy makers, the SC will decide if start times will be adjusted and if so, when the change will take place.

# Task Force Recommendations for Norwood School Times

**Elementary school start time: 7:40-7:50/1:55 pm dismissal\***

**Willett School start time 8:00-8:10/ 1:30 pm dismissal\***

**High School start time 8:10-8:20/ 2:50 pm dismissal\***

**Coakley start time 8:40-8:50/ 3:20 pm dismissal \***

*Note: end times are approximate and may shift 5-10 minutes in either direction based on ongoing review of bell schedules and further transportation analysis.*

# District Wide Survey Results

- 1,366 \*\*entries district wide, K-12
- 666 elementary entries
  - 62.42% preferred fall 2022. 37.58% preferred fall 2021.
  - 22 did not answer this question.
- 312 middle school entries
  - 57.52% preferred fall 2021. 42.48% preferred fall 2022.
  - 6 did not answer this question.
- 388 high school entries
  - 61.05% preferred fall 2021. 38.95% preferred fall 2022.
  - 8 did not answer this question.
- District -wide, 1,330 entries to this question:
  - 49% preferred Fall 2021
  - 51% preferred Fall 2022

\*\* 1,366 entries, but we do not know if this is 1,366 individuals or if there are duplicates across levels, or even if the same individual took the same survey more than once.

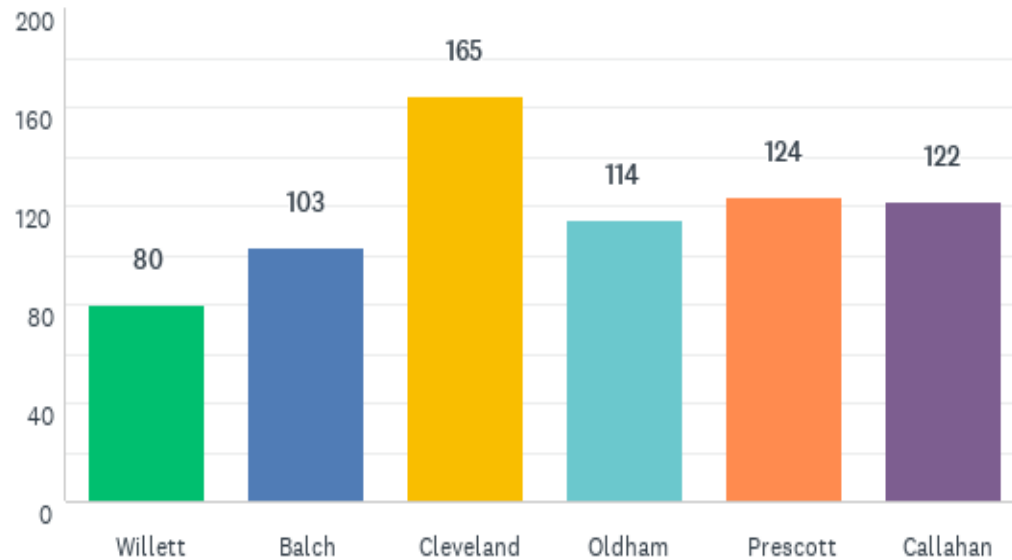
# Elementary Parents Survey Results

- 666 entries for children entering grades K-5 in Fall 2021
  - K- 79
  - 1- 172
  - 2- 161
  - 3- 151
  - 4- 150
  - 5- 146
- This represents 859 elementary-aged children
- 137 will also will have children at CMS in fall 2021, and 55 will have children at the HS in fall 2021



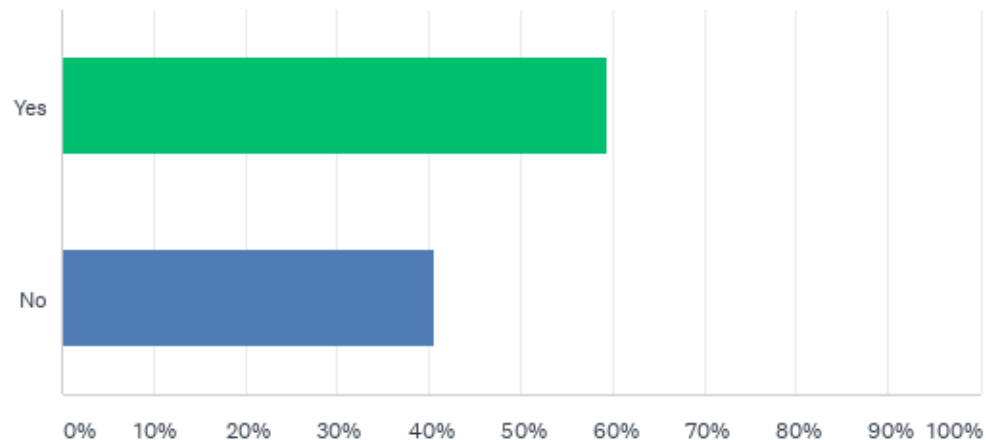
# Elementary Parents Survey Results

Q2 What school will your elementary age child(ren) be in starting Sept 2021? Please select all that apply.



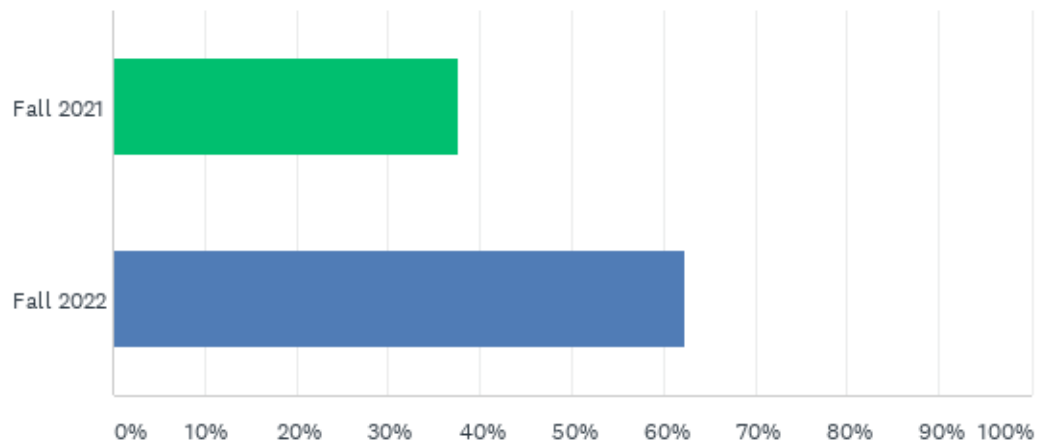
# Elementary Parents Survey Results

Q3 Have you watched the Task Force presentation to be informed on this initiative and proposal?



