



March 4, 2020

To: Oregon School Board
From: Joe Donovan
Re: Survey report addendum

Thank you, once again, for giving my colleagues and me the opportunity to work with the Oregon School District on its start time survey. In addition to sharing the top-level results of the survey, I would like to provide this addendum.

In most cases, when we conduct surveys, the wishes of the majority of respondents are clear and we are provided with even more context when we disaggregate the data. At a high level, the desires of respondents are split, and it is difficult to discern a clear choice from the survey results. For this reason, I wanted to provide this document, which shares additional information as you consider the survey results.

1) Respondents are mixed in their suggestions, but they feel strongly about their positions.

While it may seem reasonable to sort the responses in a way that allows for their quantification, doing so introduces a great deal of subjectivity—even if all the sorting is done by a single member of our team. Therefore, we are reluctant to suggest doing so. As noted, respondents are mixed in their opinions about start times. However, based on the open responses, those who did respond seem to feel strongly about their positions.

2) Survey participation is very high.

From our perspective, what is remarkable about this survey is the level of participation from parents and the speed with which respondents participated. The number of parents that participated rival much larger districts. Moreover, the majority of responses to the survey came within the first three days of the survey's introduction.

While reminders were sent to ensure an even greater level of survey participation, they were hardly needed. These high numbers may be attributable to the nature of the survey, but we found similar results with previous surveys.

I must stop here and note that we find survey participation to be a proxy for engagement. Districts with low levels of parent engagement also tend to have low levels of survey participants, and the opposite is true for high-engagement districts. We commend the district for creating an environment for such outstanding survey participation.

3) The amount of effort put into survey responses is significant.

Aside from the number that describes high levels of survey participation, the amount of time that survey respondents spent answering questions and the amount of text provided in the open response questions suggest a high degree of engagement.

4) There are concerns about lunchtime.

As noted in the survey report, there is significant support for extending lunchtimes and many parents, some of whom noted they had joined their daughter or son for lunch, expressed concern about children being rushed while eating. Generally, we see in surveys that lunchtimes are an issue; it is generally the case that there are concerns about lunch being provided too early or too late in the day, as opposed to the amount of time offered for lunch. We found this interesting.

5) Responses reflect a strong concern for starting elementary school earlier.

As noted, the survey results are largely mixed. However, at the elementary level, there was a theme in the comment data about not starting earlier. Both sides of this issue are noted in our report.

What we find interesting, but difficult to report, is what appears to be a difference of intensity as it relates to the different sides. Those who did not like the earlier start time were quite intense in their opposition, whereas those who indicated support generally did so with less intensity. This is not noted in the report, as such measures are admittedly subjective on our part. However, I felt it worthy of mentioning here.

It is also worth noting that the majority of respondents spoke to how potential changes in the schedule would impact them or their families. Considering the nature of the questions, this should, perhaps, be expected. But I feel it worth noting that few parent respondents spoke to the larger good of the school or district.

6) Staff do not feel strongly about a potential change.

As noted in the report, as a whole, staff respondents spent a good amount of time on the survey and indicated the change would have little impact on them.

7) Conclusion.

I would like to conclude with a word of caution. Where I have erred over the years in analyzing survey results is, in my zeal to find themes, to dig too deep and disaggregate the data again and again, in an effort to find something to help make a difficult decision easier. I found myself wanting to do that with this dataset in order to examine cross-tabulations and find a hidden truth in the data. I believe that in doing so, the interpretation can become somewhat subjective.

It pains me to state the glaringly obvious, but the most significant finding of this survey is that you have parents on both sides of this issue and they feel strongly in their positions.



Oregon School District

**SURVEY REPORT
March 2020**

INTRODUCTION

The Oregon School District has a history of working together with the community to plan for the future. Recently, the district and community created and supported a plan to address the projected growth of more than 2,000 students that is expected by the year 2030. The first phase of this plan is to build a kindergarten through sixth-grade elementary school within the city of Fitchburg. This building is currently under construction and is scheduled to open for the 2020-21 school year.

As the district plans for the opening of the school in the northern part of its attendance area, it proposed a plan intended to address a variety of interrelated components, including school district boundaries, school start and end times, transportation wait times, and adolescent sleep recommendations.

