

MacFarlane Park PTA
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Monday, April 24, 2017

Attn: Jeff Eakins, Superintendent of Hillsborough County Public Schools (jeff.eakins@sdhc.k12.fl.us)
Hillsborough County School Board members:

District 1: Susan Valdes (susan.valdes@sdhc.k12.fl.us)
Secretary: Yamil.Diaz@sdhc.k12.fl.us
District 2: Sally Harris (sally.harris@sdhc.k12.fl.us)
Secretary email, (same as above)
District 3: Cindy Stuart (cindy.stuart@sdhc.k12.fl.us)
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District 7: Lynn Gray (Lynn.gray@sdhc.k12.fl.us)
Secretary: Yamil.Diaz@sdhc.k12.fl.us

CC: BellSchedule@sdhc.k12.fl.us
Robert Cox, Supervisor of Magnet programs, HCPS (emailed to: Robert.Cox@sdhc.k12.fl.us)
Chris Farkas, Chief Officer of Operations (via email: christopher.farkas@sdhc.k12.fl.us)
Joe Henderson Tampa Bay Times (JoeHTampa@gmail.com)

Attachments: Bell Change Survey (and results) on the Proposed Bell changes for the parents of
MacFarlane Park Elementary (an IB magnet public elementary school)

Dear Mr. Eakins and School Board Members:

Executive Summary:

The earlier start time of 7:45 AM for the large majority of elementary magnet schools unfairly affects magnet families who drive great distances (up to an hour each way) to attend magnet schools. Multiple studies have shown that elementary aged children require more sleep. While many of MacFarlane Park Elementary School's parents are in favor of the proposed longer school day, most are very concerned about the amount of sleep children of HCPS magnet programs will receive due to the much earlier start times. The District failed to make a broad enough survey to insure that all voices were heard. No elementary magnet schools were included in the 22 surveyed. Had the District done so, it would have discovered the disproportionate impact that this drastic change will have on its magnet elementary students. If the district truly desires to facilitate the success of its students, it must look at their entire

day, including providing a schedule that will give them the best opportunity to receive the sleep that study after study as shown they need.

Introduction:

We, the members of MacFarlane Park PTA would like to express our concerns over the earlier proposed start time to elementary magnet schools including our own. Our current start time is 8:20am and the newest proposal of 7:45am for the 2018-2019 school year carries an undue burden on our magnet school families who may drive great distances to attend this magnet school.

This letter will address:

- The results of our school wide survey concerning the proposed bell schedule change
- Studies that show the benefits of later start times for elementary aged children
- Our concerns for, not only ours, but all magnet schools which were moved to the 35 minute earlier start time

School wide survey:

Considering Hillsborough County Public Schools did not include any elementary magnet school in the list of 22 schools surveyed used to make a proposed bell schedule change, the MacFarlane Park PTA decided to create its own survey of our school families. The results of this survey as documented by this letter accurately reflect the thoughts and opinions of MacFarlane Park Elementary families on the new proposed bell times. The survey was created on 4/12/17 when the proposal was for the 2017-2018 school year and with a proposed start time for our school of 7:35am. (Since then on 4/18/17 the start time has been changed to 7:45am). This survey was created online using Survey Monkey, ensured anonymity to complete, did not require a login to access, and was advertised in 3 ways: through the PTA's weekly enews-letter; through the PTA's Facebook page; and through paper flyers that were sent home with every student. As of 4/23/17, the PTA received 94 responses including 50 comments. This is a tremendous response rate considering our school only has 360 students which demonstrates the huge impact that the proposed change will have.

The questions and answers to our survey including optional comments are included in the Attachment. The following is a brief summary:

- 85% of parents did not like the early (7:35am) start time.
- While we recognize that since this survey was created the bell schedule change will not take effect until the 2018-2019 school year, 40% of parents would not have considered attending a magnet school with the proposed 7:35am start time.
- Parents attending MacFarlane Park Elementary told us they would have to leave home as early as 5:45am with the average parent leaving home at 6:41am (with the proposed 7:35am start time). (It is unclear how the 7:45am start time would affect this number as many middle schools siblings attend did not have their start time changed.)
- 64% of parents are concerned about how this earlier start time would affect their children's amount of sleep.
- 83% of our parents are concerned how they would get all of their children to school on time (with some having siblings in middle school.)

- 48% of parents are concerned about how this early start time affects the health and wellbeing of their children.
- 88% of parents do not feel that the 22 school study (which did not include an elementary magnet school) contained enough information to make an informed decision on a new bell schedule for MacFarlane Park Elementary school.
- 92% of families do not feel that a 7:35am start time is fair for just magnet school families when other neighborhood public schools were not changed by nearly as much and in some cases began later, especially since neighborhood schools drive far less than magnet schools. They find it illogical for the magnet schools to begin at 7:45AM while the non-magnet neighborhood elementary schools (where children live much closer) begin at (on average) 8:35am.