# Elementary Parents Survey Results

Q4 For your elementary-aged children (grades K-5), do you prefer this change occur in Fall 2021 or Fall 2022?



242 said fall 2021; 402 said fall 2022; 22 didn't answer the question

# Elementary Parents Survey Results

Preference for fall 2021 or 2022 by school, absolute numbers

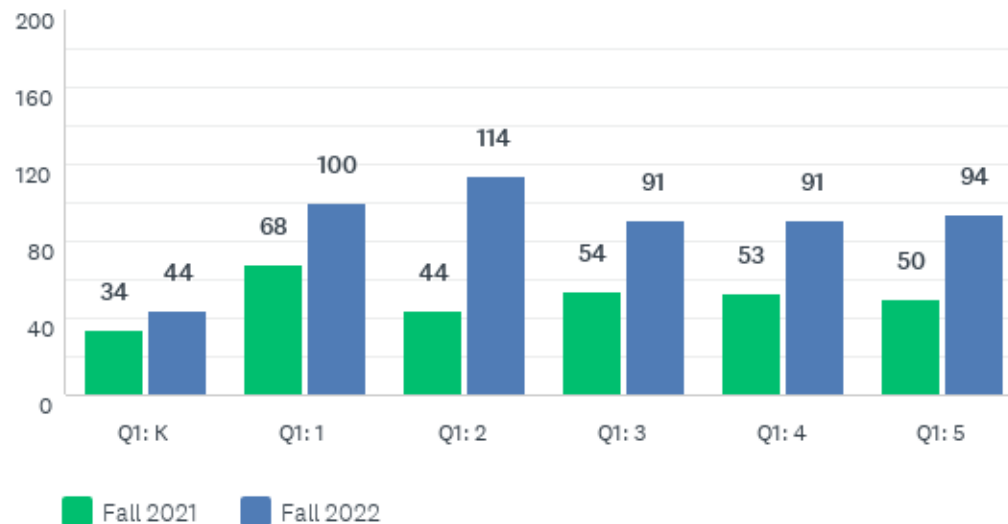
Q4 For your elementary-aged children (grades K-5), do you prefer this change occur in Fall 2021 or Fall 2022?



# Elementary Parents Survey Results

Preference for fall 2021 or 2022 by grade, absolute numbers

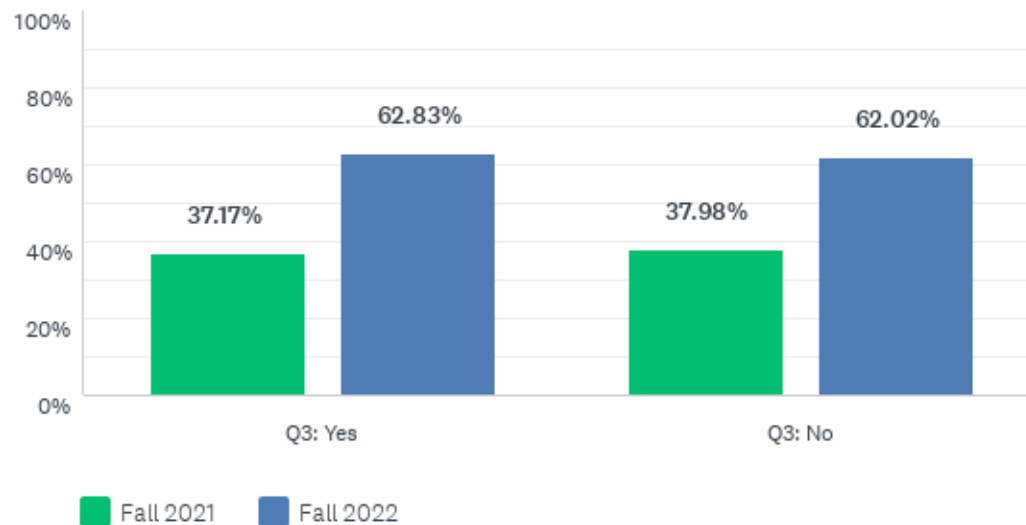
Q4 For your elementary-aged children (grades K-5), do you prefer this change occur in Fall 2021 or Fall 2022?



# Elementary Parents Survey Results

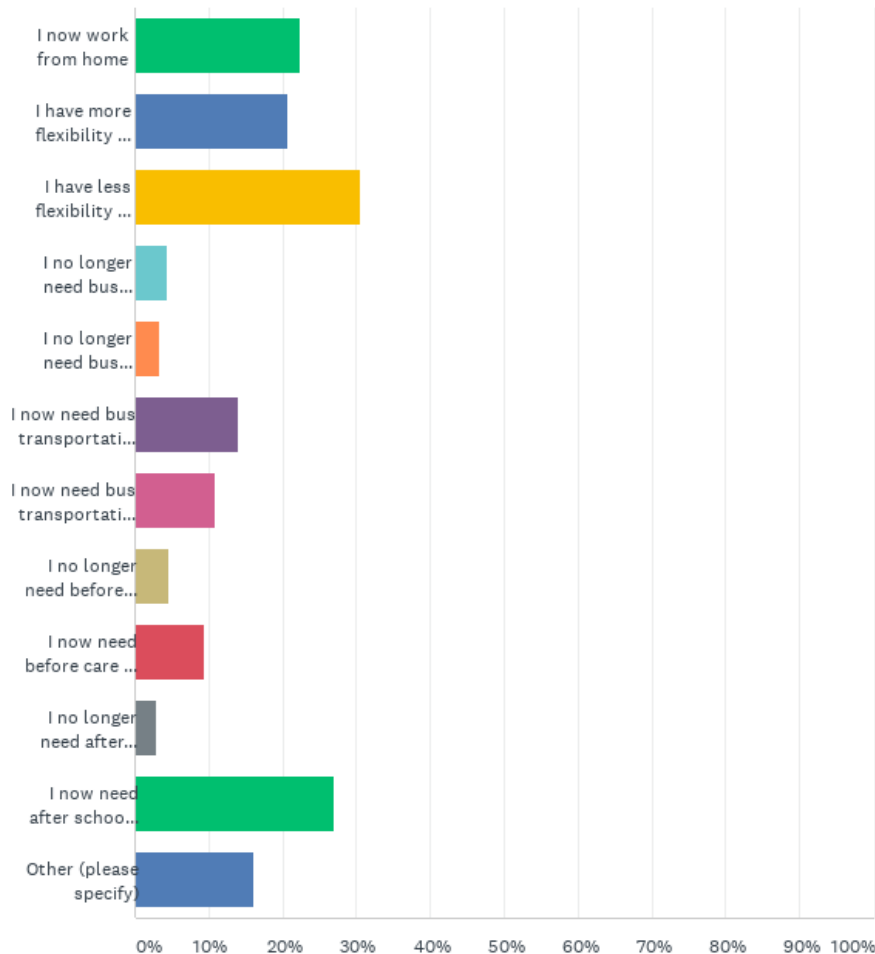
Filtered by if respondent watched the presentation

Q4 For your elementary-aged children (grades K-5), do you prefer this change occur in Fall 2021 or Fall 2022?