On December 20, 2019 Superintendent Dr. Brian Busler and Board President Steve Zach announced a work group—comprising parents, staff, board members, and administrators—to review relevant data and facts related to school start and end times.

The purpose of this survey is to gather data on the impacts of school start and end times on families, students, and staff. Data collected from this survey will be shared with the Board of Education as it considers the information presented by the work group on school start and end times.

This report provides a summary of responses to the survey.

PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

The survey was administered using the Donovan Group's survey engine. Efforts were made to ensure that all eligible respondents had the opportunity to take the survey, but that no respondents took it multiple times. In accordance with best practices in online research and to protect the security of the survey, internet protocol (IP) addresses were logged and each response was time-stamped.

To date, there is no reason to believe anyone has taken the survey more than once or that anyone from outside the district has taken the survey.

To encourage residents to take the survey, the school district issued a news release, shared the survey via social media, and distributed a postcard to all district residents. The survey was open from February 19 through March 1, 2020.

It should be noted that by design, this data is not based on a scientific sample. Therefore, it should be treated as qualitative data that is similar to data from a large number of focus groups. Because we used a convenience sample, it would be methodologically inappropriate to carry out a regression analysis or attempt to calculate error. Our response pool to date is a solid one that provides sound data to the board.

SURVEY RESULTS

A total of 1,599 community members completed the survey, including 1,593 completed in English and 6 completed in Spanish. To complete the survey, respondents must have clicked "submit" at the end of the survey and answered all of the required questions.

Below are the questions and their corresponding responses.

1) Where do you reside?*

Village of Oregon	52.85%
Village of Brooklyn	6.63%
City of Fitchburg	10.44%
Town of Brooklyn	2.00%
Town of Rutland	2.81%
Town of Union	0.44%
Town of Oregon	12.26%
Town of Montrose	0.13%
Town of Dunn	3.13%
Town of Blooming Grove	0.19%
Other	9.13%

2) Please check all of the following that apply to you:*

I have preschool-aged children (ages 0-3)	15.01%
I have children who currently attend an Oregon School District school	88.87%
I am currently employed by the Oregon School District	18.51%
Other	1.25%

3) Earlier, you indicated you have school-aged children. Which schools do your children attend? (Select all that apply.)

Oregon High School	35.75%
Oregon Middle School	27.09%
Rome Corners Intermediate School	25.19%
Brooklyn Elementary School	16.96%
Netherwood Knoll Elementary School	20.13%
Prairie View Elementary School	16.61%
Early Learning/4K	11.54%

Note: This question was seen only by those who selected "I have children who currently attend an Oregon School District school" in the previous question. 88.87% (or 1,421 of 1,599 respondents) selected that option and were shown this question.

4) Earlier, you indicated that you were employed by the district. What is your position?

Elementary school teacher	20.61%
Middle school teacher	11.49%
Intermediate School teacher	10.14%
High school teacher	17.57%
Aide or para-professional	14.19%

Administrative support staff	4.39%
Student support staff	6.08%
Administrator	2.70%
Foodservice staff	3.38%
Other	9.46%

Note: This question was seen only by those who selected “I am currently employed by the Oregon School District” in question #2. 18.51% (or 296 of 1,599 respondents) selected that option and were shown this question.

5) In which building do you work? (select all that apply)

Brooklyn Elementary	14.19%
Netherwood Elementary	13.85%
Prairie View Elementary	12.84%
Rome Corners Intermediate	17.91%
Oregon Middle School	21.62%
Oregon High School	28.04%
District Office	5.74%

Note: This question was seen only by those who selected “I am currently employed by the Oregon School District” in question #2. 18.51% (or 296 of 1,599 respondents) selected that option and were shown this question.