The comments parents included varied but were extensively (90%) opposed to this new earlier start time. Parents expressed concern over how an earlier start time affected their elementary children's sleep, getting all children to school on time, and mostly about how it just does not make sense to start a magnet school (whose families drive great distances) any earlier than the current start time.

The largest percentage the PTA received was in Question No. 8 of our survey, "Public MAGNET schools draw from all across Hillsborough County with some families driving up to an hour away to attend school. Neighborhood public (Non-magnet) elementary schools have a proposed bell change of (on average) 42 minutes LATER. Do you feel a 7:35AM start time is fair for just magnet school families?" With 94 respondents, an overwhelming 92% of parents said responded, "No, I feel that this earlier start time is NOT fair just for magnet schools." Since then, the PTA has analyzed the new 2018-2019 suggested bell times for all 147 elementary schools.¹ The PTA found that when averaged, the 12 magnet elementary schools are proposed to start 44 minutes earlier than non-magnet (neighborhood) schools. The large difference in the start times between magnet schools (who draw from great distances) and neighborhood schools disproportionately puts magnet school families at a severe unfair disadvantage. Consequently, this discourages the success of the magnet program because it creates an undue and difficult obstacle to attend magnet schools.

While MacFarlane Park Elementary has a small number of students who ride the public school bus in the morning, the PTA is concerned about them as well. As you know, magnet school students get on the bus in their own neighborhood, are taken to a transfer station, and then take another bus to school. The time our magnet school students spend on the morning buses greatly exceeds the amount of time that students are on the bus for neighborhood schools.

Supporting Studies:

MacFarlane Park Elementary parents are very educated concerning this topic and through the survey responses referenced numerous studies and academic papers discussing the impact of sleep on elementary aged children. Key highlights and references follow. The MacFarlane Park PTA encourages

¹ Hillsborough Public Schools Proposed Bell Times for the 2018-2019 school year.
http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/docs/00/00/18/55/Bell_Time_Schedule_Proposed.pdf

each of you to review this information so that you can make the best informed decision on Tuesday. Below are key conclusions.

One of the questions asked in our survey is, "What time will your child have to leave home, in order to get to school with the new 7:35am school start time?" Out of our 91 responses, the average was 6:41am. Below is the suggested sleep schedule per age according to the American Academy of Pediatrics²:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Amount of sleep recommended by AAP¹</u>
Children 3 to 5 years of age	Sleep 10 to 13 hours per 24 hours (including naps) on a regular basis to promote optimal health.
Children 6 to 12 years of age	Sleep 9 to 12 hours per 24 hours on a regular basis to promote optimal health.

Assuming it takes around 40 minutes to get ready in the morning, the average child would have to wake at 6:00 to then leave by 6:41AM. This could put the suggested bedtime at that child as early as 6:00PM. If this child is 5 years old, like most kindergarteners are when they start school, the suggested bedtime would be as early as 5:00PM. 1/3 of our response had a leave time at 6:35am or earlier with a few even saying 5:45am. If a child left at 5:45am to get to school (presumably to drop siblings off at other schools first), and if that child's age was 5, using the AAP guidelines, then that could put the suggested bedtime at 4:00PM! This is just not reasonable to expect of children. An earlier start time for magnet schools which draw from a large area around Hillsborough County just does not make sense.

Multiple studies have been done on the effects of effects of the amount of children's sleep on their health. An extensive study just released today, 4/24/17, has proved the correlation between an inconsistent sleep time and obesity. "Children who did not go to bed at a regular time on school nights were more likely to be obese by age 11."³ The studies found particularly address students even citing, "several studies in children have reported decrements in verbal creativity, attention, and psycho-motor performance following either sleep restriction or sleep deprivation."⁴

Additionally, studies have also been done on the effects of the amount of children's sleep on their academic performance. A University of Rome study found, "sleep quality and quantity are closely related to student learning capacity and academic performance"⁵ A study published in Semantic Scholar found,

² American Academy of Pediatrics Supports Childhood Sleep Guidelines. <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/American-Academy-of-Pediatrics-Supports-Childhood-Sleep-Guidelines.aspx>

³ "Regular bedtimes stop children from becoming overweight, study finds" <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2017/04/24/regular-bedtimes-stop-children-becoming-overweight-study-finds/>

⁴ "Understanding adolescent's sleep patterns and school performance: a critical approach." <http://web.mit.edu/writing/2010/July/Wolfson&Carskadon2003.pdf>

⁵ "Sleep Loss, Learning Capacity and Academic Performance" by Curcio, Ferrara, and Gennaro https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Luigi_De_Gennaro/publication/7215445_Sleep_loss_Learning_capacity_and_academic_performance/links/0912f5124bb6c0e0a7000000/Sleep-loss-Learning-capacity-and-academic-performance.pdf