# Elementary Parents Survey Results

Q5 Are there conditions in your work or family situation that have changed since the last School Start Time survey was completed in the Fall of 2019? (Check all that apply):

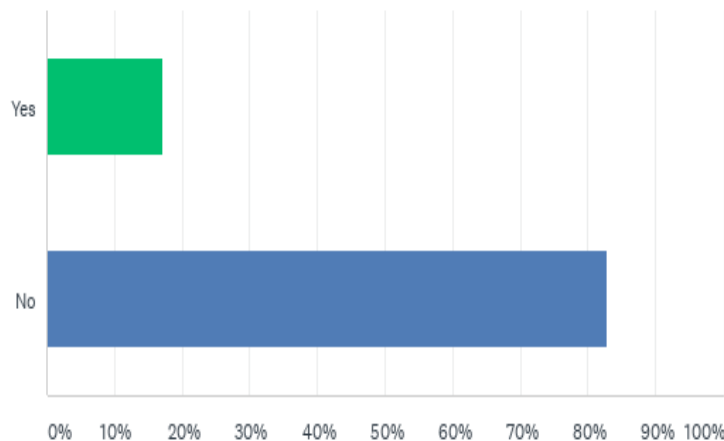


580 people answered this question. 86 skipped it.

94 comments under “other”. Survey Monkey analysis identified 34% of these comments were positive; 15% neutral; and 50% negative

# Elementary Parents Survey Results

Q6 With the shift in start time to earlier for elementary students, do you anticipate needing before school extended day services from 7:10-7:40am?



113 said yes,  
548 said no.

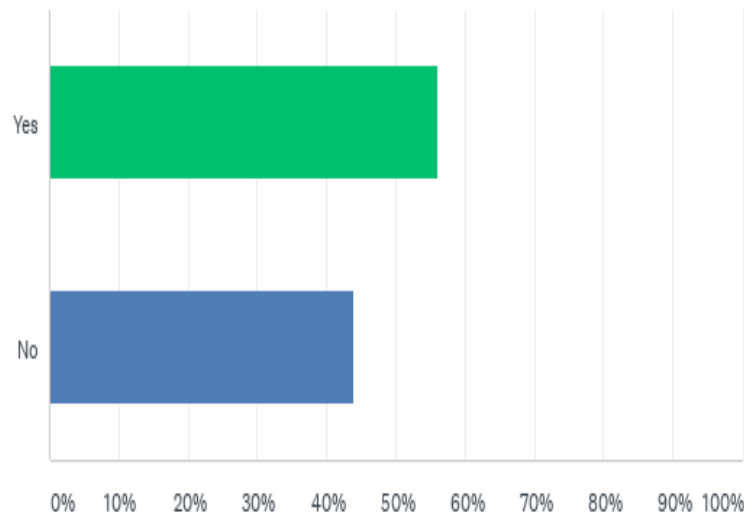
Numbers by  
school who  
said yes:

Willet- 14  
Balch- 20  
Callahan- 22  
Cleveland- 29  
Oldham - 19  
Prescott -20



# Elementary Parents Survey Results

Q7 With the proposed shift in release time to earlier for elementary students, do you anticipate needing after school extended day services?



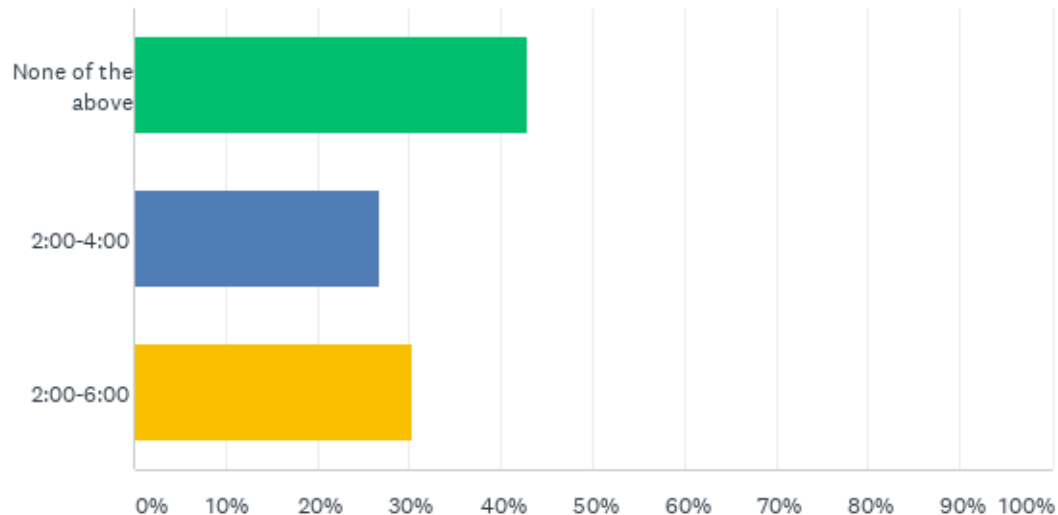
371 said yes;  
290 said no.

Numbers by  
school who  
said yes:

Willet- 42  
Balch- 52  
Callahan- 79  
Cleveland- 97  
Oldham- 69  
Prescott- 59

# Elementary Parents Survey Results

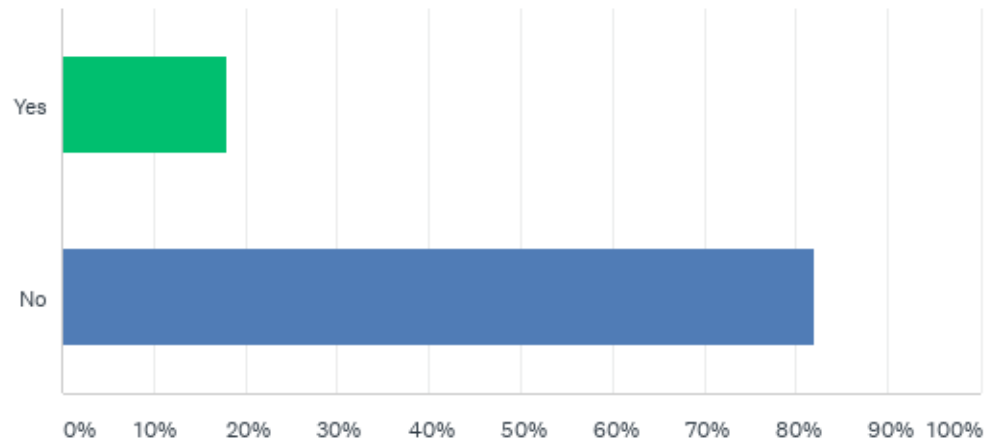
Q8 If you selected yes to the last question, would you need care from 2:00-4:00? Or from 2:00-6:00?



