

# **STARTING HIGH SCHOOL AT 8:30 OR LATER**

**Why Does that Matter to ME?  
Or why SHOULD it?**

A new packet with fun infographics, more colors, fonts, and pictures, and even a quiz. Hopefully, this appeals to you more than the less exciting research review!

(It's got new information and references, too!)

Compiled for the FBISD School Board and other interested parties by Stephanie Ellis, Ph.D.

# Starting High School at 8:30 or Later: Why Does That Matter TO ME?

I've given you the research about how this impacts our students, and the benefits you could provide them with. But it hasn't seemed to have any impact yet.

Now I've put together a packet for you of information that I believe will speak to each of you personally, maybe emotionally. Be warned... I've been trying to focus on the good we could do by changing HS start times. Now, I'm going to go ahead and lay out the truth about the harm that's being done, too.

If you need a very brief review of the research showing that teens are sleep deprived, and that there is no way for them not to be sleep deprived with a high school start time before 8:30, turn the page.

If your "gut" says that teens are doing fine, turn to page 3.

If you're mostly worried about what parents will think, take a look at page 5.

If you think that experts (like people with medical degrees and research doctorates) have training and knowledge that matters, just wait until you see page 7!

If it's life and death issues that matter most to you, check out page 8. (Fair warning; it's a doozy!)

If you want to help the district avoid potential lawsuits, turn to page 9.

For a little bit of a lighthearted break, check out page 11 for Pro Tips on avoiding sleep deprived people!

If you care about social justice (and I know you do!), check out page 12.

If you're pretty sure this whole thing is really parents' responsibility, take a look at page 13.

If you would never give a teenager a beer & a shot of vodka before putting them behind the wheel, see page 15.

If you want to see how early high school start times have affected you personally, take the quiz on page 16.

If you believe this matters, and frankly if you don't want student deaths on your conscience, turn to page 17, where you can be reminded of my contact information. If you can't do anything as the Board, maybe you can help me find another way. If it's not popular, but you still care, feel free to email me anonymously from a trash email. I won't out you; I promise. I know you didn't cause this. But you're letting it happen.

**The only thing necessary for evil to triumph in the world is that good men do nothing.**

—Edmund Burke

(Probably not attributable to the oft-attributed Edmund Burke. But you get the idea. )

References on pages 18-19. Because you know I'd never give you something that wasn't grounded in science. Be aware – despite how I'm trying to make this engaging for you, the references are in black and white, with no fun pictures. If I were made of money, there would be billboards already!

# A VERY Brief Research Review (with cute sleepy animal pics)

## Teens aren't lazy.

And they're not *\*just\** overscheduled.

The changes in the adolescent sleep cycle (that is, they **get sleepy later and wake up later** than both kids and adults) are **NORMAL**.

In fact, it's not even just humans! It's MAMMALS!

Teens also need **MORE sleep than adults and fifth graders – 9.5 to 10 hours/ night!**

(They're going through major physical and cognitive maturation that requires more sleep.)



When high schools start at 8:30 or later, compared to before 8:00, improvements are seen in:

- **Academic performance** (standardized tests scores, GPAs, college admissions, tardiness, attendance, graduation rates)
- **Physical health** (BMI, cardiovascular health, dietary choices, physical activity, caffeine/nicotine/alcohol/drug use, car accidents, injuries, and risky behaviors)
- **Mental health** (depression, hopelessness, suicidal thinking/planning/completion, anxiety/worry, test anxiety, mood, emotion regulation, coping skills, family interactions)
- **Delinquency** (classroom behavior, suspensions, risky behavior, substance use, physical aggression, juvenile arrests)

## Teens ARE NOT getting enough sleep!

73% percent of U.S. high school students getting less than the recommended 8-10 hours of sleep on school nights.

68% of them are getting **less than 7 hours!** Chronic sleep loss in adolescents poses **risks to physical and mental health, public safety, and reduced academic performance.**



# My “Gut” Says They’ll Be Fine

First, we don’t let students say their “gut” says that  $2+2=5$ .  
We certainly don’t let them say that their “gut” says they don’t need to wear protective goggles in chemistry lab.