“High GPA correlated significantly with waking up later on school days”⁶ A recent study conducted by Hanover Research for the Shorewood, Wisconsin School District found that “research shows that even a 30 minute increase in sleep for pre-adolescent students results in “significant improvement in their ability to regulate their emotions, including limiting restless-impulsive behavior in school.” Such an increase was also noted to promote “a significant reduction in reported daytime sleepiness.” Younger students who get less sleep overall or a poorer quality of sleep struggle to learn in school and perform on tests.”⁷

As stewards for our students, it is the responsibility of the Hillsborough County School Board and Superintendent to address the concerns of not just budgetary shortfall but the effect on the well-being of the students they serve. Concerning students’ sleep, “administrators aiming to improve student achievement should consider the potential benefits of delaying school start time.”⁸ Earlier start times for magnet schools who draw from a large area (including some from all of Hillsborough County) would definitely have a negative effect on the amount of sleep children receive. Because of this and many more items of research, the Parents Advocacy Network joined with the national coalition Start School Later to recommend a resolution to eliminate mandatory classes before 8:00AM.⁹ Additionally, “the Florida Medical Association supports legislation and endorses public schools (elementary to high school) classes at 8:00 am or later.”¹⁰ Another study found that “Synchronizing education start times to adolescent biology is the obvious way to address the problem of chronic sleep deprivation currently experienced by adolescents on school days. Astronomical time data and changes in sleep patterns from international studies show at the age of 10 biological wake time is about 06:30, so synchronized school starting times would be 08:30-09:00”¹¹

In Conclusion:

The MacFarlane Park Elementary School PTA is grateful that the proposed earlier start time decision is now delayed by a year. It would have not been fair to impose this drastic change in such a short time, especially with families making their school choice decisions based on only knowing current times. However, the PTA is still very concerned about the new 7:45 start time for the 2018-2019 school year which is a full 35 minutes earlier than the current start time of 8:20am. This will be extremely

⁶ “Sleep and Student Performance at School” by Howard Taras, William Potts-Datema
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/908d/c249ec66dff18011dc358f658ac4b7bbb434.pdf>

⁷ “Impact of School Start time on Student Learning” by Hanover Research
https://www.shorewood.k12.wi.us/uploaded/Family_Resources/general/Impact_of_School_Start_Time.pdf

⁸ “A’s from Zzzz’s? The Causal Effect of School Start Time on the Academic Achievement of Adolescents” By Scott E. Carrell, Teny Maghakian, and James E. Wes <http://faculty.econ.ucdavis.edu/faculty/scarrell/sleep.pdf>

⁹ Anne Arundel County, MD. September 27, 2012.

¹⁰ Florida Medical Association 2012 PUBLIC POLICY COMPENDIUM
http://www.startschoollater.net/uploads/9/7/9/6/9796500/fma_support_of_after_8a.m._start_times.pdf

¹¹ Synchronizing education to adolescent biology: ‘let teens sleep, start school later’ Paul Kelley, Steven W. Lockley, Russell G. Foster & Jonathan Kelley <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/17439884.2014.942666>

burdensome on families and has the potential to negatively impact student performance. Your paramount duty should be to do what is best for the students in the district and the MacFarlane Park Elementary School PTA does not see a scenario where moving the start time up to 7:45 AM could be in the best interest of the students. This decision could disproportionately impact magnet schools students where the children attending often reside a considerable distance farther than those children who attend their neighborhood schools. Requiring young children, some with special needs, to arrive 35 minutes earlier to the magnet schools, when they are already making a long trip early in the morning, will be extremely difficult. Some families who love our school and do not want to leave are reluctantly considering leaving our magnet school. Placing the burden of a significantly earlier start time on the families who have to travel the greater distance does not make sense. If this bell schedule needs to be implemented, there would be far less burden placed on children who attend their neighborhood schools to have the earlier bell schedule.

Additionally, this is clearly a change for the benefit of a small percentage of the district budget. This change is not for the benefit of the children.

MacFarlane Park PTA is also concerned about the impact this has on teachers. This increased school day has greatly cut into the teachers' planning time with no additional compensation. This is not fair on the wonderful teachers who already work tirelessly to serve our students.

The MacFarlane Park PTA respectfully objects to the proposed bell schedule changes for our magnet school for the 2018-2019 school year.

Sincerely,

MacFarlane Park PTA

Attachment: Bell Change Survey (and results) on the Proposed Bell changes for the parents of MacFarlane Park Elementary (an IB magnet public elementary school)

Considering Hillsborough County Public Schools did not include a magnet elementary school in the list of 22 schools surveyed used to make a proposed bell schedule change, the MacFarlane Park PTA decided to create its own survey of school families.