173 from 2-4 and 195 from 2-6

# Elementary Parents Survey Results

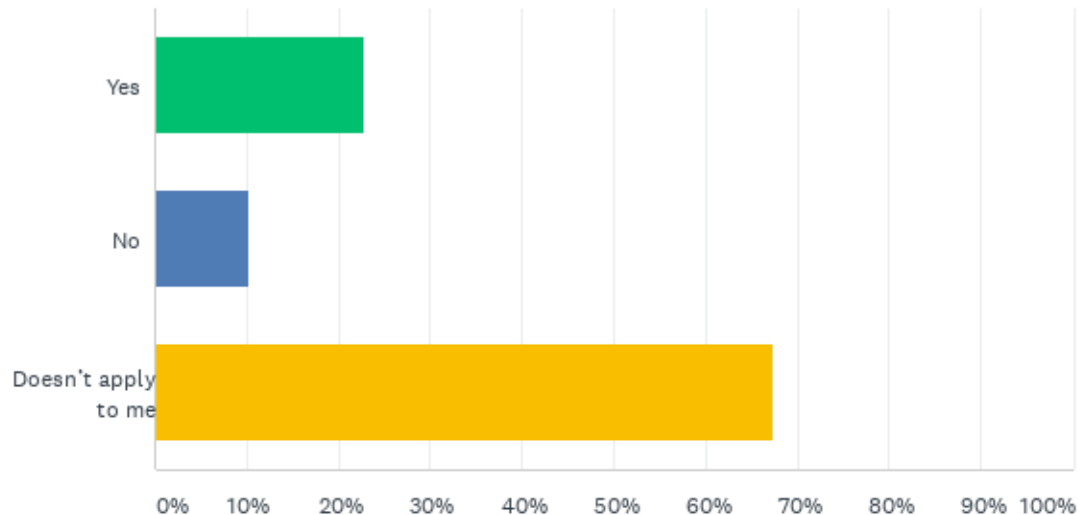
Q9 Do you currently rely on older siblings to provide care for your elementary student after school?



118 said yes.

# Elementary Parents Survey Results

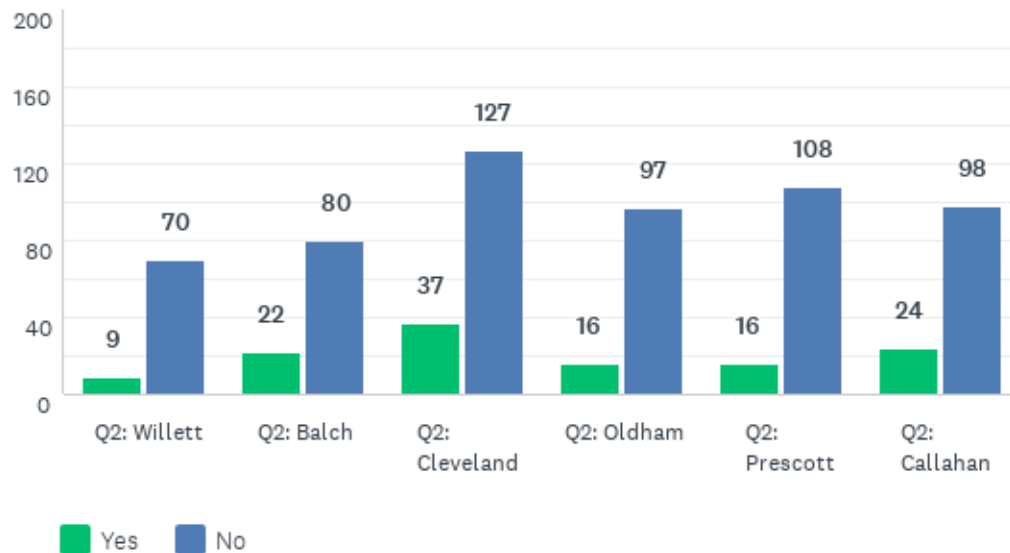
Q10 If you answered yes to the last question, will the school start time change negatively impact your family?



Note: 118 said yes to the last question, yet 149 then answered yes to this question.

# Elementary Parents Survey Results

Q9 Do you currently rely on older siblings to provide care for your elementary student after school?

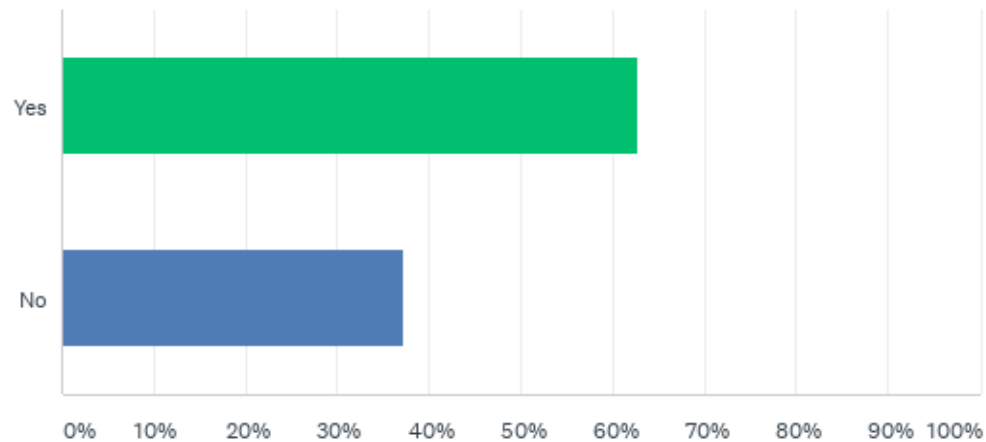


# Middle School Parents Survey Results

- 312 entries for children who will be in grades 6-8 in Fall 2021
  - 6- 120
  - 7- 116
  - 8- 99
- This represents 335 middle school age children.
- 97 will also will have children at elementary schools in fall 2021, and 74 will have children at the HS in fall 2021

