

## Oyster River Cooperative School District

May 25, 2016

ORHS – Start Time Workshop

7:00 p.m.

**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:** Tom Newkirk, Al Howland, Denise Day, Sarah Farwell, Maria Barth, Dan Klein, Kenny Rotner.

**ADMINISTRATORS:** Superintendent Dr. James Morse, Sue Caswell, Todd Allen.

There was one member of the public present.

### I. CALL TO ORDER

**II. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Jennifer Lyons of Durham thanked the Board for having this workshop and is looking forward to listening to the conversation.

### III. REPORTS:

#### School Board Visits.

#### MAST WAY

Denise Day and Dan Klein visited the Mast Way School.

Denise: I really liked doing this, found it valuable. Issues on original survey people felt, “it was a done deal.”

Title I meets before school – Impact?

Look at it from a much bigger issue/scheduling, homework.

What is start time trying to fix?

It would be nice to start earlier.

Flip elementary/high school not popular.

Folks were interested in an 8:20 start time/not much support for 7:30, lots of disadvantages to an early start time.

Dan: Really good candid conversation.

Survey choice of two options as opposed to a few ideas. Survey data may not be valuable to us.

Teachers felt elementary schools start late. Teachers were thinking globally.

Several years ago teachers looked at value of homework. Perhaps look at homework first.

Concern over flipping.

We stuck to questions and clarification questions.

I felt really proud of our teachers. Whatever happens teachers will make it work.

Lots of unknowns ~ wondering if it is worth it.

#### MOHARIMET

Tom Newkirk and Al Howland visited Moharimet.

Al: No younger kids in dark. AM is optional teaching time. PM kids get tired.

Optimal: 8:00 – 8:30

More times not more things.

Feel racing/shallower.

Day is too short.

Spontaneity being lost.

Tom: Earlier/think afterschool considerations but manageable.  
AM block so valuable.  
Broadened discussion on nature of school day – feel some of the best things are being lost.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Kenny Rotner and Maria Barth visited Middle School.

Kenny: Response to Board presence – positive.  
Bigger issues were uncovered – How are kids getting to school. Students are arriving but few tired. Breakfast more important.  
End of day kids tired.  
Afterschool activities and child care.  
Teachers very professional/PM afterschool students seek out teacher. Concern kids will choose activity rather than seek out adult.  
Outcome unknown – will kids actually sleep later.  
Big difference 5/6 & 7/8  
Preadolescent vs teacher.  
Not as many late starts and students driving safer.  
Concern about downtown Durham.  
Flex scheduling and ELO – flex schedule by kids' biological clocks.

Maria: Extra help after school due to staff unavailability.  
I was very happy to be there and agree with Kenny's observations.

## **HIGH SCHOOL**

Tom Newkirk and Sarah Farwell visited high school.

Sarah: Wonderful to hear from staff.  
1<sup>st</sup>/last period experiencing similar trouble.  
Concerns about opportunity to meet with students.  
Homework, caffeine, screen time areas of concern.  
Rotating schedule may be a way to handle 1<sup>st</sup>/last period.  
Sped concern about impact.  
8:00 – 3:00 = ideal/more flexibility.

Tom: Athletic impact.  
Staff concerned about tardiness – unknown if it would change.  
Moving start time without looking at other factors, homework, flex schedule, length of the day. Brian Z & Mark M suggested that we look at the day itself – pressure we place on them.  
ORHS open to flex schedule. Really good experience.

## **Portsmouth**

Tom Newkirk, Al Howland and Dr. Morse visited the Portsmouth School District – sense original = flip opposition from parents – backed off flipping.

Tom: Moving toward uniform start option – start at 8:30 - 3:00 – increase cost to transportation.

End later, but not a whole lot later – contract in factors like passing time and lunch

Al: 8:30 – 3:00 – hold to 3:00 – reduces athletic problems. Darkness addressed toward lighting.

Affordable park permit in spring/signing up for bus.

ORCSD – addresses the 100% on bus – Portsmouth does not.

Survey question on who will use bus.

Fall 2017 goal.

Dr. Morse shared Concord School District Report.

Kenny: Do we know Portsmouth’s schedule?

Al: Portsmouth’s budget goes to council, unlike us where we go to voters.

#### **IV. OPTIONS:**

Dr. Morse explained the K-12 systems and presented the options. Todd took minutes while Jim presented.

Todd: Create efficiencies in day schedule and look to a Saturday schedule for away athletic contest that are more than 1 hour away.

#### **V. DISCUSSION:**

There was a lengthy discussion surrounding the 6 presented options which resulted in a 7<sup>th</sup> option revised using option 6 to keep the AM run the same, but combine the PM run which has fewer bus riders. Additional questions and comments were relayed as depicted below:

Dan: Could you move using option 6 incrementally toward an 8:30 start time? Does this approach lend itself to future adjustments?

Kenny: Reducing ride time is a good goal by itself. Could we reduce the number of students driven to school? Could we create “express route” stops to reduce ride time?

Al: spoke against options 2,3,4 & 5. Felt we should focus on option 6 and any variation thereof.

Sarah: Keeping 40 minute max runs is very important. Against options 2,3,4 & 5. Likes options 6 & 7.

Denise: Likes the idea of ending no later than 3:00. Likes option 7 because it takes into account lower MS/HS ridership in the afternoon due to afterschool activities. Option 7 satisfies elementary concerns.

Tom: thinks next step should be to flesh out options 6 & 7. Then get input from staff, revise and take out to the community.

Maria: How can we increase joy of learning? What does research say about students in places like Alaska and Sweden that have minimal daylight during some parts of the year? What other relaxation techniques can be taught?

Dr. Morse: Need to look at issues of homework and stress, but do it in stages. May need to have a meeting and consult with Guild if change in the length of the day.

Dan: If you start earlier what activities will be implemented before school?

**VI. DIRECTION:**

Tom suggested that the focus be on fleshing out options 6 and 7 – Board nodded in acclamation. The revised option 6 & 7 will be brought forward for discussion at the July meeting.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Maria Barth made a motion at 8:30 pm to adjourn.**

Respectfully  
Dr. James C. Morse, Sr.  
Superintendent