Perspectives From The Trenches

You Are Not Healthy if Your Sleep is Not Healthy

Darrel Drobnich
President, MidAmr Group
April 29, 2017
How Did We Get Here?

* Current school start times are based on social, political, financial and historical factors NOT SCIENCE or even good planning!!
The Reality

- Early start times are a recent trend that started post WWII.
- We have balanced our budgets on the backs of our kids putting their health, safety, learning at risk now and probably later in life.
- The problem was created by adults and should be solved by adults for the benefit of our kids and ourselves.
All cultural and institutional change is political – Science might open the door, but politics will drive the result.

Make your argument about health and safety and not academics.

Superintendent & Board leadership is crucial. If they don’t want it, you won’t get it.

Superintendents and Board Members are politicians that are judged on academic success NOT the health and safety of kids.

Educate stakeholders, but don’t expect to change minds. Find out the negotiation points.
* DO NOT poll people about IF start time change should be done, but how best to do it and then try to accommodate
* DO NOT expect the same people who created the problem to be able to solve it. They typically have an vested interest in the status quo.
* Empower an independent change agent to engage stakeholders, challenge common assumptions, and set the stage for change.
* To to nothing is to do harm.
Key “Take Home” Points

* Change is hard
* History does not equal destiny
* Anticipation often worse than reality
  * Impact on athletics
  * Impact on after-school student employment
  * Impact on teacher retention
* Initial challenges reduced over time
  * Traffic patterns adjust
  * Parent, teacher supports increased post-change
* Almost no schools have returned to the original bell times
Thank You!

I need to finish my back-to-school shopping.

Study: Teens need more sleep. Start school later.