~ ~ ~

**Guts are all well and good, but data is better.**

The **DATA** says that people’s “guts” (intuitions, beliefs) about if their kids are getting enough sleep are **WRONG**!

First of all, parents are **TERRIBLE** at estimating how much sleep their teens are getting! They think their teens are going to bed about 20-30 minutes earlier than they are, and they think their teens are getting almost an hour more sleep than they really are on weekdays and an hour and a half more than they really are on weekends! Teens, as it turns out, are pretty good at estimating their own sleep time, based on data from wearables. (Short et al., 2013)

Here are some **OTHER MYTHS** that more than half of parents believe (Robbins et al., 2022):

Going to bed and waking up late on the weekends is no big deal for adolescents, as long as they get enough sleep during that time (74% of parents)

If school starts later, adolescents will stay up that much later (69% of parents)

Energy drinks can counteract the negative effects of not sleeping enough (53% of parents)

Melatonin supplements are safe for adolescents because they are natural (66% of parents)

## MYTHS!

Getting too much sleep is bad for teens (51% of parents)

# My “Gut” Says They’ll Be Fine

But maybe YOU had an early high school start time and YOU were fine.

~ ~ ~

Chances are, you actually weren’t (take the quiz on page 16 to find out more!)

Also, chances are you were probably at least spanked if not beat as a child. But we’re not saying that’s a great idea these days.

We’re DEFINITELY not saying it’s a good idea at SCHOOL.

(Also, you aren’t average. Every single Board Member has at least a college degree, putting you in the top 23.5% most educated adults in America. We’re trying to protect & provide FAPE for everyone.)

## Take this journey with me...

Maybe you think, “I get less sleep than my teen, and I’m doing fine.”

But, you probably AREN’T getting less sleep than them. (Do you go to sleep – not BED, sleep) later than your teen and also wake them up in the morning?

Even if you are, that’s not the equivalent based on their biology. (Are you getting fewer than 5 hours of sleep per night after having traveled two-three time zones?)

And even if YOU are sleep deprived, 72% of adults are getting 7+ hours of sleep per night (their recommended amount) (United States, 2020).

Only 27% of teens are getting 9+ hours of sleep per night (their recommended amount) (Wheaton et al., 2018)

And, chances are that you don’t start work at 7:30 (or are you a high school teacher, so maybe you do?)

And even if YOU are at work, *working*, at 7:30am, the average work start time (for a daytime worker) in the US is 7:55 am, which is almost an hour after the most typical natural wake time for adults.

Compare that to the 7:30am high school start time, which is half an hour to an hour before average teens’ natural wake time of 8-8:30am)

Even if you do, that’s not the equivalent based on their biology. The equivalent is you sleeping from 11pm to 4am and then being at work, *working*, at 5am. (Or, a better comparison is probably you sleeping from 9p to 2a, and then work at 3a.)

~ ~ ~

If that weren’t enough, by the way, you might not be fine either. If you aren’t sleeping at least 7 hours per night unassisted and waking up feeling rested, then even if you don’t feel it right now, you are putting yourself at risk for decreased cognitive performance, increased mood disturbance, and a host of medical conditions. (If you personally want to learn more about how to improve your own sleep, daytime performance, and long term health, let me know. Find my contact info on page 17.)

**And even if you are “fine,” you are not going through the major biological and neurodevelopmental changes that adolescents are!**

# But the PARENTS....

## Here's what parents of teens are afraid of:

(Woolford et al., 2023)

Screen/Device TIME (67%)  
SOCIAL MEDIA (66%)

Improved by  
adequate sleep!  
(Tambalis et al., 2018)

Depression/SUICIDE (57%)  
STRESS/anxiety (52%)  
Lack of MH Services (47%)

Improved by  
adequate sleep!  
(e.g., Peltz, 2021)

UNHEALTHY DIET (52%)  
OBESITY (48%)

Improved by  
adequate sleep!  
(Gariepy et al., 2018;  
Tambalis et al., 2018)

Improved by  
adequate sleep!  
(Pasch et al., 2010; Street  
et al., 2016; TCoC, 2003)

BULLYING (53%)  
SCHOOL VIOLENCE (49%)

Improved by  
adequate sleep!  
(Miller et al., 2017; Street  
et al., 2016)

SMOKING/VAPING (48%)  
DRINKING/USING DRUGS (44%)

Improved by  
adequate sleep!  
(e.g., O'Brien et al., 2013;  
Uy et al., 2017)

RISKY BEHAVIOR (like gun  
INJURIES (47%) and INTERNET  
SAFETY (62%))

# Other things parents of teens are afraid of (Woolford et al., 2023):

COSTS OF Healthcare (50%)

Oh, wait... teens who sleep enough are healthier, which means they're less likely to need medical care.