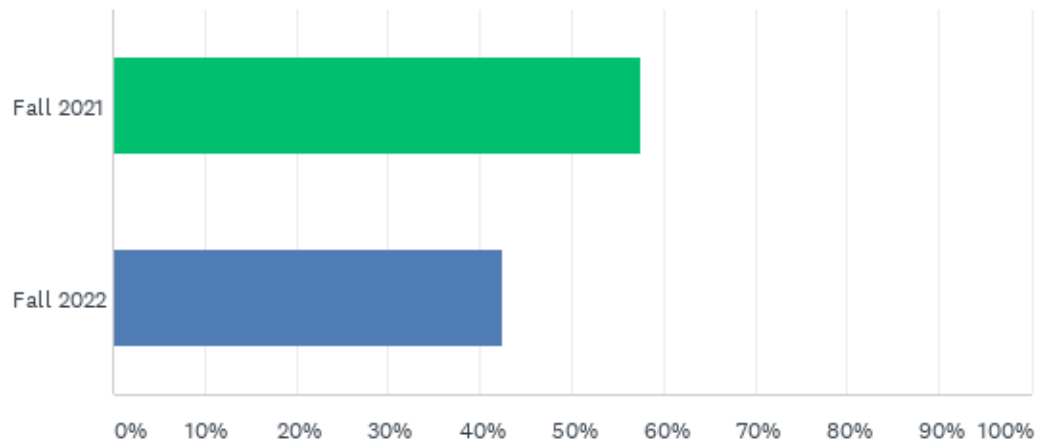
# Middle School Parents Survey Results

Q2 Have you watched the Task Force presentation to be informed on this initiative and proposal?



# Middle School Parents Survey Results

Q3 For your middle school-aged children (grades 6-8), do you prefer this change occur in Fall 2021 or Fall 2022?

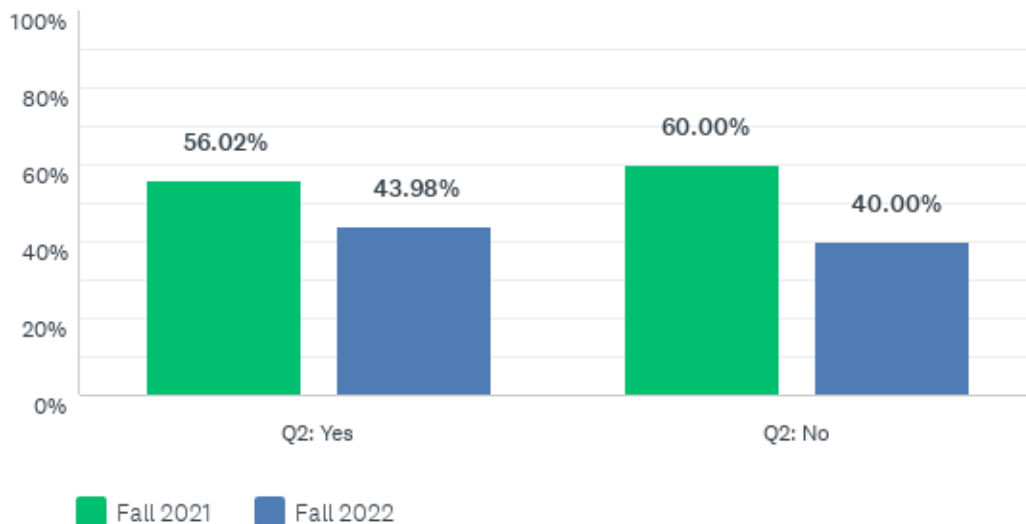




# Middle School Parents Survey Results

Filtered by if respondent watched the presentation

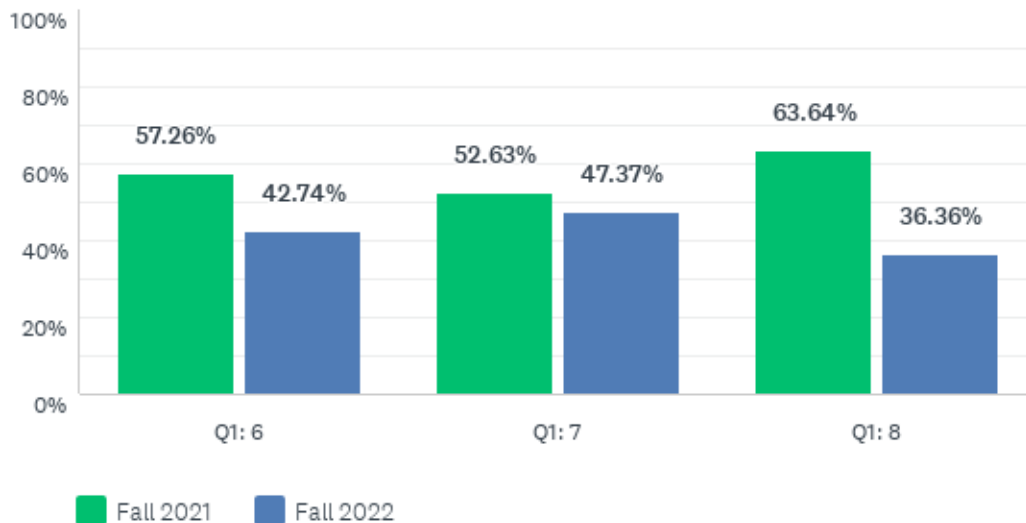
Q3 For your middle school-aged children (grades 6-8), do you prefer this change occur in Fall 2021 or Fall 2022?



# Middle School Parents Survey Results

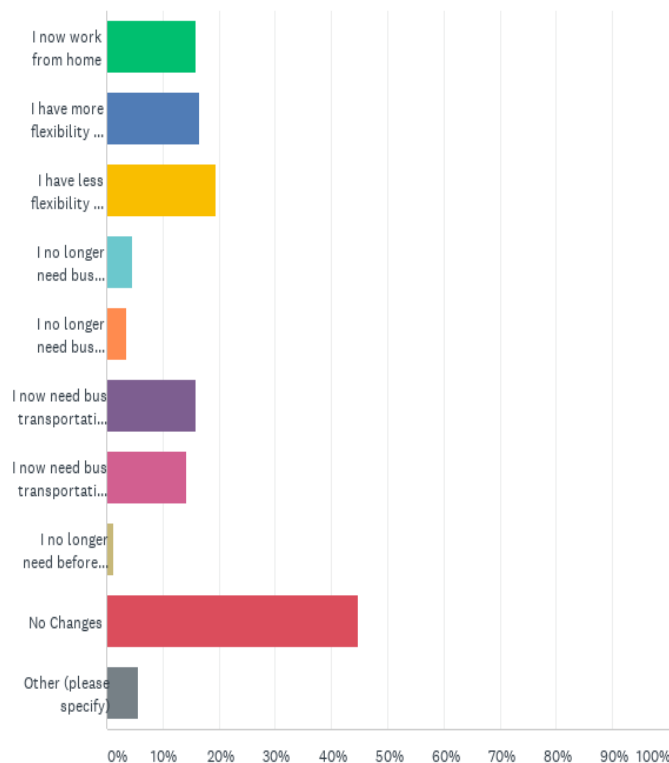
Filtered by grade

Q3 For your middle school-aged children (grades 6-8), do you prefer this change occur in Fall 2021 or Fall 2022?