This survey was:

- created online using Survey Monkey
- ensured anonymity to complete
- did not require a login to access
- was advertised in 3 ways:
 - o through our PTA's weekly enews letter
 - o through our Facebook page
 - o through paper flyers that were sent home with every student at our school.

As of 4/23/17 the PTA have received 94 responses.

Bell Schedule Change Survey for MacFarlane Park Elementary parents

Hillsborough County Public Schools has a proposed bell schedule change slated to take effect for the 2017-2018 school year. According to this change, MacFarlane Park IB Magnet Elementary School's proposed hours are 7:35AM - 2:30PM (1:30PM Mondays).

Objective:

The objective of this survey is to determine:

1. How the proposed earlier bell schedule change for the 2017-2018 school year affects families at MacFarlane Park Elementary School.
2. If you think Hillsborough County Public school was fair and if you feel they used enough information in proposing this schedule change.
3. Express the results of this survey to Hillsborough County School board

Supplemental information:

- There are 146 elementary schools in Hillsborough County. (Source: [HCPS](#))
- Of these, there are 13 public magnet elementary schools in Hillsborough County. (Source: [HCPS](#))
- When Hillsborough County Public schools formulated the survey to determine the impact on the suggested bell schedule change to all public school students, they only used a sample of 22 schools.(Source: [HCPS](#).)
- No magnet elementary schools were used in this survey, however, the suggested bell change affected public magnet elementary schools the most out of all changes. 11 of the 13 public elementary magnet schools are starting 45 minutes earlier than usual, moving their start time from 8:20am to 7:35am while non-magnet public elementary schools are starting on average 42 minutes LATER. (Source: [HCPS](#).)

1. How will the proposed suggested changes to our school bell schedule school start time for MacFarlane Park Elementary magnet IB school affect you? (moving start times from 8:20am to 7:35am)

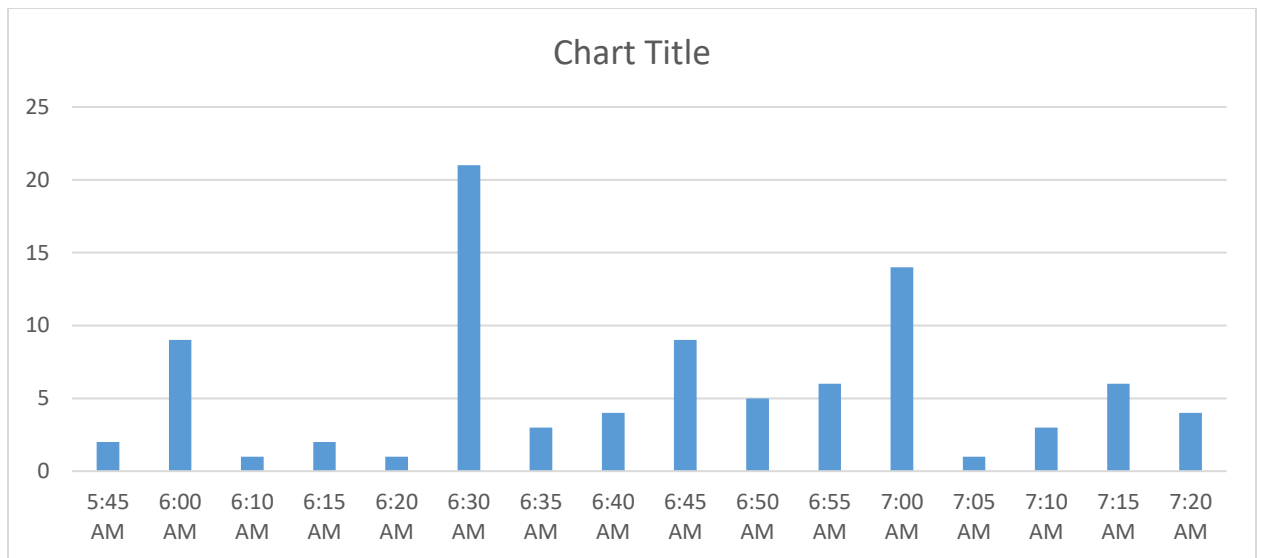
Negatively- I do not like the earlier 7:35 start time	84.95% 79
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— Positively- I like the earlier 7:35 start time	8.60% 8
— neutral/ no change	6.45% 6
Total	93

2. This potential change is slated to take effect in the next school year, 2017-2018. Would you still have considered MacFarlane Park Elementary for next year knowing this proposed new time?

No, I would not have considered MacFarlane Park Elementary with the new earlier start time	39.36% 37
— Yes, I would have still considered MacFarlane Park Elementary with the new earlier start time	60.64% 57
Total	94

3. What time will your child have to leave home, in order to get to school with the new 7:35am school start time?



The average of these 94 respondents is 6:41am (with the 7:35am start time.)

- It is unclear how the 7:45am start time would affect this number as many middle schools siblings attend did not have their start time changed.