Poverty (45%)

Oh, wait... it's just that economically disadvantaged teens are disproportionately helped by later high school times.

You know what parents probably do want, aside from just safety, and health, and academic performance, and kids not going to jail?

How about better coping skills & better family relationships?

Guess what.

**WOW!**

We actually found something parents care about that later high school start times are unlikely to help!

**WOW!**

Now HERE is something that later high school start times are unlikely to help!

Improved by adequate sleep!

(APA, 2014; Wang & Yip, 2019)

Please, can we stop with the insanity about "if we flip BELL schedules, our little babies will be waiting for the bus in the dark"??!

First, exactly how many parents are letting their five-year-olds walk to the school bus stop and wait there by themselves in the light?

What is it exactly that we are worried about? Is it abductions? Because kids aged 12 to 18 are five times more likely to be abducted by strangers than kids who are between five and 12.

Is it being hit by cars in the dark? Teens are four times as likely to be involved in pedestrian vehicle accidents than younger kids.

Also, right now FBISD elementary schoolers are waiting for the bus generally between seven and 730. Guess who's driving on the roads right then, while your five year olds are standing blissfully on the curb?

Sleep deprived teens. Not good. Meanwhile, early elementary start have "near zero effects" on student health and performance. (Bastian & Fuller, 2023)

**BUT WE DON'T WANT THE SCARY PARENTS TO BE MAD THAT WE'RE INCONVENIENCING THEM, EVEN FOR THEIR KIDS' WELLBEING.**

Lucky you. **92%** of parents & teachers are happy about later HS start times by the end of the first year. (Texas School Health Advisory Committee, 2022)

# EXPERTS!

Every one of these professional & scientific organizations and sleep scientists recommend that high school start at 8:30 or later...

American Academy  
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



*National  
Association of  
School Nurses*



AMERICAN  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION



Texas School Health Advisory Committee



The Surgeon General!



And it's not that I think you aren't taking me seriously as a short, female, American psychologist, but...

...since research shows that people take men (Wen et al., 2020), tall people (Stulp et al., 2015), and people with British accents (Shah, 2019) more seriously, have a listen to this podcast featuring Dr. Matt Walker (Professor of Neuroscience and Psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, and Founder and Director of the Center for Human Sleep Science) and Dr. Craig Canapari (Director of the Sleep Medicine Program at Yale University).



# It IS Life & Death. No kidding here.

The top three causes of death in the U.S. for the age group 15-24 in 2022 (CDC) were:

- Unintentional injuries (mostly vehicular accidents) – 14,861

Not only does sleep deprivation increase drowsy driving (accidents which account for 20% of fatal crashes, and accidents in which teens are over-represented by about 5x), it also decreases attentional capacity and increases risk-taking, like alcohol and drug use (which contribute to fatal car crashes). It also increases the likelihood of non-motor vehicle accidents and injuries.

- Homicides – 6,306

Although I don't have the data here about what number of the teens killed by homicide are killed by other teens versus adults, teens who sleep adequately are less likely to engage in juvenile delinquency, including violent offending.

- Suicides – 6062

Sleep deprivation increases mood dysregulation, depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. Poor/insufficient sleep is one of the largest risk factors for suicide attempt and completion.

- By the way, the next largest group is cancer, coming in at a whopping 1,440. Actually, adding up every other category in the top ten gets us only to 3,849, cancer included. They're all health conditions.

And you know what? Adequate sleep also improves every studied health variable.