# Middle School Parents Survey Results

Q4 Are there conditions in your work or family situation that have changed since the last School Start Time survey was completed in the Fall of 2019? (Check all that apply):

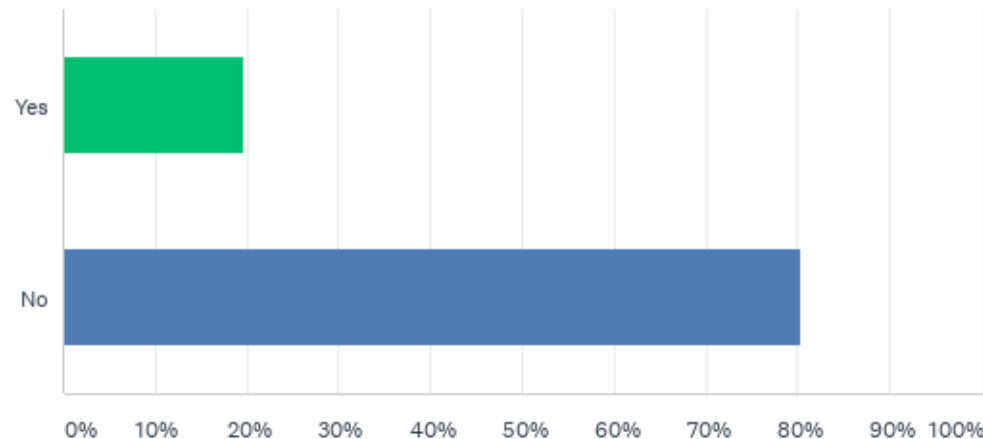


302 people answered this question. 10 skipped it.

17 comments under “other”. Survey Monkey analysis identified 65% of these comments were positive; 6% neutral; and 29% negative.

# Middle School Parents Survey Results

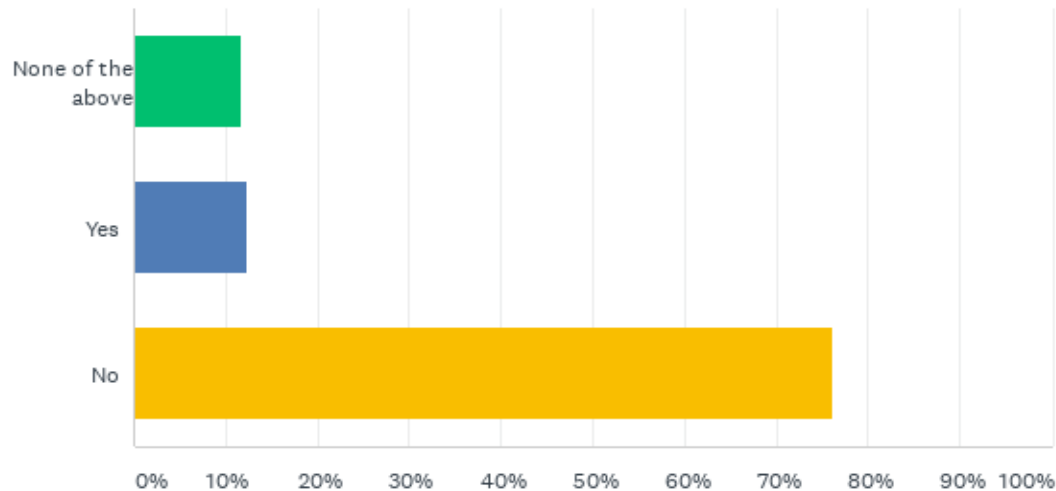
Q5 With the proposed shift in start time to later for middle school students, do you anticipate needing before-school extended day services from approximately 8-8:30 AM? (a half-hour before the scheduled school day begins?)



61 people said yes: 32 6th grade; 20 7th grade; 13 8th grade

# Middle School Parents Survey Results

Q6 With the proposed shift in release time to later, do you anticipate needing after school extended day services for your middle schooler until 4:10/4:20 (an hour after the scheduled school day ends)?



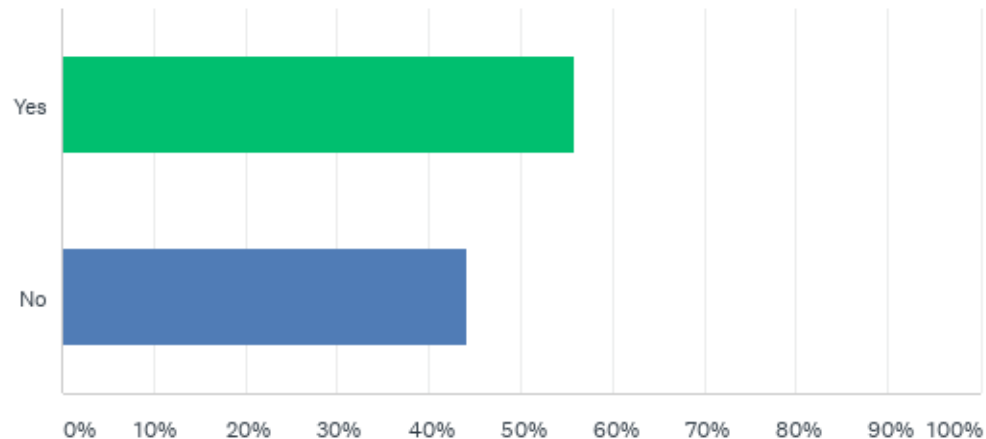
38 people said yes: 25 in 6th, 11 in 7th, 6 in 8th

# High School Parents Survey Results

- 388 entries for children who will be in grades 9-12 in Fall 2021
  - 9-109
  - 10-106
  - 11-122
  - 12- 113
- This represents 450 high school age children.
- 45 will also have children at elementary schools in fall 2021, and 48 will have children at CMS in fall 2021.

