

## **School Start Times Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### **Where can I find more resources and information related to school start times?**

The district has a dedicated web page, which includes a podcast and additional information, which can be found at [www.pinerichland.org/starttimes](http://www.pinerichland.org/starttimes).

### **What are the new school start times for the 2019-2020 school year?**

HS/MS: 7:45 a.m.

EHUE: 8:35 a.m.

Primary Schools: 9:20 a.m.

The HS/MS start time shifts from 7:20 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. Eden Hall will shift from 8:30 a.m. to 8:35 a.m. The primary schools will shift from 9:15 a.m. to 9:20 a.m.

### **What are the dismissal times in the afternoon for the 2019-2020 school year?**

HS/MS: 2:36 p.m.

EHUE: 3:10 p.m.

Primary Buildings (HE, RE & WE): 3:40 p.m.

Through improved efficiency of transportation and the reduction of homeroom and transition times at the high school and middle school, the dismissal times have been slightly adjusted from previous years. The high school and middle school will shift from 2:25 to 2:36 p.m., Eden Hall will shift from 3:05 to 3:10 p.m., and the primary school will shift from 3:30 to 3:40 p.m.

### **For parents who drive their students to school, what time can students be dropped off in the morning?**

All students are encouraged to use the district provided transportation (school bus). School buses provide safe, efficient transportation to and from school for all students in grades 1-12 (Students in kindergarten are provided transportation to school (AM program) and home from school (PM program)).

### **Drop off times for students:**

HS/MS: 7:30-7:40 a.m.

EH: 8:15-8:30 a.m.

Primary Buildings (HE, RE & WE): 9:00-9:15 a.m.

### **What are the Kindergarten Start and End Times?**

AM Kindergarten: 9:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

PM Kindergarten: 1:00 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.

### **What are the Kindergarten Arrival times for 2019-2020?**

AM Kindergarten - 9:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.

PM Kindergarten - 12:50 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

### **What if a Two-Hour Delay is Issued?**

Bus pickup and school opening are delayed by two hours. Lunch will be served.

### **What is the Modified Kindergarten Schedule?**

AM Kindergarten will meet from 11:20 a.m. - 1:05 p.m.

PM Kindergarten will meet from 1:55 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.

### **What if my child attends A.W. Beattie Career Center?**

A.W. Beattie assured Pine-Richland that the center would adapt to Pine-Richland's schedule. Students arriving on the PRHS campus will board a transfer bus at 7:30 a.m. **Students will not report to a Pine-Richland homeroom. Attendance will be taken at A.W. Beattie.** The transfer bus will be waiting along the yellow brick road on the high school campus.

In the afternoon, students will ride a bus from A.W. Beattie to the PRHS campus. Some students will remain on this bus and others will transfer to another bus to take the students home.

### **What are the A.W. Beattie Career Center Hours & Bus Pick-Up Times?**

Beattie Morning Session: 7:45 a.m. - 10:10 a.m.

Beattie Afternoon Session: 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. (Students eat lunch at PRHS.)

### **Bus Times for Beattie Transfer**

Bus leaves PRHS yellow brick road at approximately 7:30 a.m. to transport students to Beattie for AM session.

Bus leaves PRHS yellow brick road at 12:05 p.m. to transport students to Beattie for PM session. Students will be brought back to PRHS to board their regularly scheduled PM bus to take them home.

### **What is the half-day student dismissal for K-12 (i.e. during conferences and the last day of school)?**

- K-3 half-day dismissal will be 12:35 p.m.
  - No PM kindergarten on half days
- EHUE half-day dismissal will be 11:50 a.m.
- PRMS/PRHS half-day dismissal will be 10:58 a.m.

### **Will school lunch schedules be revised as a part of the newly proposed schedules?**

The lunch schedules will adjust with the bell schedules. Students would eat at approximately the same interval of time they do now, based upon their arrival at school. The same interval of time would exist from lunch to the conclusion of the school day as well. The amount of time that student will be allotted to eat lunch will not be impacted by the shift in start times.

### **How will the athletic practices and competitions be impacted?**

In consultation with the director of athletics, the change to the end of the high school/middle school day will have little to no impact on practices for athletic teams or competition schedules.

**How did the 2018-2019 high school and middle school start times at Pine-Richland School District compare to those in the rest of Allegheny County? How did the primary school dismissal times compare to other area primary schools?**

Compared to other Allegheny County high schools, Pine-Richland's previous start time was one of the earliest in the county. [You can review slide #3 of the school start times podcast.](#) Since Pine-Richland Middle and High Schools are on the same campus, along with the logistics of covering the entire Pine and Richland communities, the start times are the same. Although the primary school times are some of the latest in the county, the district was able to minimize the impact to 10 minutes through transportation efficiencies and reduced homeroom and transition times at the HS/MS. Several factors influence the actual arrival time home after dismissal (e.g., the geographic footprint of the district, length of the school day in comparison to other buildings in the district, fleet size, bus drivers, bus runs, etc.).