**Am I saying that FBISD's high school start time is killing young people? No. I'm just (1) giving you the unequivocally clear data that every cause of death for teens/youth is negatively impacted by sleep deprivation and (2) telling you that all of the science unambiguously shows that there is no way for teens to get the recommended amount of sleep with the start times we have. You can draw your own conclusions.**

Does it need to be personal? There were 3055 crashes of teen drivers (ages 16-18) in Fort Bend County during the 22-23 school year (TXDOT CRIS). Six of them were fatal. Six lives. And statistically, since drowsy driving is the cause of 20% of fatalities, at least one of those might have been prevented. More likely two or more, because teen drivers are 5x more likely to be driving drowsy than adults. Two or more deaths may have been prevented, JUST LAST SCHOOL YEAR. How about the 13 suicides in FBC teens in 2018?

# Help FBISD Avoid Potential Lawsuits

Here's something to think about...

- In Texas, if you sell or serve an alcoholic beverage to someone who is obviously intoxicated, and then that person causes some kind of damage that is proximate to them being intoxicated (like a car accident), you can be held legally liable. (Alcoholic Beverage Code, Title 1, Chapter 2, Sec. 2.02) Driving while sleep deprived is as dangerous as or more dangerous than driving drunk (e.g., Lowrie & Brownlow, 2020; Pacheco & Rehman, 2023). And students don't biologically have a choice about when they fall asleep or when they have to be at school, unlike adults who have a choice about when they drink.
- West Virginia, California, and Oregon appellate courts have all ruled that an employer was liable for their sleep-deprived employee's car accidents on the way home from work! (Berlin, 2008)
- Illinois didn't, but would have held the employer (a hospital) liable if the injury had happened in the hospital or in the course of the resident's duties. (In that particular case, consider that sleep-deprivation should be a primary factor when determining consequences for teens who engage in juvenile delinquency, risk-taking behavior, classroom discipline issues, and have failing grades, even if you don't think a court would hold the district liable for a car accident off school property.)

***I'M NOT SAYING I WANT PARENTS TO FILE LAWSUITS! I ACTUALLY DON'T!  
THAT'S MONEY THE DISTRICT PROBABLY COULD USE TO DO BETTER THINGS!***

**But I do think it's only a matter of time.**

And when someone brings that lawsuit, one of the questions will be **"Why did FBISD consistently and willfully act not only against the research about sleep deprivation in teens, but against the advice of the AMA, AAP, APA, CDC, US Surgeon General, and Texas Dept of State Health Services?"** What is the answer to that going to be? Who is going to need to answer it?

Just a note about "sovereign immunity"...

It's true, while individuals employed by public school districts in Texas are protected from personal liability in basically all cases except actually running a kid down with your own car or actually punching them in the face (Texas Education Code , Title 2, SubTitle D, Ch. 22, Subch B. Civil Immunity), that doesn't mean the district is – "a government unit in the state is liable for: property damage, personal injury, and death proximately caused by the wrongful act or omissions or negligence" ... but it does have to involve *tangible property* [like school equipment] (Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Title 5, Ch 101, SubchB, Tort Liability of Governmental Units.) Because of the current protection of 101.051, the biggest liability is going to be damage that occurs because someone is also reckless enough to let a student operate a "motor vehicle," but know that it takes lawsuits to get legislation changed.

**Oh, and let's think about if we want these loopholes to be the reason you're not liable. If this is where your mind went, instead of "I'd rather students not be injured or killed because of policies we could easily change," THAT'S NOT OK.**

# Some interesting options that would reduce liability, if you really don't want to start high school later:

- **Counting all absences and tardies that have a parent citing "My child was visibly too tired to drive" as excused? (But wait – that wouldn't be good for our state reporting. Or our students' academic progress. But changing HS start times is good for both!)**
- **Making bus pickup and drop-off available to every student attending each school, even within 2 miles, where most accidents occur? (But wait – that would cost money and changing HS start times doesn't. And it doesn't help students in any other way.)**
- **Giving "field sobriety tests" to all students who are going to leave the school premises in their own cars, and assisting them in finding alternative transportation if they are too sleepy to drive adequately? (Talk about expensive! And ridiculous! And not helpful, in any other way.)**
- **We could go back to fully online schools with all those laptops the district just purchased for every middle and high school student? That would help with the driving, but probably the sleep, too. (My kids figured out they only need about 3 hours to get school done online.) And with cost. And busses. (I'm guessing that's a "no," but I'm also guessing that every reason you might give is made better by starting high school later!)**