6a) My child rides the bus to school (BEFORE SCHOOL)

4K	4.56%
5K	11.72%
1	12.00%
2	12.09%
3	11.53%
4	11.63%
5	5.77%
6	6.79%
7	7.07%
8	6.23%
9	4.84%
10	3.72%
11	1.67%
12	0.37%

6b) I (or a family member) takes my child to school (BEFORE SCHOOL)

4K	7.94%
5K	7.17%
1	6.94%
2	5.32%
3	6.63%

4	6.63%
5	9.87%
6	7.86%
7	10.25%
8	10.02%
9	9.87%
10	6.17%
11	3.39%
12	1.93%

6c) My child gets to school on their own (walks, bikes, drives) (BEFORE SCHOOL)

4K	0.28%
5K	0.56%
1	0.84%
2	1.96%
3	1.40%
4	1.40%
5	11.45%
6	6.98%
7	3.63%
8	5.03%
9	7.54%
10	17.32%
11	24.58%
12	17.04%

6d) My child goes to childcare before school (BEFORE SCHOOL)

4K	39.13%
5K	16.30%
1	13.04%
2	15.22%
3	7.61%
4	5.43%
5	0.00%
6	1.09%
7	1.09%
8	1.09%
9	0.00%
10	0.00%
11	0.00%
12	0.00%

**6e) I have an older child who cares for a younger child before school (indicate younger child)
(BEFORE SCHOOL)**

4K	5.13%
5K	0.00%
1	5.13%
2	5.13%
3	10.26%
4	7.69%
5	10.26%
6	7.69%
7	10.26%
8	2.56%
9	15.38%
10	7.69%
11	7.69%
12	5.13%

7a) My child rides the bus home from school (AFTER SCHOOL)

4K	4.23%
5K	8.95%
1	9.52%
2	9.28%
3	8.95%
4	10.33%
5	8.14%
6	7.73%
7	10.50%
8	8.62%
9	6.43%
10	4.88%
11	1.95%
12	0.49%

7b) My child goes to childcare after school (AFTER SCHOOL)

4K	17.78%
5K	18.04%
1	15.98%
2	17.78%
3	13.40%
4	10.57%
5	3.35%
6	2.06%
7	0.52%
8	0.26%
9	0.00%
10	0.00%

11	0.26%
12	0.00%

7c) I (or a family member) picks my child up from school (AFTER SCHOOL)

4K	8.51%
5K	6.86%
1	6.62%
2	4.73%
3	6.26%
4	6.38%
5	9.69%
6	7.92%
7	10.87%
8	8.87%
9	11.23%
10	6.26%
11	3.78%
12	2.01%

7d) My child gets home from school on their own (walks, bikes, drives) (AFTER SCHOOL)

4K	0.24%
5K	0.47%
1	1.18%
2	1.65%
3	1.65%
4	1.42%
5	12.50%
6	9.43%
7	4.25%
8	7.55%
9	7.31%
10	15.57%
11	22.17%
12	14.62%

7e) My child participates in co-curricular activities after school (school-sponsored) (AFTER SCHOOL)

4K	0.17%
5K	2.15%
1	3.47%
2	3.80%
3	3.31%
4	6.28%
5	7.11%
6	3.97%
7	11.90%

8	8.26%
9	15.87%
10	14.55%
11	12.40%
12	6.78%

7f) My child participates in afternoon or evening community activities (not school-sponsored) (AFTER SCHOOL)

4K	2.14%
5K	6.79%
1	7.80%
2	7.42%
3	7.42%
4	9.69%
5	9.81%
6	8.55%
7	9.69%
8	8.30%
9	7.42%
10	6.54%
11	6.04%
12	2.39%

7g) I have an older child who cares for a younger child after school (indicate younger child) (AFTER SCHOOL)

4K	3.03%
5K	3.03%
1	3.03%
2	15.15%
3	13.64%
4	12.12%
5	13.64%
6	4.55%
7	10.61%
8	1.52%
9	6.06%
10	3.03%
11	9.09%
12	1.52%

7h) My child works at a job after school (AFTER SCHOOL)

4K	0.00%
5K	0.00%
1	0.00%
2	0.00%
3	0.00%

4	0.00%
5	0.00%
6	0.00%
7	0.66%
8	3.31%
9	16.56%
10	27.81%
11	29.80%
12	21.85%

8) If your child works after school, would having school end later impact your child’s ability to work at that job?

Yes	10.55%
No	6.02%
I don't know	6.54%
My child does not work after school	76.89%

9) Would ending the school day at 3:45 p.m. impact your child’s ability to work at this job?

Yes	58.45%
No	22.54%
I don't know	19.01%

Note: This question was seen only by those who selected “Yes” to question #8. 142 respondents were shown this question.

10) Would ending the school day at 4:00 p.m. impact your child’s ability to work at this job?