4. On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being MOST concerned, 1 being LEAST concerned), how concerned are you about how this change affects your child's amount of sleep?

Response: 3.56 toward MOST concerned about child's amount of sleep

5. As you know, we have a choice in middle schools. The public IB middle magnet schools have also been affected by this proposed bell schedule change. Williams IB Middle school proposed bell time for 2017-2018: 7:15AM - 2:10PM (1:10 Mondays) Walker IB Middle school proposed bell time for 2017-2018: 7:15AM - 2:10PM (1:10 Mondays) MacFarlane Park IB Elementary magnet school proposed bell time for 2017-2018: 7:35AM - 2:30PM (1:30 Mondays) Are you concerned about how you are going to get all of your children to school on time with this proposed bell schedule change?

Yes, because of this proposed bell schedule change, I am concerned about getting all of my children to school on time	82.61% 76
No, even with this proposed bell schedule change, I am NOT concerned about getting all of my children to school on time	17.39% 16
Total	92

6. Even with the 45 min earlier start time, the end of the day bell schedule was not moved earlier- it is kept the same at 2:30 (1:30 Mondays). This increases the length of your elementary school student by 40 minutes every day. On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being MOST concerned, 1 being LEAST concerned), how concerned are you about the increased school day and how this change affects your child's health and well-being?

Response: 2.92 most concerned about how this change affects child's health and well-being

7. When Hillsborough County Public schools formulated the survey to determine the impact on the suggested bell schedule change to all public school students, they only used a sample of 22 schools and NO magnet elementary schools were used in this survey. The suggested bell change affected public magnet elementary schools the most out of all changes with 9 of the 12 public elementary magnet schools starting 45 minutes earlier than current times. Do you think this was enough information used to make an informed decision on a new bell schedule for our public magnet, MacFarlane Park Elementary?

No, I DO NOT feel this was enough information to make this decision on bell schedule changes	88.30% 83
Yes, I feel this was enough information to make this decision on bell schedule changes	11.70% 11
Total	94

8. Public MAGNET schools draw from all across Hillsborough County with some families driving up to an hour away to attend school. Neighborhood public (Non-magnet) elementary schools have a proposed bell change of (on average) 42 minutes LATER. Do you feel a 7:35AM start time is fair for just magnet school families?

No, I feel that this earlier start time is NOT fair just for magnet schools	91.49% 86
Yes, I feel that this earlier start time is fair.	8.51% 8
Total	94

9. Please include any additional comments on your thoughts and feelings on the new proposed bell schedule changes:

Comments AGAINST the change (45 out of 50):

- It would be recommended to inform the main reason for this change, why is changing? More time for students to learn more in school? to help School Bus drivers?, I still don't know if this is beneficial for my sons.
- If ANYONE HAD to have an earlier time, it should be the non-magnet school because their students are zoned for schools CLOSE to them; therefore, they do not have to wake up as early as MOST magnet school kids. Magnet schools have children from ALL OVER THE COUNTY driving LONG distances to get to their schools. They already have to get up earlier than traditional kids as it is, and NOW they have to get up even EARLIER. This will greatly affect their performance in school. So NOW, instead of leaving at 6:30, we will have to leave around 5:45am!!! That's INSANE for children!!! We are NOT happy with this AT ALL.
- Please be fair and considerate when making such huge decisions. It affects a lot of families and their daily schedules.
- I predict that this change would decrease student's cognitive ability, conscientiousness and negatively impact their achievement motivation. I've listed a number of scientific studies that show that having an earlier school time will have a negative impact on the children. I'd like to refer you to some peer reviewed studies that support this hypothesis: A's from Zzzz's? The Causal Effect of School Start Time on the Academic Achievement of Adolescents By Scott E. Carrell, Teny Maghakian, and James E. Wes
<http://faculty.econ.ucdavis.edu/faculty/scarrell/sleep.pdf> Understanding adolescent's sleep patters and school performance: a critical approach.
<http://web.mit.edu/writing/2010/July/Wolfson&Carskadon2003.pdf> Early to Rise: The Effect of Daily Start Times on Academic Performance
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228313358_Early_to_Rise_The_Effect_of_Daily_Start_Times_on_Academic_Performance Sleep and Student Performance at School
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/908d/c249ec66dff18011dc358f658ac4b7bbb434.pdf> American Academy of Pediatrics: Excessive Sleepiness in Adolescents and Young Adults: Causes, Consequences, and Treatment Strategies
<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/115/6/1774.full.pdf> Sleep loss,

Learning capacity and academic performance

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Luigi_De_Gennaro/publication/7215445_Sleep_loss_Learning_capacity_and_academic_performance/links/0912f5124bb6c0e0a7000000/Sleep-loss-Learning-capacity-and-academic-performance.pdf Sleep and Academic Performance in U.S. Military Training and Education Programs
http://faculty.nps.edu/nlmiller/docs/Sleep_and_academic_performance.pdf