## Want to know something **SO IRONIC?**

**Even mild sleep deprivation  
makes people **MORE** likely to SUE!**

Mildly sleep-deprived adults (6hrs/night for 4 nights) are more likely to believe doctors made severe errors, more likely to recommend physician punishment, and more likely to impose the harshest possible penalties! (Nguyen et al., 2019)

Also, this article does a great job of demonstrating that even this mild sleep deprivation causes daytime sleepiness, mood disturbances, and attentional difficulties, in case you want to check it out.

# PTC Tips

HERE ARE A FEW RESEARCH-BACKED PRO-TIPS FOR YOUR OWN LIFE, JUST TO GIVE YOU A BREAK FROM ALL THIS HEAVINESS...

## Sleep-deprived people and situations to avoid:

- Try not to go to court/before a judge on the day after “spring forward” – that very small amount of sleep deprivation leads to harsher sentences. This is actually also true whenever judges are sleepy, but you probably won’t be able to know that. (Cho et al., 2017).
- Try not to get in trouble with the law, generally. Police officers tend to have low average sleep quality, for various reasons (Garbarino et al., 2019). Not only do people aim guns poorly when sleep deprived (Rezasoltani et al., 2019), they naturally overestimate what constitutes a threat (Zenses et al., 2020). Be especially mindful if you aren’t in the same demographic group as the law enforcement officers who are attending you – sleep deprivation increases “outgroup bias” (Zhang et al., 2020). (“Outgroup bias” is when people overestimate the “badness” of people who aren’t “like them”)
- Try not to go to the hospital at ALL, ever. Hospitals still have insane policies about length of shifts, and you don’t know how long your nurse, doctor, or surgeon may have been awake. Even moderate sleep deprivation increases self-reported medical errors by over 50% (Trockel et al., 2020).
- But ESPECIALLY avoid residents...they average 66 hrs of work/week, with shifts up to 40 hours long, with an average sleep time of 6 hours per day. Along with working on-call shifts, all of those factors independently increase medical errors. (Mul Fedele et al., 2023).
- You can probably fly pretty safely. While pilots do have pretty awful sleep schedule and quality (Abdelaziz et al., 2024), most of the national/international airline requirements include some rest protections, the requirement for co-pilots, and at least options for “controlled rest” during flights (Jackman, 2018). Yes, there was that recent incident where both pilots fell asleep during a transatlantic flight, and people got very upset! (e.g., Hassan, 2024). No one died! 157 people MIGHT have. But 2,100 deaths every year just in the US can be attributed to teen drowsy driving and no one seems to care!?
- Don’t try to have a meaningful conversation with your partner, if either of you haven’t been getting enough good quality sleep – being sleep-deprived increases cortisol and reduces positive feelings in communication with your partner (Currotto et al., 2022). (Actually, low quantity/quality of sleep is really terrible for relationships in many ways, but it’s probably too much to discuss here. Suffice it to say, don’t get divorced if you aren’t sleeping enough. Fix the sleep issues for you both and then see if you might like being married.) If you’ve had this experience before, of either being unreasonable/cranky/emotional with too little sleep or communicating with an unreasonable/cranky/emotional partner, please remember this is how parents are forced to interact with teens – it’s no wonder we think they’re “moody.”
- Don’t drive in the early morning hours. And don’t drive if you haven’t slept enough. (Note: I did not say “if you feel sleepy” – once you’re sleep deprived, you’re no longer good at judging if you’re sleepy!) Even though adults are less sleep deprived than teens, and are better at driving-when-tired than teens, we’re still incredibly bad drivers when we haven’t slept enough – lane departures, near-crash events, etc. (Cai et al., 2021)

**Just remember – our teens are more sleep deprived than any of these people... definitely avoid talking to them and don't hold them accountable for ANYTHING**

# How about social justice?

(This is in several of your website bios! I know you care!)