Yes	92.96%
No	1.41%
I don't know	5.63%

Note: This question was seen only by those who selected “Yes” to question #8. 142 respondents were shown this question.

11) Please use the space below to share the impacts of an earlier K-6 school start time (as early as 7:45 am) to you as a parent or on behalf of your child.

Summary: *While these results were mixed, the slight majority of respondents indicated concern about starting elementary school earlier. Moreover, respondents who responded with concern did so with intensity, citing disruptions of sleep, family routines, and behavior challenges as possible negative outcomes of an earlier school start time. The following is a representative sample of responses noting concern and showing support for the earlier start time, as there were a fair amount of responses in support. They have not been edited.*

Note: The question was only shown to those who responded they have children attending Rome Corners Intermediate School, Brooklyn Elementary School, Netherwood Knoll Elementary School, Prairie View Elementary School, or Early Learning/4K, as well as to those who are current employees of the district.

Approximately 1,581 respondents saw this question, though the actual number may be slightly less, as some respondents could have children in multiple schools. 812 responses were recorded.

Concerns about an earlier start time:

- *15 minutes earlier doesn't seem like much to most, but as the nights get long we tend to have more evening activities. I really think they'll be losing important sleep*
- *An earlier start time would be a challenge for our family. Our kids simply do not respond well to early morning activities and 7:45 would impact their learning. The same rationale for why older kids do better with a later start applies to growing 4th & 5th graders.*
- *An earlier start time would have a negative impact on our family. It is already challenging enough to allow our children to get an ample amount of sleep in the mornings, wake up, eat a nutritious breakfast, and prepare for the day without being rushed and scrambling to get out the door. We already don't use the bus to transport our children in the mornings as that would require them to be ready even earlier. While having an earlier start time would be beneficial for the adults' work schedule, that is not our priority when it would be at the detriment of our children. An earlier start time is not something we could see going well for our family.*
- *Both of my elementary boys are already waking up at 6 AM and on the bus at 7AM! We think it is already completely ridiculous that their rise to school is 45 minutes LONG when we live 3 miles away!! That is way too early and I would never want their school to start earlier or extend in the afternoon the days are long enough!!*
- *Early start times are very difficult for children. We already have many children arriving late daily when we start at 7:50am. When school starts, many are not ready to learn. They are still tired, hungry (sometimes), or requiring extra movement to start their day to wake up their brains. Our schedule is very academic driven, without a lot of time built in for play or brain breaks. The behaviors we are seeing in recent years suggests that we need to look at not just what we are teaching academically. Everything is rushed and academic demand is high. Social skills are suffering, we are taking away breaks and opportunities to play - we need to build things back in and think about what we know about childhood development and the brain.*
- *School start times are already too early for our family and many other families too. With work obligations it is extremely difficult to get kids in bed on time to be able to get adequate sleep at night. My kids are not getting enough sleep as it is and an even earlier start time will only make this worse, as adjusting bedtime at the end of the day is not possible.*
- *That is too early. It's unhealthy for children and inconvenient.*
- *My husband and I work before 7 and depend on our older children to send the children to school. This schedule change is a headache.*
- *While I am completely onboard with moving OHS and OMS start times later, I am aggressively against pushing K-6 start times earlier. There is zero evidence that shows it would be beneficial to the K-6 students, and a growing body of evidence that shows it would be harmful.*

Support for an earlier start time:

- *A little earlier would be beneficial. As it is I make it to work just on time based on the time I have get my child on the bus. If the bus came earlier it would be easier to get to work on time.*
- *An earlier start time would not negatively impact my family besides a slight adjustment to sleep schedules and morning routine.*
- *I agree with the earlier start time. The time the kids have for lunch needs to increase and one way to do it is with the earlier start time. There will be no impact on the kids with an earlier start. They*

have plenty of time to get ready in the morning. It is good for the parents too since we can start work earlier now.

- *Would support this as it works well with our family schedule.*

No impact:

- *At least 80 responses were none, no impact or similar*

12) Please use the space below to share the impacts of adding time (as much as 10 minutes) to the current K-4 day length, which would be used to extend the time of lunch and recess.

Summary: *Responses to this item were a mix of support and concern for adding time to the school day. Many respondents expressed support for extending the lunch hour.*

The following is a sample of responses that have not been edited.

