

Civic Minds

Date: Friday, November 20, 2015

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Article Title: *Wake-up call: Seattle schools may take leap*

Section: Main, A1

Vocabulary:

Look up the definition of **retract**. Please write the definition and create a new sentence, using your own words.

“They had to **retract** their decision, which was really unfortunate because they were really heading in the right direction,” said Maribel Ibrahim, co-founder of Start School Later, a national nonprofit.

Comprehension Questions

1. Across the U.S., advocates are watching as the district votes today on what issue?
2. Few ideas in education are as simple and supported by science as pushing back school start times to better match teens’ biological clocks. Why is it so difficult to start in school districts?
3. It wouldn’t be easy for Seattle, either, but after a four-year campaign led by parents, teachers and local sleep scientists, Seattle Public Schools is scheduled to vote Wednesday on what?
4. Under the proposal before the School Board, all the district’s high schools and most of its middle schools would begin at _____ a.m., almost an hour later than most do now.
5. When would the elementary and K-8’s begin?
6. If approved by the School Board, the changes would take effect when?
7. Scientists have long known that in adolescence, teenagers become biological night owls who are more alert later in the day and find it hard to fall asleep at night. Evidence has been mounting for years that later school start times improve what areas?
8. Even though the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended last year that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later, only about _____ of Washington’s middle and high schools start that late, according to a recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
9. In 42 states, the report said, _____ percent of public secondary schools start before 8:30 a.m.
10. The reasons vary, but often have to do with districts trying to save money by doing what?

Class Discussion Questions and Essay Prompts:

- What do you think about pushing back start times for older students?
- Do you think you’ll do better, academically, if you start school at a later time? Why?
- Is your district thinking about these same time changes?

Seattle could “provide a role model for urban school districts to do the right thing in the interest of student health, safety and well-being and to serve as a beacon to inspire other school districts,” said Dr. Judith Owens, who directs the Center for Pediatric Sleep Disorders at Boston Children’s Hospital.

Owens was instrumental in helping the 11th-largest school district in the country, Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia, get later start times for teens last year.

- Do you agree that later start times would impact the health, safety and well-being of the students? Why or why not?

Essay

Are you tired in the morning? Does your focus/grades suffer in the early periods? Why or why not? Would you support these changes at your own school? Why or why not?

Newspaper-related CBA activity: U.S. Policy

How the United States government interacts with the world affects people across the globe. Analyze and evaluate the causes and effects of US foreign policy on people in the United States and across the world.

- Using The Seattle Times e-edition, find an article from this week that deals with world politics or foreign policy.
- What are the main points of view from someone living in that particular country? How is that “view” similar and different than your own opinion, regarding the specific issue the article is discussing?
- Why is it important to study and learn about foreign policy? How does it help you understand the world we live in, using current issues and events?

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