Now that I've gotten the scientific facts out of the way... let me tell you a bit about what my life is like. My son goes to school early on Tuesdays for the Math Bowl (@7:30am). This is already difficult for me to get him to school on just that day. I work late and we live far from Macfarlane Park, but we go there because he loves it and it is one of the best schools in the area. I worry that he will not be able to get enough sleep if the schedule changes. We already have issues with him not having enough time to sleep and with him being late to school. We get home @6:30pm, then I need to cook for him and check his homework (IF he even did his homework at school, most of the time he does it at home) and then I take some time to teach him some extra mathematics. He hardly has any time to sleep as is. He should be going to bed at 7:00 or 7:30pm, but it is realistically closer to 9pm on a good day. If the schools wanted to extend their classes until later (to have the kids be longer in school), then that would be GREAT and very much welcomed by most families that I know. To get them to school EARLIER would be a disaster. It is already incredibly early. I worry that the people making the decisions are too far removed from what it is like to have a child. I'm a single parent, and my life is difficult enough as is. The last thing that I want to do is wake my son up @5am just so that he can get to school on time (6am is already a chore). We would probably have to move schools or I would have to move to a place that is closer to the school. I don't know what I'd have to do to make that work. PLEASE, don't have the kids start school earlier. Let them get a bit more sleep so that they can perform at their best. If people want to have the kids be longer in school, then have HOST be less of a day care and more about learning.

- This would really impact my son and daughter that both attend MacFarlane due to the fact that we do live 30-40 min away it is already a challenge to make sure they are up eat breakfast and get to school on time 5 days a week . This would be really hard on our family and I would be devastated to change schools after my son has been there 4 years. Thank you
- With the amount of test prep that is required to attend Hillsborough County Schools my children will have to time to do homework or any extra activities because they will have to be in bed to early this proposal is a bad idea
- Commuter schools with a larger, more spread out student base should not have changed. Rather, neighborhood schools where children live within a close proximity, unaffected by traffic patterns should have changed.
- Grades K-5 need proper rest and the 7:35 start time is more appropriate for middle school students. MacFarlane Park has already incorporated the extra courses into the coursework and additional time for this is unnecessary. Our children will be tired and over worked and the extra 42 minutes of something that they already do daily is not necessary.
- This will affect every child with their sleeping patterns a lot of children do extracurricular activities after school and some late at night. 45 min is a big deal all around. A lot of parents

come from a distance away and also have more than one child and this would be a problem to get them to school and also get to work.

- We would like to have current scheduled time as 8:20am.
- Because of our work schedule our son stays in the host program until 5:45 - 5:55 each day. This lengthened school day is very concerning to us. Our preference would have been to keep the school start time the same as it is currently and change the end of the school day by the 40 odd minutes. This would keep our sons sleep schedule the same, his time away from home the same, potentially eliminate the need to pay additional club charges each grading period (because that time would now be spent in extended school time), and keep my commuting schedule the same.
- We feel that the sleep time will not be enough for our kids, if the bell time become earlier than usual time. And it might be effect on their health after some span of time.
- The time proposed for ELEMENTARY children is extremely early. These children will have much less time in the evening with parents, dinner, play time, homework, etc. to accommodate an earlier bed time to make it to school by 7:35AM. They will then have to push their wake time much earlier to accommodate this 45 min time change, not to mention LONGER hours at school with those in after school programs and HOST. These are very young children to have such extended hours. If all other Elementary schools are proposed to begin at a particular time - the MAGNET school program should begin at the same time. Middle and High school students are much more adaptable per their age groups then young Elementary school children to begin their learning day at such an early time in the day. The proposed 7:35 start time leaves VERY little time to wake, have a healthy breakfast and drive time to school!
- I have a daughter in high school and there is no way I can get her to school by 7:15 then my son to his magnet school by 7:35. This will put a toll on our family and will be most possible that he will be tardy on some occasions and lack of proper sleep for his age. We get home after 7pm afterschool activities work so he will be in bed by 9 to have to be up at 5am to be out the door by 6am.
- There is a lot of evidence based research that children need more sleep than they are getting. With this new schedule, my child will get an hour less sleep, not more. During sleep, their young minds make connections from the day. Without good sleep, these connections are not made and despite more class time, they learn less. I think this is a short sited decision that does not take into account our kids well-being.
- There are many families staying far from school, but send their Kids to this school because it is IB magnet and a good school. All of those families will be affected with this change.
- The bell schedule should better correlate to working parents' schedules. Typically 8-4pm, with 30 minutes slated for lunch and 30 minutes slated for planned recess or outdoor time, 7 hours of actual instruction is more conducive to learning. Lunch and Recess should not be included in total amount of hours in school. 7 hour instruction time allows for more actual

instruction and less homework. Homework after school does not allow for quality family time (1:1) time for working parents, most notably midweek church activities and dinner as a family. The bell schedules are reflective of older times, when the mother often stayed at home as a homemaker.