**Female students, racial/ethnic minorities, and students of lower socioeconomic status** are particularly affected [by early start times], with teens in these categories less likely to report regularly getting seven or more hours of sleep each night compared with their male counterparts, non-Hispanic white teenagers, and students of higher socioeconomic status. (Columbia Univ, 2015)

**Sexual and gender minority** adolescents reported substantially higher prevalence of past-year suicidal ideation and suicide attempt and 2.6× higher prevalence of very short sleep duration. Very short sleep duration partially mediated the pathway between SGM identity and past-year suicidal ideation (15.5% mediated) and suicide attempt (17.2% mediated). (Clark et al., 2023)

Adolescents who met all three [Canadian 24-hour movement guidelines, which include 8-10 hours of sleep for ages 13-17] recommendations showed a lower likelihood of suicidal ideation, suicide planning, and attempted suicide than those who did not meet all the recommendations. Overall, when **younger adolescents, female adolescents, and adolescents of minority races** met the 24-h movement recommendations, they had lower odds of suicide-related outcomes than when they did not. (Lopez-Gil et al., 2024)

**Gender minority adolescents** reported the worst sleep patterns and socioemotional outcomes, followed by sexual minority and cisgender heterosexual adolescents. Emotional well-being, self-esteem, and peer relationships at age 17 were prospectively predicted by sleep patterns and the associations were moderated by sexual and gender minority status. (Wong et al., 2024)

More than two-thirds of US adolescents are sleeping less than 8 hours nightly on school nights. **Racial and ethnic minority children and adolescents** are at an increased risk of having shorter sleep duration and poorer sleep quality than their white peers. Racial/ethnic minorities and those whose parents had little formal education said they were less likely to regularly get seven or more hours of sleep, yet they were more likely to report getting adequate sleep, suggesting a mismatch between actual sleep and perceptions of adequate sleep.

(Guglielmo et al., 2018)

**What about FAPE? (FREE APPROPRIATE Public Education)**  
Sure, there are plenty of things rich families can do to reduce the burden. Katy ISD's virtual school, private school, home school. But what are we doing?! Are our best efforts really just to further **widen the gap** by letting the **“rich kids”** **have more sleep and all of its benefits, while depriving mostly the economically disadvantaged?!**

# **THIS IS PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY, RIGHT?**

WELL, PARENTS SHOULD CERTAINLY BE DOING WHAT THEY CAN.  
AND WHAT CAN THEY BE DOING?

**Do you think parents should set and enforce bed times for their teens?**

**They should!\***

**Take screens and devices out of their rooms, especially at night?**

**They should!**

**Encourage and make space for their teens to have physical activity every day?**

**They should!**

**In case any parents are reading, here are some things you should NOT do:**

**Force your kids to lie in bed, awake, before they are sleepy.** (\*Being in bed doesn't help you sleep. In fact, lying in bed awake, which teens will do because their parents will say they have to be in bed, but they won't be able to fall asleep, that actually contributes to further sleep problems. Bedtimes are good after biology is taken into account.)

**Mess with their melatonin** (which has worrisome implications for pubertal development!) **or use other sleep medications unless directed by your pediatrician.** (By the way, your pediatrician is probably part of the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, who both advise that high schools start at 8:30 or later.)

**Let them sleep in late on weekends** (It turns out that regularity is more important for daytime functioning. The "social jet lag" of sleeping late on weekends is likely to impair their sleep even further for the first few days of the school week, setting up an additionally damaging pattern.)

**THOSE THINGS HELP - TEENS WITH AWESOME PARENTING AND HEALTHY HOUSEHOLDS AND SOUND RULES WILL SLEEP MORE THAN TEENS WHO DON'T HAVE THAT.**

**BUT THEY ARE STILL SLEEP DEPRIVED!**

**PARENTS CANNOT CHANGE THE NORMAL, BIOLOGICAL, DEVELOPMENTAL CIRCADIAN RHYTHM AND SLEEP PRESSURE CHANGES IN ADOLESCENCE THAT SIMPLY MEAN THEY NEED TO SLEEP LATER.**

**ONLY FBISD CAN DO ANYTHING ABOUT THAT!**

**OTHERWISE, YOU CONDEMN THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO THE NEGATIVE OUTCOMES PRESENTED HERE.**

# I MEAN, IT'S NOT THE DISTRICT'S RESPONSIBILITY, RIGHT?

Maybe it wouldn't have been, if you hadn't made every goal, core belief, and commitment of the district something that requires adequate sleep.\*



Not without enough sleep, they can't.