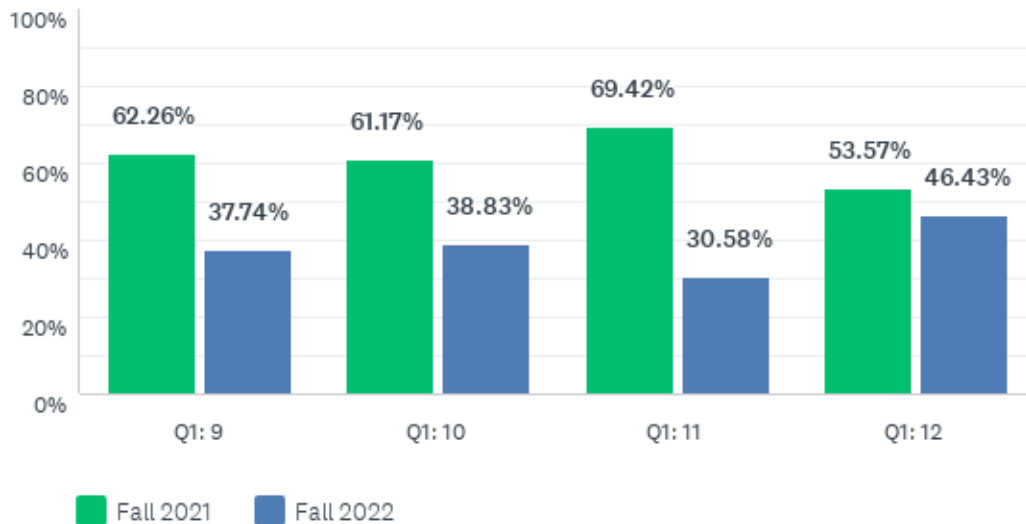
# High School Parents Survey Results

Q2 Have you watched the Task Force presentation to be informed on this initiative and proposal?



# High School Parents Survey Results

Q3 For your high school-aged children (grades 9-12), do you prefer this change occur in Fall 2021 or Fall 2022?

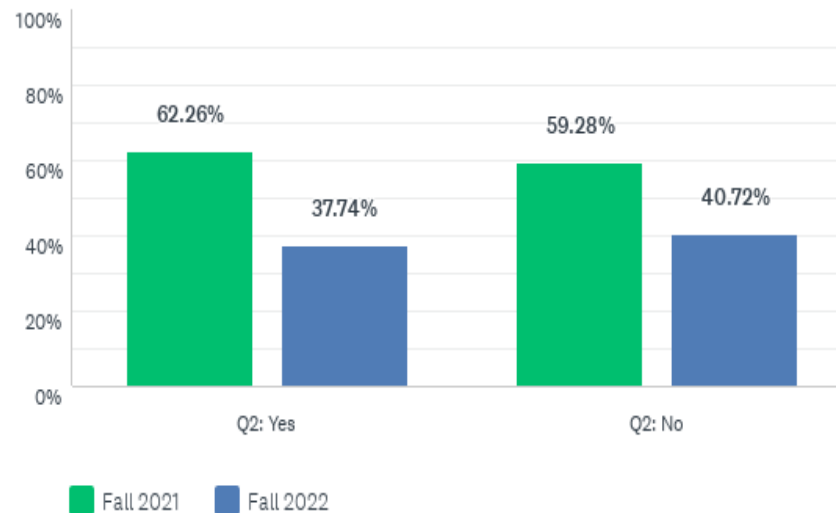




# High School Parents Survey Results

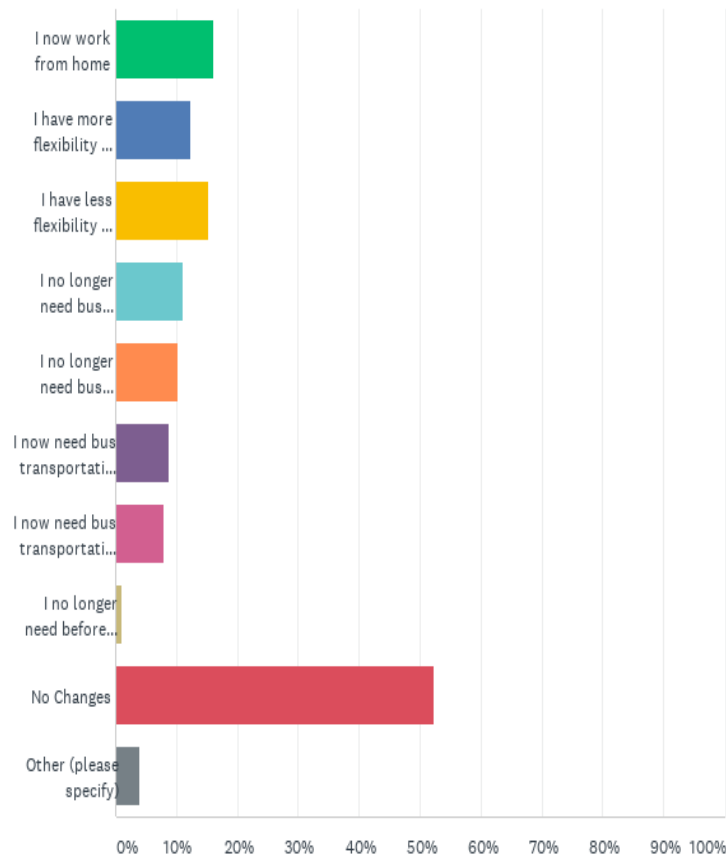
Filtered by if respondents watched the presentation

Q3 For your high school-aged children (grades 9-12), do you prefer this change occur in Fall 2021 or Fall 2022?



# High School Parents Survey Results

Q4 Are there conditions in your work or family situation that have changed since the last School Start Time survey was completed in the Fall of 2019? (Check all that apply):

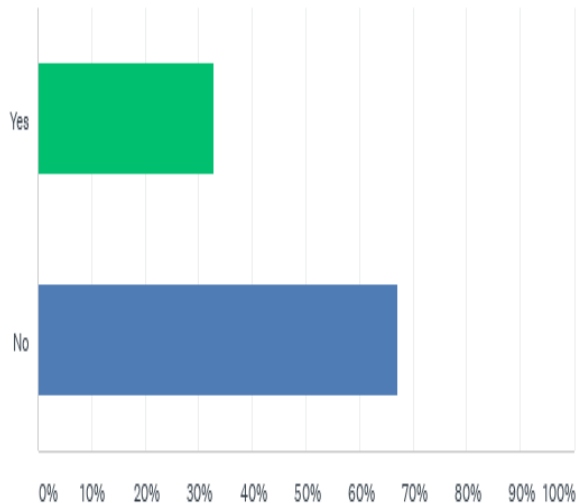


378 people answered this question. 10 skipped it.

15 comments under “other”. Survey Monkey analysis identified 27% of these comments were positive; 40% neutral; and 33% negative

# High School Parents Survey Results

Q5 Does your high school-aged child work after school?



