

Scarborough Schools New Daily Schedule

To the Scarborough Business Community,

As you may have heard, Scarborough Public Schools will be changing their daily schedule beginning fall, 2018. The elementary schools will shift to an earlier schedule of 8:00am - 2:25pm, and the middle and high schools will shift to a later schedule of 9:00am - 3:25pm and 8:50am - 3:15pm, respectively. (Please see chart below.) We understand that this change will cause ripple effects through our community, and we wanted to reach out to you, as Scarborough business leaders, to explain why this change is happening and hopefully, to give you time to plan ahead for the ways in which this might affect your business.

2018-2019 NEW Student Day Schedule				2018-2019 NEW LATE START (One Wednesday per month) Student Day Schedule			
	Doors open for students	Start of Instructional Day	End of Instructional Day		Doors open for students	Start of Instructional Day	End of Instructional Day
K-5	7:40	8:00	2:25	K-5	9:05	9:25	2:25
6-8	8:40	9:00	3:25	6-8	10:05	10:25	3:25
9-12	8:30	8:50	3:15	9-12	9:55	10:15	3:15

For years, national health organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Association have recommended that adolescent students begin school at 8:30am or later. The reason for this is that there is a temporary shift in adolescents' biological rhythm that causes them to be unable to fall asleep until around 11pm with a natural waking time of around 8am. Experts recommend that this age group get 8.5 to 9.5 hours of sleep per night, but with an early school start time of 7:35 am and bus pick-ups beginning at 6:30 am, this simply hasn't been possible in Scarborough. Our teenagers are consistently sleep-deprived, which can lead to higher rates of car accidents, substance abuse, depression, obesity, and risky behaviors.

At the other end of the spectrum, elementary-aged students are more likely to be alert and ready to learn in the morning. We want to capitalize on that and provide our younger students with more instructional time in the morning, as well as opening up the opportunity for more active, outdoor play in the afternoon with an earlier release. Our goal in changing our schools' start times is that all students, of every age, will be able to get the recommended amount of sleep and benefit from safe, healthy, and appropriate school hours.

Communities around us are also beginning to shift their school schedules in recognition of this important health issue. Biddeford, Old Orchard Beach, Thornton Academy, Westbrook, Topsham, Brunswick, South Portland, and Yarmouth have already changed their start times. Gorham and Kennebunk are currently exploring their options.

The School Board recognizes that this change might affect your business. Traffic patterns might be different in the mornings and afternoons with school starting and ending on a different schedule. Perhaps you employ high school students who will be getting out of school a bit later than they have in the past. Daycares will see fewer children needing care in the morning, but will be having children arrive earlier in the afternoon. We do not take lightly the impact this change will have on all of Scarborough, and we appreciate your help and understanding as we move forward with this new schedule that we believe will be serving the best interests of our students, and by extension, our community. Thank you for your time, and please feel free to reach out with questions by emailing us at boe@scarboroughschools.org.

Sincerely,
Scarborough Board of Education