HS teachers  
ALSO function  
better with  
more sleep  
on a delayed  
start time –  
Less stress &  
More effective  
(Wahlstrom et al.,  
2022)

## CORE BELIEFS AND COMMITMENTS

Core Belief 1: All students can reach their full potential.

Commitment: Fort Bend ISD will provide an educational system that will ensure all students can reach their full potential.

Core Belief 2: We believe student success is best achieved...

...through effective teachers that inspire learning.

Commitment: Fort Bend ISD will recruit, develop, and support effective teachers.

...in a supportive climate and safe environment.

Commitment: Fort Bend ISD will provide a supportive climate and safe learning environment.

...by empowered and effective leaders throughout the system.

Commitment: Fort Bend ISD will provide and promote leadership development at all levels.

...in a well-functioning, high-performing community of learners.

Commitment: Fort Bend ISD will be a collaborative, efficient, and effective learning community.

92% of teachers are happy  
after starting HS later! That's GOOD  
for retention!

I won't mark this one,  
but I'm sure leadership  
development in FBISD  
includes data-driven  
decision making?

## MISSION AND VISION

### MISSION

Fort Bend ISD exists to inspire and  
equip all students to pursue futures  
beyond what they can imagine.

### VISION

Fort Bend ISD will graduate students  
who exhibit the attributes of the  
District's Profile of a Graduate.

Efficient and  
effective learning  
only happen with  
adequate sleep.

## PROFILE OF A GRADUATE

A Fort Bend ISD Graduate has a rigorous academic foundation, strong character, and is...

equipped with skills for life.



Fort Bend ISD graduates are literate and articulate; proficient with technology; and

a compassionate citizen.



Fort Bend ISD graduates are compassionate; are culturally aware; actively engage in improving our diverse community; are kind; and are

a servant leader.



Fort Bend ISD graduates demonstrate leadership skills; maintain a positive attitude; and are accountable for their own actions. They are

a collaborative team member.



Fort Bend ISD graduates work effectively with others; are

an effective communicator.



Fort Bend ISD graduates communicate clearly both orally and in writing; demonstrate active listening; are effective; and

a life-long learner.



Fort Bend ISD graduates apply what they have learned to new situations; are academically prepared

a critical thinker.



Fort Bend ISD graduates are visionary and innovative; have the courage to actively challenge conventional methods in order to improve themselves and the world around them.

Not as many  
as you could!

\*Sorry. This single item actually  
might not be affected by high school  
start time?

## DISTRICT GOALS



**District Goal 1**  
Fort Bend ISD will provide an educational system that provides all students access to the FBISD curriculum.



**District Goal 2**  
Fort Bend ISD will ensure all students graduate from high school through the FBISD curriculum.



**District Goal 3**  
Fort Bend ISD will provide an inclusive, collaborative, and fluid learning environment with opportunities for both risk-taking and success.



**District Goal 4**  
Fort Bend ISD will develop a collaborative, literate, language, and



**District Goal 5**  
Fort Bend ISD will develop an organizational culture that



# NEVER WOULD I EVER...

The U.S. Government, since 2006, has required that even prisoners of war undergoing advanced interrogation techniques must be allowed at least 4 hours' sleep per 24 hours (that's -3 hours from the recommended adult need of 7 hours).

Due to normal biological, developmental changes, the average high school student needs 9.5 hours of sleep per night and CANNOT fall asleep before 11pm, regardless of "good parenting practices."

The average first bus stop time for FBISD high school bus routes is 6:30 am. FBISD recommends that students be at their bus stop and ready 10 minutes early, so 6:20am. Let's assume they showered the night before, don't eat breakfast, and get picked up within a 5-minute walk. So, they can wake up at ~6:00am at the latest.