- I don't mind the additional 40 mins of class but feel it unrealistic for parents and teachers to make it to school at 735am when we drive an hour to get to school.
- I'm not satisfied with the proposed changes in the bell schedule. I would like to have the present timings to continue as we have commutation problems.
- I know this is directly related to MacFarlane Park Elementary, but it is in combination with the Middle School Magnet bell change that makes the schedule changes all the more concerning. As we will need to leave the house at 6:30am in order to have my son at middle school on time, that means all of our household including my daughter, a MacFarlane Park student, will also be affected with less sleep and less family time, which is of utmost importance. Because of the schedule changes we will also be forced to consider after school care for 1 or both children and again, I am strongly against this option for OUR family. Among the distressing considerations of this bell change proposal is my elementary schooler being at school longer. While many European countries have proven that our young children thrive with LESS school, we are being asked to keep them in school longer? For what purpose? Our family puts a great value in allowing plenty of time for family activities including, but not limited to chores, play time, family conversations and interaction, extracurricular activities, sports, church, reading time and also unscheduled time, not to mention time for homework. In light of this, I am NOT IN FAVOR of the bell changes for magnet elementary and middle school. I do not think they will benefit our children's health, well-being or academic lives.
- This proposed change is NOT fair and is designed to negatively impact Magnet Elementary and Middle School children. We do NOT support it and it will be detrimental to the health of our children. Sleep deprivation has huge impacts on the development and well-being of children. Please do not implement this change.
- None of the above makes any sense and I feel that we (magnet schools) are unfairly penalized. This is a no go.
- I have not seen anywhere the reasons given for the proposed changes.
- It is really very difficult to commute so early in the morning with two kids every morning. The traffic is very bad and it takes us 45 minutes to reach school. I totally disapprove the bell schedule go the school!
- The earlier start time with later school days will adversely affect many children's sleep schedules. This also puts a strain on parents to transport their children to school and puts children who ride buses at greater risk walking to bus stops in early morning hours before sunrise, not to mention greater risk of being victims to criminal activity. If the Hillsborough County School Board believes children are not getting enough time in school, why not just add a few days to the end of the school year or start the year earlier?

- The morning is a critical time for young children to sleep, bond with parents and siblings and be able to enter school relaxed. Changing the bell schedule to 45min earlier will rob our kids of parent of dining, sleep and will add stress to their already long day at school. The bell schedule should remain at 8:20am.
- I have one child each in a magnet elementary, middle, and high school, and I also work full time. I have no idea how I would possibly get them all to school on time with the proposed schedule. Also, the entire family would lose an hour of sleep every day, 180+ days per year. That is extremely unhealthy and will negatively impact learning for all. It is unconscionable and inexcusable that the school district did not talk to any Macfarlane Park parents or staff before proposing to move up the start of the school day. Doesn't anyone downtown realize that the new start time would devastate our school community? Many parents would be forced to withdrawal their children from the best school in Hillsborough County due to unmanageable travel problems and concerns for the health of their families. The school district would already know this if the magnet elementary community had been included in their secret decision making process. No deviation without representation!
- It is clear that the school board did not make this decision in a transparent manner, nor did it take into account the health impacts to magnet elementary and middle school children.
- There is no way to get my elementary school child to school on time on time after I drop of my middle school child. This time change is unfair to magnet school children.
- All of the proposed bell times are shortsighted. This is far too early and the 9:30 middle schools are far too late for working families. This will only result in additional need for before and after school programs for families with children in both schools and an increased demand for busing. Both of which will cost more money than they expect to save. These changes will NOT solve the problem
- I am also concerned on how this may negatively impact the work day for our faculty and staff. Their work days will increase and they will have less planning time with the students starting early. (Additional comments have been sent directly to the School Bells email address). Thank you!
- Kids need more sleep and starting earlier does not facilitate this. Start time should be pushed back to 9 or 9:30
- By starting magnet schools early and getting kids to school even earlier for free breakfast, kids are losing a lot of sleep, especially for commuters. Even worse is for those parents who have children in daycares, who have to get dropped off first, there are no daycares that open that early. What are they supposed to do??? And how are kids going to take advantage of the extra time at school? I read that they will have more time for PE. Are you kidding me????
- I would like to know how this extra time in school will be used given there's always budget cuts especially to PE and specials.

