

GREENWICH PUBIC SCHOOLS
Greenwich, CT

December 2016
Changing School Bell Times Update

GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS BELL TIMES ARE CHANGING

The Greenwich Public Schools is proud to be joining numerous other schools to change its bell times to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of its students. This decision was based on a substantial body of research and recommendations from a number of physician organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Medical Association.

Frequently Asked Questions about the New Bell Times for 2017-2018

- 1. Q. Are school bell times changing for the Greenwich Public Schools (GPS)?**
A. Yes. Greenwich High School and the three middle schools will be starting and dismissing later. Changes for the elementary schools are still under discussion in an effort to maintain the current bell times.
- 2. Q. What will the new bell times be?**
A. Greenwich High School will start at 8:30 a.m. and end at 3:15 p.m.
Middle Schools will start at 8:00 a.m. and end at 2:50 p.m.
- 3. Q. When will we know if the Elementary School bell times will change?**
A. The September 2016 proposal presented to the Board of Education, called for at least two elementary schools' bell times to change, with the remaining nine elementary schools maintaining their 8:15 a.m. or 8:45 a.m. start times. The SST Committee is working toward maintaining current bell times for each of the eleven elementary schools and plan to finalize this decision late winter 2017.
- 4. Q. When will new times begin?**
A. On the first day of school of the 2017-2018 school year.
- 5. Q. Will my bus stop change?**
A. Not likely. The vast majority of the bus stops will stay the same.
- 6. Q. Will bus rides be longer?**
A. No. Overall bus rides will be the same or shorter. Individual student ride lengths may change as some routes will be different.
- 7. Q. Can I continue to drop off my child(ren) early at school?**
A. Yes. Greenwich High School will continue to open its doors at 6:00 a.m., which is the same time it currently opens for early drop off. The Middle Schools will open their doors at 7:15 a.m.
- 8. Q. My child(ren) is/are not eligible for bus transportation. What options will be available for my child/ren to get to school if my work schedule no longer allows me to transport them to school?**
A. At a minimum, students may continue to be dropped off at the same time they are

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now at the high school (6:00 a.m.) and at the middle schools (7:15 a.m.).

9. Q. How will this impact other programs, including athletics offered in the Greenwich Public Schools (GPS)?

A. Our response to this question is based on our initial review of all programs, including athletics, and is subject to minor changes as we further flesh out all options.

(1) Academic programming in GPS will not change.

(2) Every effort is being made to minimize the impact of the change in bell times on after school activities and sports, including when students will be dismissed early from class to participate in after school activities. This is a work in progress and additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

(3) Levels of current Greenwich High School athletic teams will remain, i.e. Freshmen, JV and Varsity sports teams. We are working to minimize any changes in the total 9 - 12 sports program.

(4) Extra-curricular activities will continue before and after school.

10. Q. Are there plans to evaluate the impact of the change in bell times?

A. Yes. An evaluation plan will be developed to evaluate the impact of the change. The community will be involved in this evaluation. Understandably, our immediate focus is on addressing the elements necessary to ensure a smooth transition.

11. Q. My child participates in an after school program (activity or athletics) that is a private program and not a part of the GHS program, what provisions are being made to mitigate the impact of a change in school bell times for these programs?

A. While we cannot make changes for private programs, we respectfully request that parents advise the proper individuals who are responsible for these programs about our schedule change. We would welcome the opportunity to speak to those individuals to share whatever information we can that might help them to possibly adjust their program.

12. Q. How will I continue to be informed?

A. Emails will be sent to parents via ParentLink, Principals will communicate through school channels, and you may follow School Start Time implementation work at <http://www.greenwickschools.org/SST>.

This is the first of periodic updates on the progress of implementation for the new bell times, which begin on the first day of the 2017-2018 school year. We encourage you to send your questions to the Office of the Superintendent at salvatore_corda@greenwich.k12.ct.us. Questions of general interest will be included in the next update and specific questions will be addressed with whatever information is current.