**What does this mean for primary families in terms of childcare, after-school activities, transportation of preschool children, and the original structure for “pick-ups” at the end of the day in the car rider line?**

Based on a review of literature and discussions with professionals with experience in this area, outside agencies, employers, childcare facilities, etc. will adjust to the availability and needs of families. Parents drive students to school for a variety of reasons. Parents pick-up students from school for a variety of reasons. There is a personal impact - versus generalized impact - with any change. People respond to those impacts in different ways depending on their personal situation. The schools would plan proactively and adjust drop-off and pick-up procedures to accommodate the modes of arrival and dismissal most fitting for families.

**Is Stepping Stones able to accommodate changes in structure to include more participants?**

Stepping Stones currently holds programs in each of our schools. The number of participants is based on requests by families in conjunction with the number of rooms available. Availability and room utilization differs in each primary school. Additional ideas have emerged at the primary level as well, including offering the traditional “after-school programs” as well as “before school programs” to assist families with supervision needs. Since the start of the day shifted by only five (5) minutes, significant challenges with the typical morning routines are not anticipated.

**Why did we make this change? How many students are impacted by this? Won't students just stay up later? What considerations were in place for students in kindergarten through 6th grade?**

**The health and wellness of older adolescents is the key driver of this work.** As one example, please read the [policy statement by the American Academy of Pediatrics](#). In addition, slides #4 and #5 of the [podcast](#) outline this rationale. This structural change which can be controlled by the district will provide an opportunity of more sleep for our 2,300 high school and middle school students every day. As outlined in the literature, the biology of adolescents is different. There is a slight shift for the 1,100 Eden Hall students with dismissal still scheduled just after 3:30 p.m. Through transportation efficiencies and decreased homeroom and transitional time at the HS/MS, the impact on the 1,200 primary students was significantly reduced.

The seriousness of health and wellness is the reason the district has studied this topic and is considering a change to the entire system. Moving a start time does not guarantee anything. Parents will need to ensure that older adolescents maintain their current bedtimes or even shift them earlier through better time management and routines. Sleep is part of a larger picture of habits and choices for students (e.g., exercise, nutrition, screen time, and substance abuse). Research does not suggest that kids stay up later. For this initiative to have the greatest positive impact on our students, families are encouraged to partner with the district in helping their children establish healthy habits for life. This opportunity to improve health and wellness rests with all of us.

The district worked to identify the start times that maximized the benefits and minimized the impacts on students and families. As mentioned above, there is minimal impact on Eden Hall. At the primary level, the majority of students - even in this model - will be home by 4:30 p.m. to 4:40 p.m.

**What are you anticipating the impact will be on the teaching and learning process as a result of the proposed recommendation? Is there research about how and when to best engage students and have you reviewed it? Would homework requirements be considered?**

Shifting the current model by 15 - 20 minutes will not represent a significant difference in the students' experience, nor the teaching and learning experience, particularly given the high levels of growth and achievement demonstrated by our students. As one measure, PSSA performance results for all tested grade levels are within the top decile of all schools in Pennsylvania. To maintain a similar learning schedule to what we have now, we are adjusting schedules at the primary schools to ensure the students are engaged in math and English Language Arts during the most opportune times. This will help to mitigate concerns regarding the learning stamina for our youngest learners. Through an ongoing district initiative that focuses on high-quality instructional practices. Students will engage in learning activities that require them to think, communicate, and move on a regular basis. Brain Breaks, which involve frequent movement structured into the school day, were studied and recommendations during our Health/Physical Education In-Depth Program Review. There is value in homework provided it is meaningful and relevant. The district will review the question of homework within the strategic plan.

#### **Staff-Related FAQs**

**What are the Faculty/Staff start times for 2019-2020?**

- K-3 buildings (Richland, Wexford, Hance) - 8:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.
- 4-6 building (Eden Hall) - 7:50 a.m. - 3:35 p.m.
- 7-8 building (Middle School) - 7:05 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
- 9-12 building (High School) - 7:05 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.

Generally, the times above will apply to faculty and staff. However, there are always unique situations that may require a slight deviation from the above times. For example, a paraprofessional's schedule might vary slightly due to the specific needs and supports provided to a student. These one-off situations will be handled at the building level.

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