

NEWTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

High School Start Time Working Group

Student Survey (Administered December 2015)

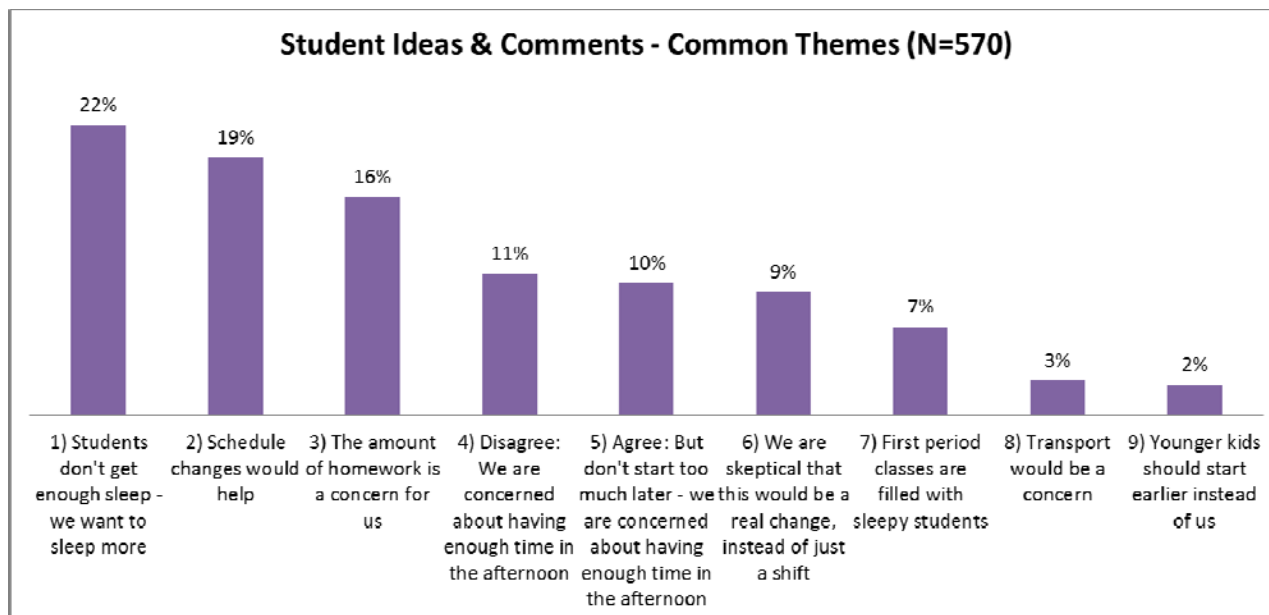
Student Survey Release # 2 – April 11, 2016

This release includes additional analysis from the December 2015 high school student survey for:

1. Analysis of student ideas and comments
2. Student opinion, disaggregated by student sub-group

1) Students were asked for their ideas and comments in an open response question at the end of the survey. A similar question has also been included in the faculty/staff survey and the parent/guardian survey. The open response question was analyzed thematically by frequency counts. A theme was identified for analysis if multiple students offered a similar comment or idea.

The recurrent themes in student comments are reported below as percentages of the number of students who provided an idea or comment, from most frequently stated to least frequently stated. Students often stated multiple themes in their comments; thus percentages do not sum to 100%:



Some observations about the frequency of the observed themes are:

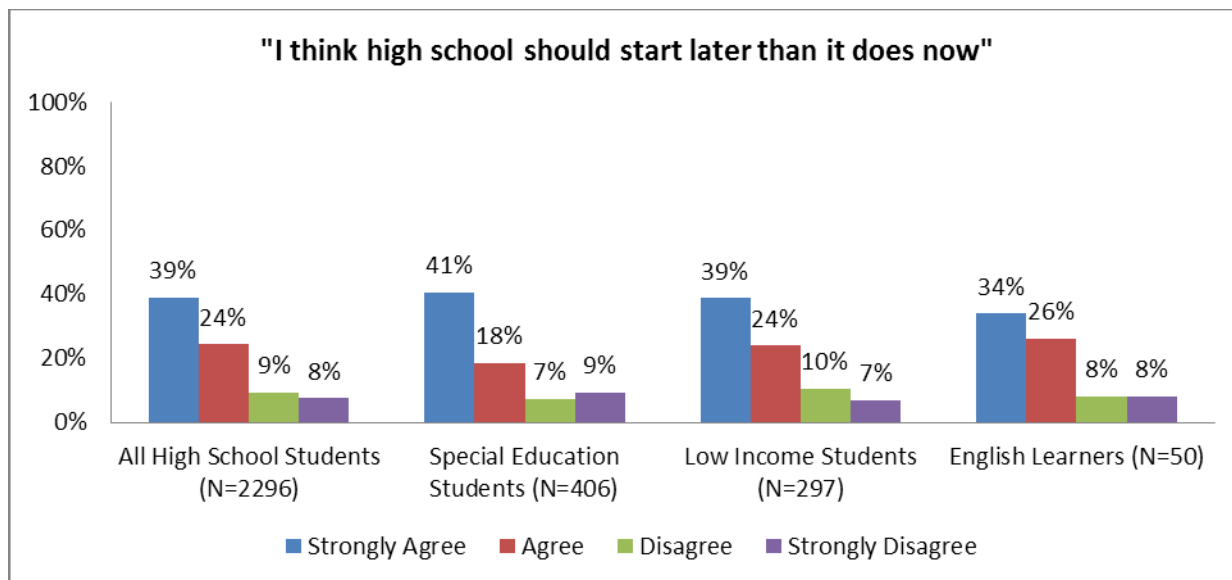
- Theme #1 (with the highest frequency) relates to sleep deprivation and students' need for more sleep. Theme #7 also relates to the need for sleep.
- Many students have different ideas about the school schedule (theme #2), some of which will be further considered by the working group and shared with high school administrators.
- The amount of homework (theme #3) including general assignments, test preparation, and writing is a specific concern for students associated with late bedtimes and stress.
- Students are concerned about the time available in the afternoons for activities of their choice. A total of 110 students expressed this concern directly (themes #4 and #5).

- Theme # 4 emerged from students who mostly disagreed that high school start time should move later.
- Theme # 5 came from comments by students generally in support of a later start time, but who also have reservations about a potential change.

Individual student comments that are representative of particular themes are included below to showcase student voice. The only changes made to these quotations were to remove specific references to either Newton North or Newton South or to shorten the response.

- *“Sleep = health>academics”* (Theme #1)
- *“As someone who has [first] block free on some mornings, I can say that an extra hour truly makes a difference.”* (Theme #2)
- *“...to wake up early in the morning, go to Physics first period, and go throughout the day with hard homework in every class is hard. Something has got to give.”* (Theme #3)
- *“Although school start time does play a big role in stress for students, there is another larger problem: homework. The volume of homework given to students is too great, and most of it is just busy work that is unproductive.”* (Theme #3)
- *“I have no problem with the time at which [I] get up, and I would like to keep free time in the afternoons in order to complete homework and pursue other activities.”* (Theme #4)
- *“Students in [first] block classes are rarely focused enough”* (Theme #7)

2) Student opinions about starting high school later were similar across student subgroups:



For additional information and response frequencies for items from the full student survey, please go to the Newton Public Schools website at: <http://www.newton.k12.ma.us/laterstarttime>