We're at a maximum possible sleep time of 7 hours, which is 2.5 hours under the recommended sleep time for adolescents (adolescent need -2.5). *We're half an hour (or 16%) away from deserving to be court martialed. Can we not treat our teenagers better than PRISONERS OF WAR?*

I would  
NEVER  
torture  
anyone!



I would NEVER  
ruin school  
lunches!

I have to assume you wouldn't do this because of the danger to that child and the other people on the road (not just because it's illegal), right?

Assume a summer-well-rested teen starts the school year on a Monday. They get "short sleep" (2.5 hours less than needed) over several nights, which produces daytime deficits consistent with 24+ hour sleep deprivation (Banks & Dinges, 2007). Sleep deprivation of 18 hours shows equivalent driving performance of a .05% BAC, and 21 hours produces performance of .08% BAC (Yao et al., 2019). They're definitely "drunk" heading to school (and home...and taking little brother to soccer that evening...) by the first Friday of school, if not before!

What about if we reduce high school lunch from a minimum of 750 calories to 547 calories, and especially take away the proteins, veggies, and complex carbohydrates (which are the most cognitively supportive components, just like REM sleep, which occurs at the end of the sleep period and is what short-slept students are getting the least). But that's the equivalent when you make 7 hours the maximum amount of sleep our high schoolers can have!

By the way, FBISD has requirements for school breakfasts and lunches, in terms of minimum/maximum calories and a few other things like offering/requiring vegetables and amount of sodium. Worth noting, the meal calorie requirements are different for elementary, middle, and high school students! WHY?! Because they're different!

I would NEVER give a teenager a beer and a shot of vodka before putting them behind the wheel!



# Do HS start times matter to me?

Give yourself a point <u>each</u> if you, or any friend in high school, or any teen you currently know, has experienced any of the following:	
• Falling asleep in class	
• Poor attendance	
• Several tardies	
• Not graduating	
• Being overweight	
• Depression, suicidal thinking, or suicide	
• Anxiety, including test anxiety	
• Problems in relationship with parents	
• Getting injured during sports/activities	
• Getting detention, ISS, OSS, or in trouble with the law (x4)	
• Risky choices, including sex (x # of regrets)	
• Drug or alcohol use (x2)	
• Driving intoxicated, distracted, or drowsy (x3)	
Do you recommend any of those things? Give yourself a point for each one of those you DON'T recommend.	
Do you have a teacher or friend who wishes teens at school behaved better? (1 point for each friend)	
Do you/have you/will you have a teenage child? Give yourself a point for each teen you've had, expect to have, or have cared about.	
• Do you wish they (or teens in general) would be safe? A point per teen, or 26,000 points if you care about all current FBISD teens.	
• Do you wish they (or teens in general) would be healthy? A point per teen, or 26,000 points if you care about all current FBISD teens.	
• Do you want them to have good coping skills? (Same)	
Would you like to reduce family conflict for parents of teens? Or, do you wish you had a better relationship with your parents when you were a teen? A point or two!	
What time do you go to bed? Add 4 to that number. Would you like to wake up and start work at that time every day? If you answered no, give yourself 1 point. Or 1 point for every work day you wouldn't want to do that.	
Have you ever driven drowsy? If you answered yes, give yourself 5 points. (Because teen drivers are overrepresented by about 5x in drowsy driving accidents.)	
Do you drive on FBC roads? If you answered yes, give yourself a point. And say 3,000 prayers of gratitude for '23-24 and another 3000 prayers of protection for '24-25), because that's how many car crashes teens are involved in each school year.	
Of course, if you've been in a teen-involved car accident, or your teen has been, give yourself an extra point for every dollar is cost you.	

Total \_\_\_\_\_

*see? it matters. to you.*

# Contact Information

- Board members, you have my personal email already. Please contact me. Please help me figure out who it is who can help me help our teens!
- Anyone is welcome to contact me if you want additional information for yourself, want me to speak to a group, or want to help me spread the word.
- Please, contact me if you know what is needed, who is needed, or someone who might be helpful!

[StartSchoolLaterFBISD@gmail.com](mailto:StartSchoolLaterFBISD@gmail.com)



Everyone can also find the “boring” research review [here](#).



I have some videos that summarize the “boring” research review [here](#).



And the petition [here](#)!

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