



Washoe County School District

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Board of Trustees: Barbara McLaury, President • Ken Grein, Vice President • Scott Kelley, Clerk
Dan Carne • Barbara Clark • Estela Gutierrez • John Mayer • Dr. Heath Morrison, Superintendent

June 2011

Dear Parents,

As many of you know, the Washoe County School District has been looking at the possibility of changing the bell schedules at our schools. The proposal to change the daily start and end times at most of the elementary, middle and high schools in the WCSD would provide academic benefits for our children and provide a cost savings to the District.

During the month of May, we discussed this proposal at several townhall meetings and asked for your feedback through a community-wide survey. Based on the input from you and from school district employees, it is clear that many people agree with the concept of altering the bell schedule. About 4,000 people responded to the survey and approximately 75 percent supported a change to the bell schedule.

In addition to indicating whether a person supported this idea, those who took the survey were able to leave additional comments and thoughts about the proposal. In this open-ended section of the survey, we received approximately 2,500 comments, many of which offered suggestions and/or expressed concerns and questions about implementing this change next year.

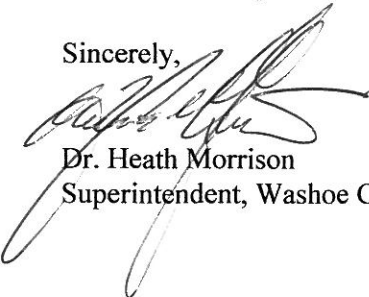
After hearing all of the feedback, I recommended to the Board of Trustees on May 24, 2011 that we delay changing the bell schedules and the Board accepted that recommendation. We are going to continue to look at the possibility of altering the daily school start and end times, but these changes would not be implemented until the 2012-2013 school year.

I felt we could have moved ahead and changed the bell schedule for the upcoming school year as originally proposed, but we would have spent a year reacting to different challenges at our schools. The decision to delay changes to the bell schedule will give the District additional time to gather input and to work proactively with our schools and parents to address any challenges a new bell schedule could present. Whenever we make a significant change at our schools like the bell schedule, we are committed to making that change happen efficiently and smoothly. We want to ensure that any changes would not distract from the time our students spend learning in the classroom. When we make a change like this, we want to do it right the first time and delaying the bell schedule change will allow us to ensure implementation is done with as few problems as possible.

I would like to thank everyone for providing feedback on this topic. Working with our parents and the community is a process that the WCSD highly values. If a new bell schedule is implemented at our schools for the 2012-2013 school year, we will communicate those changes as soon as the decision is made.

As the District continues to look at ways to improve efficiency and better support our children in the classroom, we will continue to partner with you in our goal to reach “every child, by name and face, to graduation.”

Sincerely,


Dr. Heath Morrison
Superintendent, Washoe County School District