- IB schools attract IB families. The distance between Macfarlane and EITHER Williams or Walker are almost impossible to manage with the close dismissal times, in particular. To put parents in the position of having to leave kids in HOST just because the times are too close is unfair.
- I have concerns about students being at school at 7. Additionally, I have concerns about the transportation and expectations of teachers. Many of our teachers have long commutes and this is an undue burden on them as well. I live very close to the school but we used to drive 45 minutes each way. It would require parents to leave for work at 6 am, which impacts the whole family.
- If they would like to extend school time they could do it from 8.10 am to 2.50 pm will give additional 30 min without affecting kids sleep.
- I think it makes the day too long for Elementary school children and it is not fair to parents with children in magnet schools because they don't all live close by and might already have a long drive in the mornings.
- I am not only concerned about the amount of sleep my children will receive on an earlier start time but also the amount of time between breakfast and lunch that will occur. I have a diabetic daughter who must eat at regular intervals, adding 40 minutes onto the day puts her at risk for low blood sugar in the mornings. I also think adding 40 minutes is an awfully long day for an elementary student. As it is I deal with regular after school meltdowns due to exhaustion. A longer school day would only increase my children's exhausted state at the end of the day.
- All above reflects most points I wanted to raise. While my kid is not using the school bus for Macfarlane Magnet school due to unreasonable timings, the current time it comes to my neighborhood in Lutz per the communication in the year start is 5:45 AM for school start at 8:20 AM and with the proposed bell change will it come for pickup at 5:00 AM. REALLY??? I can't imagine how this will help kids to be effective. Also I have daughter in Walker and with the new schedule I am left with no option other than pulling one of them from Magnet school even though both of them are doing really excellent in the schools and we want to continue in Magnet IB School.
- This is not fair to IB students who already work harder than most other students in the district. This has been an A school for years. Extending the day and making these poor children come in even earlier than they already can ultimately affect their personal achievements and the school grade in the long run. This is also not fair to IB teachers who work so hard for very little pay. They barely have enough planning time as is. To make them work for an hour longer than other teachers and then have to do double the planning seems incredibly unjust. Not one bit of this seems logical. Nor has research proved that this is the way to solve the apparent "bus" problem.
- This seems like it will also have a negative effect on teachers and their prep time. Teachers already get to school very early. Elementary aged children already have a long day from 8:20-

2:30. Sleep is more important at this age, especially when it will take them those extra 40 minutes to wake up and be alert for learning.

- Make high school kids get up earlier!!! No elementary.
- While I don't have middle schoolers, there is no way I could get my kids to school on time if we continue in IB programs. I also feel this is not fair for families who commute already from far and spent 30-45 minutes in the car as is.
- 7:35 is not a fair start time for magnet which draw students from all across the County!
- As a parent of 2 students I am completely against a 7:35 start time. With over a 50 min commute to school in the morning we will now be leaving the house much earlier and during the winter they will be starting school when it is dark outside. Also the fact that the Magnet program had no representation in the initial research and development of a new schedule shows bias and does not adequately represent a good sampling of elementary schools in the county. For MacFarlane Park -this change is not necessary and the fact that you are putting a bus schedule in front of the well-being and education of our children is deplorable. Do not change what does not need to be fixed. Please leave our school out of this.
- Magnet schools draw from across the entire County and therefore parents drive far to attend them. Starting earlier negatively affects magnet school families.

Comments in favor of the change (5 out of 50):

- I have children in both Hillsborough and Pinellas County and my Hillsborough county magnet school child spends less time in school. I think it would be greatly beneficial to have the extra educational time. I don't particularly agree with early release on Mondays either. I'd much rather an extra day or two off during the year to spend family time. I love the idea of the new time. Even coming from Pinellas County the drive/timing would not be an inconvenience due to the time if day t would actually be less Traffic.
- I am very happy with the proposed changes. The earlier time will allow my child, and many others, to be in a classroom rather than sitting in the school cafeteria with limited supervision because the school refuses to offer morning HOST or assign more teachers morning duties. The additional instructional time is also very important due to the extra specials and Magnet curriculum integration. This will ensure our children receive the same amount of core instructional time as other schools and the other things offered (i.e. Strings and Spanish) are truly in addition to, rather than in place of, core instruction. The school has already been dismissing early (before the end of the 2:35 instructional day) for years. The IB curriculum and mindset is what I want for my child. The added time to the day will provide more time for teachers to enhance learning.
- To avoid rush hours, we have to leave our house earlier and end up waiting in front of school until it opens. We use our morning time for reading. If we leave 5 minutes later than our usual time, we end up being stuck in traffic for an extra 25min and lose our morning reading time. Talking to few people who travel an hour to get to their school, they voiced that leaving

a little earlier (5-10min) will save them time spent stuck in traffic (25-35min on average, for some even more) because of the rush hours. I don't see a concern about a longer day since it'll include more PE time and activities.

- I'm hoping the earlier start time will make for less crowded roads on our morning commute. This will also help parents who need be at work before 8am and have struggled to find before school care for their children. Lastly I feel our children will benefit from the extra 40 minutes of instructional time since our curriculum is so broad.
- I think 30 mins earlier would be fair than 45 mins