

Fairfax County Public Schools  
Transportation Task Force

Report of the “Flip” Committee

October 18, 2007

# Flip Committee Objective

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- The Flip Committee's objective was to design one recommended bell schedule and one alternative bell schedule that are more consistent with student sleep biology than the current bell schedule.
- The Committee did a preliminary analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of two candidate bell schedules and formed our recommendations based on the knowledge and research of the committee members.
- We assumed that more in-depth analysis of our recommended and alternative bell schedules, based on further research and data collection, would be conducted in the next set of committees.

# Flip Committee Fundamental Beliefs

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- The current FCPS system of bus routes needs to be reengineered:
  - it is stretched to the breaking point,
  - It is not providing acceptable service in many cases, and
  - It needs to be redesigned to take into account the operation of the new bus facility
- This reengineering and the bell schedule change should occur simultaneously – i.e., review each route once, not twice
- Adolescent and teen students would benefit significantly from later school start times

# Flip Committee Process

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- Meeting Oct 1
  - Looked at bell schedules considered in previous studies
  - Developed two alternative bell schedules:
    - Flip 1: ES, HS, MS
    - Flip 2: ES, MS, HS
- Meeting Oct 4
  - Developed list of factors/concerns
  - Rated each bell schedule against factors/concerns
- Meeting Oct 9
  - Voted – Flip 2 barely won
  - Individual comments through email
- Report consists of briefing, minutes, and comments

# Flip Committee Scenarios

	School Start Times											
Bell Schedule	7:20	7:45	8:00	8:15	8:30	8:45	9:00	9:15	9:30	9:40		
<b>Current</b>												
ES	XX											
MS	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX			X	X	XX				X		
HS	XXXXXX					X						
<b>Flip Scenario 1</b>												
ES		X) XXXXX) XXXXX)		XXXXXX	XX							
MS						XXXXXXXXXXXXXX		xx	XX)	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX		
HS and Secondary Sch						XXXXXXXXXX)		XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX				
<b>Flip Scenario 2</b>												
ES		X) XXXXX) XXXXX)		XXXXXX	XX							
MS						XXXXXXXXXX)		XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX				
HS and Secondary Sch						XXXXXXXXXXXXXX		xx	XX)	XXXXXXXXXXXXXX		

# Comparing Flip Scenarios

3 = better than current; 2= same; 1=worse than current

Factor	Flip Scenario 1 ES - HS - MS	Flip Scenario 2 ES - MS - HS
<b>Student Sleep Biology</b>		
ES	3	3
MS	3	3
HS	3	3+
<b>Students Transported during “Light”</b>		
ES	2	2
MS	3	3
HS – buses	3	3
HS – student drivers	3	3
<b>Student Supervision/Impacts on Families</b>		
Before School		
ES	3	3
MS	1	1.5
After School		
ES	1	1
MS	3	3
HS	3	3
Mondays ES	1.5	1.5

# Comparing Flip Scenarios (cont'd)

3 = better than current; 2= same; 1=worse than current

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<b>Factor</b>	<b>Flip Scenario 1</b> ES - HS - MS	<b>Flip Scenario 2</b> ES - MS - HS
<b>After School Activities</b>		
ES	3	3
MS	1	2
HS	1	1 or maybe 3
<b>Community Sports</b>		
ES	3	3
MS	2	2
HS	1	1 or maybe 3
<b>Coaches</b>	2	2
<b>Bus Run Duration</b>		
Special Ed		
ES	2	2
MS + HS	3	3
HS Academies	3	3
<b>Cost of Bus Operations</b>	?	?

# Comparing Flip Scenarios (cont'd)

3 = better than current; 2= same; 1=worse than current

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Flip Scenario 1</b> ES - HS - MS	<b>Flip Scenario 2</b> ES - MS - HS
<b>Bus Run Duration</b>		
GT		
ES	1	1
MS	3	3
Magnet - ES	1	1
TJ	1	1 or maybe 3
<b>Bus Operations</b>		
Shortage of bus drivers	2	2
Availability of buses for field trips ES	1	1
Availability of buses for field trips MS, HS	2	2
Availability buses for after-school activities -HS	3	3
<b>HS Student's Jobs</b>	2	2
<b>School staff</b>	2	2
<b>Impact on neighborhoods near schools</b>	2	1