Note: This question was only shown to those who responded they have children attending Brooklyn Elementary School, Netherwood Knoll Elementary School, and Prairie View Elementary School, as well as to those who are current employees of the district. Approximately 1,059 respondents saw this question, while 666 responses were recorded.

Concern for adding time:

- *Both my children are exhausted by the end of the day. Then my 5th grader has to start homework. Adding another 10 minutes to a long day is worthless.*
- *Extended the day for our children we believe would have a negative impact. Especially for the youngest ones. Our children are already exhausted and hungry at the end of the school day as it is currently structured. Adding time is not a positive thing.*
- *I am concerned that the time will start out as recess and lunch time and will quickly be taken away as it has been in the past. How will this impact teachers' contract time and salary?*
- *There is absolutely no reason at all to extend the school day. In fact it seems ridiculous to even be considering this. Kids at the elementary and intermediate schools are already greatly exceeding the required hours by the DPI currently.*
- *This time will take away from students time at home or in other important natural settings. I am in an elementary school lunch room every day and a vast majority of the students leave as soon as the lunch period is over, so I'm not sure extended lunch will be a productive use of time. Extended recess is good, but recess time has been shortened over the years to increase time for curricular demands, what will stop that from happening again?*

Support for adding time:

- *Adding time for lunch and recess sounds great. When I visit the school at lunch periodically, it seems like the children barely have time to eat. More time to eat and talk to friends would help them consume more of their lunches.*
- *Adding time would be great! There would be savings in after-school care costs, and my kids could actually finish their lunches. My oldest WEARS her winter coat at lunch. She has to get all her stuff before lunch b/c her class goes to recess immediately after. She says she won't have time to finish her lunch if she takes her coat off and then has to put it back on again.*
- *Good idea. Lunch and recess is too short so ending the day later is a good idea. There will be no negative impact doing this. I support ending school 10 minutes later.*

- *Please make lunch longer!! My kids constantly complain they don't have enough time to eat their lunch!*
- *That would be great...I would be rather add time to the end of their day than have them start school earlier.*
- *The lunch time is certainly short, so I am not opposed to adding up to 10 minutes to the day length if the teachers are supportive. An extended day would impact some of my son's after-school activities on certain weekdays, but that can be adjusted for the greater good of the scheduling. A 6 hour and 55 minute day would be reasonable.*

No impact:

- *113 responses indicated none, no problem, no impact, NA etc.*

13) Please use the space below to share the impacts of a later start and end time for grades 7-12 to you as a parent or on behalf of your child.

Summary: There were many blank responses for this item. In fact, of the 1,189 respondents who were provided this question, 560 did not answer it. Within the responses, two themes developed, which are noted below. The following is a sample of responses, which have not been edited.

Note: This question was only shown to those who responded they have children attending Oregon High School and Oregon Middle School, as well as to those who are current employees of the district. A total of 629 responses were recorded.

Concerns for later start time for 7-12:

- *A late start pushes all activities later including sports and homework and dinner and sleep. My teen does well with the current schedule, and I don't think the late start will benefit her or our family.*
- *A later end time will definitely affect our family life. Practices will be pushed back. Dinner will have to be pushed back. Consequently, being able to attend evening things will be harder as well. In addition I'm guessing the kids will have to leave school earlier in order to get to away games, missing more of their last class. For sure they will lose that 30 minute buffer which I think is really important transition time. Beyond that having everything run 30 minutes later at night almost eliminates possible interaction with families of younger children. Even though I have no elementary children anymore, we have many friends who do. And the schedule already is hard with those kids needing to get to bed earlier than my older children.*
- *That is too late. Jobs don't start later so people can sleep in. Our teens need to adjust. As a parent it lessens any possibility of family time or family dinners with later end times! My daughter swims a couple times a week on club having 1 1/2 between school and practice will be miserable!!*
- *A later start will not be very convenient for us.*
- *A later start time would create a significantly longer day for my students as my junior has to drive the younger siblings (K-6 and 7-12) to school. There would be wasted time in the morning making for an even longer school day. My high school students participate in extracurricular activities that would both have them missing school for travel time and extend their day well into the evening on practice days. The difference at the end of the day would significantly interfere when high school student has to pick up the K-6 student, who would be waiting over an hour after last bell.*

Support for later start time for 7-12:

- *A later start would be preferable, as early mornings are hard for the kids, physically and mentally.*
- *We would be supportive. Our child has to wake up very early to catch the bus only to wait at school for 30 minutes before school starts. She is always very tired when she wakes up even though she has a reasonably early bedtime. She would benefit from more sleep and less time on the bus and waiting at school.*
- *I think a later time will be beneficial to helping kids feel more alert and rested at school each day. From my own experience, my middle school started after 8:45 am - yes we didn't get home until after 4 PM, but that was ok. In high school, we had the opposite experience - school started at 7:15 AM, but we got out a little after 2 PM.*
- *In favor of a later start time.*
- *As long as the later end time does not interfere with my son's after school activities (sports, clubs) we are all in for later start & end times.*
- *I would like my daughter to be able to sleep longer in the morning. She has been struggling to stay awake in class this year and a later time would allow for more rest and hopefully more productive work at school.*
- *I am in agreement for a later start and end time for students 7-12.*

14) Please use the space below to share the impacts of school start times to you as a teacher or staff member or on behalf of your students.

Summary: Responses to this question were mixed. However, a majority of respondents indicated a change would have little impact on them.

This question was shown only to those who indicated they are current employees of the district. The question was shown to 296 respondents and 217 provided an answer. The following is a representative sample of responses.

- *I don't think any of the proposed changes would affect my hours.*
- *At this point in time, with my child being an elementary school student, I am happy to have an opportunity to be able to start work earlier and go home earlier. As my child gets into middle school, I'm not sure what that will mean at this point.*
- *I certainly see a lot of kids in 5-8 grade coming in to school quite tired and struggling to stay awake, especially at the beginning of the day. However, I do also see students struggling to focus at the end of the day. I'm hopeful that additional sleep and less time spent waiting for/on the school bus would help. However, in my previous district, our school day went from 8:35-3:45 for grades 4-8, and I did see similar struggles at the end of the day. For me as teacher who is split between RCI and OMS, the schedule change will make my schedule more difficult to put together. I know this only affects a handful of teachers, but it would be helpful to keep that in mind as schedules are built. I have more flexibility to determine the best possible schedule in my position, but I know that can be difficult for other teachers who have a split-day schedule.*
- *Start time will always impact me as a staff member, but I believe it is important to look at who school is for and that is the students. I am more than happy to adjust the time if it means that there is a better time and learning environment for the students in the district.*
 1. *Students will still arrive early because parents drop them off.*
 2. *Students will be here for practices (often lead to school teachers), especially swimming. That will lead to supervision issues in the morning. It is not only the buses dropping off students early that is causing the problems.*

This will also lead to later practices, meaning they will do homework/dinner time even later. Not fixing the sleeping issue. 2. Sports will not change around the conference so now students are missing 3 periods instead of just 1 or 2. 3. Students are tired and not as productive after 3 p.m. 4. I will not be able to stay after school to help students because of daycare. I need to leave no later than 4 p.m. 5. Many students start work at 4 p.m. How will they get there on time? Worried about accidents, skipping school, walking out of class early, etc.

- *One big concern I have is how long OMS students have to wait for the buses after school. I'm hoping that the adjusted scheduling can address that issue for middle schoolers so they don't have to wait 30 min + for their bus after school.*

15) What advice do you have as the district considers school start and end times?

Summary: *Many respondents used this open-response item to reiterate comments made previously. As before, some indicated a desire for an early start, while others indicated a preference for a late start. This question was shown to all 1,599 respondents. A total of 1,078 responses were recorded. Below is a representative sample of responses.*

Make a decision as best you can:

- *Whatever is decided, there will be a significant amount of people that will have to make adjustments. Not good or bad, right or wrong, just a fact and people will adjust and move on. People are resistant to change, but are also resilient and will adjust and accommodate.*
- *People will complain no matter what you decide but we will all adjust. For those who don't like your decision...they can leave our district to make room for those who like it.*
- *Make the best decision for the majority of the student population so everything can move forward and deal with the special cases one at a time after the decision has been made.*
- *From a bird' eye view, these start/end changes are minimal and all kids/families will adjust accordingly. Change is hard but once the new times become norm, kids and parents will figure it out. Thanks for providing an opportunity for voices to be heard and for considering the research and best practices for all kids, PreK-12.*