Time Students Start Work:

Between 2:30-3- 20.44%, 28 students

Between 3-3:30- 31.39%, 43 students

Between 3:30-4- 18.25%, 25 students

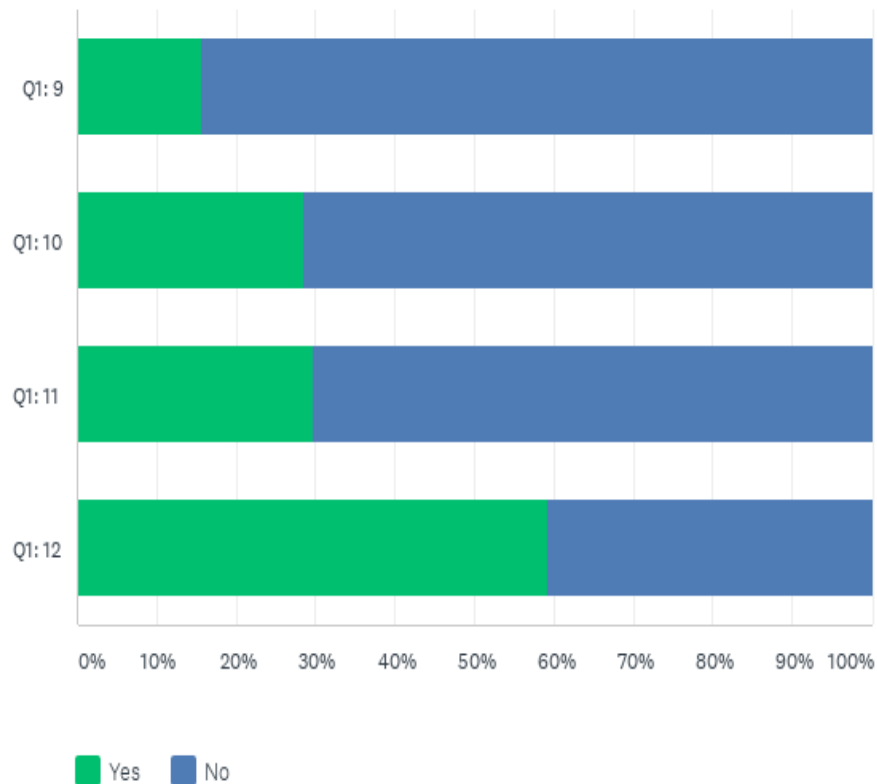
Between 4-4:30- 17.52%, 24 students

Between 4:30-5- 4.38%, 6 students

After 5pm- 8.03%, 11 students

# High School Parents Survey Results

Q5 Does your high school-aged child work after school?



17 9th  
graders

30 10th  
graders

36 11th  
graders

67 12th  
graders

# High School After School Activities and Athletics:

- Extra-curricular activities, clubs, and fine arts will continue to run after school and have no significant effect as a result of a start time change.
- Athletic contest start times will shift slightly later to an approximate start time of 4 PM. Practice times will begin at approximately 3:30.
- Approximately 60% of NHS students participate in at least one sport.

# Athletics:

## Current Tri-Valley Schools Start and Dismissal Times:

|                |      |      |
|----------------|------|------|
| ASHLAND        | 8:20 | 2:45 |
| BELLINGHAM     | 7:30 | 2:00 |
| DEDHAM         | 7:35 | 2:10 |
| DOVER-SHERBORN | 8:40 | 3:10 |
| HOLLISTON      | 8:10 | 2:43 |
| HOPKINTON      | 7:20 | 1:50 |
| MEDFIELD       | 7:30 | 2:07 |
| MEDWAY         | 8:04 | 2:31 |
| MILLIS         | 8:00 | 2:20 |
| NORTON         | 7:40 | 2:09 |
| NORWOOD        | 7:40 | 2:23 |
| WESTWOOD       | 7:20 | 2:02 |

Ashland shifted their start times in 2017 from 7:30 to 8:20.

Holliston in 2019 from 7:30 to 8:10. Dover-Sherborn this school year from 7:40 to 8:40.

Other schools are beginning to discuss this shift in the Tri-Valley League.

Many other districts in MA have done this already. Ex: the 12 schools in the Middlesex League all committed to shifting start times by 2019 and they have done so.

# Transportation

Five proposals that received consideration:

- A All district schools having the same time:  
approximately 8:30
- B Shifting all schools 30-40 minutes later, retaining the  
current order of drop-off (middle, high, elementary)
- C,D,E Options for an earlier start time for elementary students,  
  
different combinations of start times for middle and high  
schools.

## **Option A: All district schools with the same start time: 8:30am**

- Would not be possible with our current fleet of 13 busses and special education transportation requirements.
- NPS transportation director estimates **this would cost Norwood an additional 1.3 million dollars a year.**
- Not fiscally feasible as it does not adhere to the town budget nor the pledge of the override.

# Transportation

**Option B: Delaying all school start times by 30-40 minutes and keeping the current drop off order of middle-high-elementary schools.**

- This proposal shifted the **middle school start time to 7:50**, but does not achieve the recommended goal of an 8:30 start time.
- Would result with the elementary schools starting at approximately **9:10-9:20** and ending at approximately **3:25-3:35**.
- A 3:30 elementary dismissal negatively impacts special education transportation.
- Extending the elementary school day past 3pm contradicts the educational research regarding optimal learning time for our youngest students
- **This option was unanimously voted down by the Task Force as it will not support our educational goals nor the needs of our youngest students.**



# Transportation

**Proposals C,D, and E explored the impact of school drop off order on school start times.** The middle school presents a unique challenge as it is on the far end of town, has the highest percentage of students being transported by bus, and requires the use of our entire bus fleet to transport students.

**It is for these reasons that the middle school must either start first or last.**

**Option C: Middle school drop off first; with a start time of 6:55.**

- Not a viable option as that is an earlier time than the current 7:20 start time
- Does move the high school start time to the desired target of 8:30, but with a 3:23 dismissal could have a negative impact on athletics and after school activities.

# Transportation

## Option D: High school start at 8:50 and end at 3:43:

- A 3:43 dismissal would have a serious impact on athletics and after school activities.
- Further, **this option had middle school as the middle tier**, which led to complications in having enough busses for all the middle school students at the same time.

## Option E: The Task Force is recommending the following:

- **Elementary schools start time: 7:40-7:50, with a 1:55pm dismissal \***
- **Willet School start time 8:00-8:10, with a 1:30pm dismissal\***
- **High School start time 8:10-8:20, with a 2:50pm dismissal\***
- **Coakley start time 8:40-8:50, with 3: 20 pm dismissal \***

*Note: end times are approximate and may shift 5-10 minutes in either direction based on ongoing review of bell schedules and further transportation analysis.*

# School Committee Decisions

- If the School Committee will adopt option E as recommended by the School Start Time Task Force.
- If so, will the adoption of this policy begin in the Fall of 2021, or in the following year, Fall of 2022.