# Flip Committee Conclusions

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- Committee valued student sleep biology, morning ES safety, student pre- and post-school supervision, and safety of HS drivers as most important factors,
- All of these factors are benefited by later upper school start times, except ES students out 30 minutes earlier on average than currently and will need more supervision
- Committee concerned about ability of SACC program to meet increased ES after-school needs and increased costs for childcare incurred by families
- Committee favored Flip 2 (HS starts last) over Flip 1 (MS starts last); most members who favored Flip 1 would be happy with Flip 2 instead
- Flip 2 favored assuming some HS practices/activities could occur before school, and more ES fields would become available earlier in day; if these assumptions are not true, then votes would switch to Flip 1

# Flip Member Implementation Concerns

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- Implementing a new bell schedule will require significant FCPS, County and community commitment and resources
- The community should remain involved during design, testing, and implementation of new bell schedule transportation program
- The reengineering program will require resources

# Additional Flip Member Concerns

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- Can we mitigate negative impacts and find “win-win” situations to a bell schedule change?
- Will the Community accept the large change implied by HS starting last?
- Will later bus runs get bogged down in traffic?
- Tweaks to consider:
  - Future boundary changes should consider transportation service (e.g., length of bus runs) and efficiency
  - Don’t let the GT/magnet “tail” wag the dog
  - Can ES early-release Mondays be not so early?

# Flip Concerns About Cost

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- The current FCPS system of bus routes needs to be reengineered; this reengineering and the bell schedule change should occur simultaneously – i.e., review each route once, not twice – to save money
- Design of a “final” later HS start time bell schedule and the transportation costing process need to be iterative, so that small differences in bell schedule don’t cause costs to balloon unnecessarily
- The time between tiers and expanded time window for pm runs in the flip bell schedules should help to control costs
- Committee members concerned about what method will be used to cost out our proposals and how costs are attributed

# Flip Committee Member Concerns about “Costs”

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- While costs of busing seem large and tangible, benefits of later start times for HS students are significant and need to be weighed seriously

# Flip Committee Recommendations

## Proposed Bell Schedule

	School Start Times			School End Times		
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<b>School</b>	7:50-8:10 am	8:35-8:55 am	9:20-9:40 am	2:30-2:50 pm	ES 3:15-3:35 pm MS/HS 3:25-3:45 pm	ES 4:00-4:20 pm MS/HS 4:10-4:30 pm
<b>ES</b>	<b>XXXX</b>	xxxx	x	<b>XXXX</b>	xxxx	x
<b>MS</b>		<b>XXXX</b>	xx		<b>XXXX</b>	xx
<b>HS/Sec</b>		xx	<b>XXXX</b>		xx	<b>XXXX</b>
	total time span: 1 hour 50 minutes			total time span: 2 hours		

## Alternative Bell Schedule

	School Start Times			School End Times		
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<b>School</b>	7:50-8:10 am	8:35-8:55 am	9:20-9:40 am	2:30-2:50 pm	ES 3:15-3:35 pm MS/HS 3:25-3:45 pm	ES 4:00-4:20 pm MS/HS 4:10-4:30 pm
<b>ES</b>	<b>XXXX</b>	xxxx	x	<b>XXXX</b>	xxxx	x
<b>MS</b>		xx	<b>XXXX</b>		xx	<b>XXXX</b>
<b>HS/Sec</b>		<b>XXXX</b>	xx		<b>XXXX</b>	xx
	total time span: 1 hour 50 minutes			total time span: 2 hours		

# Flip Members and Participation

Last Name	First Name	Organization	Number of Meetings Attended	Email Participation	Vote
Auerbach (Sec)	Jan	FC Federation of Citizens	4	X	2
Baker (Chr)	Laurie	High School parent	4	X	2
Carley	Jennifer	Elementary School parent	1	X	
Carroll	Robin	Middle School parent	3	X	2
Evans	Sandy	SLEEP	4	X	1 (or 2)
Hecht	Jill	Elementary School parent	2	X	1 (or 2)
Jakulski	Jill	Middle School principal	4	X	1 (or 2)
Lindberg	Laurie	Middle School parent	4	X	1
O'Keefe	P.D.	FCPS Safe & Drug Free Youth	2		
Stuebner	Bruce	Elementary School teacher	3	X	2
Vdovjak	John	AP Chantilly HS ED Program	2		
Vennergrund	Carol	Middle School parent	3	X	1 (or 2)
<b>Members added by TTF Chair, 9/28/07:</b>					
Cherubini	Lisa	FC Athletic Council	0	X	2
McGrath	Patti	FC Community & Rec Svc	1	X	
Galacia	Carlos	Student	0		
Kim	Christina	Elementary School parent	1	X	2
Martinez	Donna	Adv. Comm. Students with Disabilities	1	X	
Monts	Charles	Boy Scouts	2	X	2
Stefan	Tim	FC Chamber of Commerce	0		
Wegener	Christin	FC Dept of Transportation	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>				