

Cadence Molnar

Mr. Phillips

AP Language, 03

10 October 2018

Later High School Start Time

The weight of the world will soon fall on the shoulders of our future business owners, politicians, doctors, and hardworking employees, which means that society should want them to possess good mental health, thorough development of crucial life skills, and receive the most out of their high school education. But early start times for high schools all around America may be hindering these crucial factors needed to achieve success. The start times for the average American high school vary, but several of them require students to begin school earlier than eight o'clock in the morning. The early start time of high schools can result in a lack of sufficient sleep that may negatively affect the work ethic, alertness, and mood of high schoolers. Later start times in high schools may improve students' overall well-being and give them a chance to learn at their maximum capabilities, resulting in an enhanced learning experience.

If students wake up later in the morning, they will likely be more focused and alert throughout the school day, which could not only improve each individual students' work ethic but also improve the participation of the class as a whole. When students are tired, they often tend to slack on their school work and become more likely to accept a low grade. A lack of alertness in a teenager can not only hurt the student and their work ethic, but may negatively affect other citizens as well. Many high school students drive to school in the mornings; drivers, especially newly licensed teenagers, need to be extremely alert and attentive while driving in order to avoid an accident. If high schoolers fight to stay awake and pay attention while driving, they could easily get into an accident and not only harm themselves, but harm others. Alertness is essential to the high school student in order to help them focus in school, as well as while driving, and to help them make better decisions.

In many cases, the sun has not fully risen when students begin the commute to school. If students start their school day while darkness still lurks outside, it may cause their overall mood to deteriorate. From personal experience as a junior in high school, going to school when the sun has not risen yet always puts a damper on my mood and makes going to school even less enjoyable. This may be the case for many other students around America

as well, as many students complain about commuting to school while it is still dark outside. However, when daylight savings time ends and time springs an hour backwards, the sun rises earlier and students can commute to school with sunshine. Everytime the time changes in the fall, I notice my mood becoming more uplifted as the result of not having to travel to school in the dark. Many other students may experience this as well, whether they notice this change or not.

Some people who oppose later start times for school may say that the simple solution to getting more sleep and reducing teenage tiredness is not starting school later, but simply going to bed earlier. Most teenagers need eight to ten hours of sleep a night in order to function at their very best throughout the school day. This means that if a school opens up at around seven-thirty in the morning, a student will most likely have to go to bed at around nine o'clock at night in order to get at least nine hours of sleep. This is simply unrealistic, because many students not only have extracurriculars and possible jobs to handle after school, but large amounts of homework and studying to do as well. It is also natural for a teenager to desire to go to bed later and sleep in later, and attempting to wake up a tired teenager early is like trying to get a sloth to move quickly. This is why any extra sleep that a teenager can get may make it easier for them to get up. Many people may also make the argument that starting school later than eight o'clock will only cause it to end later, leaving less time for extracurricular activities. But several high schools around America begin school after eight o'clock and they have enough time for extracurriculars, so why would schools that decide to raise their start times to eight o'clock be any different?

If all schools start at a time no earlier than eight o'clock in the morning, it may have several benefits on students' performance in school and their overall well-being, and even prevent traffic accidents that result from poor attentiveness. Even a small amount of extra sleep for teenagers can make a huge impact on their mood and productiveness. Although later start times would be the best option, perhaps compromising and getting rid of daylight savings time instead could help with tiredness, as the earlier sun rise could improve the mood of high schoolers and help them to feel more awake and alert while driving to school and throughout the school day. Society today depends on the future leaders of the world, and increasing the productivity and alertness of these future leaders by implementing later start times for high schools would be a positive impact and work towards a brighter future.

