

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)		xxxxxxx	xx							
MS						xxxxxxxxxxxxxx		xx	XX)	XXXXXXXXXXXX		
HS and Secondary Sch						XXXXXXXXX)		xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx				
<b>Flip Scenario 2</b>												
ES		X) XXXXX) XXXXX)		xxxxxxx	xx							
MS						XXXXXXXXX)		xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx				
HS and Secondary Sch						xxxxxxxxxxxxxx		xx	XX)	XXXXXXXXXXXX		

# 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>				

**Some Basics for Considering a Bell Schedule Scenario:  
“Flip Committee”  
Oct. 1, 2007**

**1) A successful “Flip” scenario would generally be consistent with the biology of the students.**

**2) Must have three *flexible* “tiers” (groupings of schools) for delivery**

Too expensive if fewer; too early and/or too late if more. Our tiers now are very loose groupings, except for HS. After the HS runs, the rest of the delivery schedule currently is really on a “rolling bell,” with MS and ES delivered as soon and as efficiently as they can be. Could do that with ES first, as well.

**3) Tier needs to be (loosely) at least 45 mins apart\***

(i.e., if first tier starts at 7:45 am, second will be approx. 8:30 am, third will be approx. 9:15 am. If first tier 8 am, others 8:45 and 9:30 am)

**4) Elementary children delivered to their base school shouldn’t be picked up before about 7 am or dropped off after about 5:15 pm.**

This is the “civil twilight” constraint. Not official policy but most involved in issue feel ES should not be walking in the dark. There are exceptions now (such as children picked up/dropped off at their own homes), some ES children now picked up before 7 am. More research being done on actual civil twilight constraints.

**5) ES has to go on at least two tiers because of numbers. MS is not full a full tier should be combined with other. HS tier now includes many MS and Spec. Ed runs.**

(Balancing tiers helps Transportation operate efficiently.)

**6) The longer the window between the earliest and latest start time, the lower the cost of implementation will be.**

*\*According to consultants, Management Partnership Services*

**Chart of Potential Scenario Options, in General:**

Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4 <i>Status Quo</i>	Scenario 5	Scenario 6	Scenario 7
ES	ES	HS/es	HS/MS	MS/ES	MS/hs	ES/MS/HS
ES/HS	ES/MS	ES	MS/ES	ES	HS/ES	ES/MS/HS
MS/es	HS/es/ms	MS/es	ES	HS/es	ES	ES/MS/HS

*Lower case lettering indicates that there would be relatively few of these schools on this tier.*

***Flip Committee members at Oct. 1, 2007, meeting generally felt that Scenarios 1 and 2 above had the most potential.***

Key: Better than current bell=3; Neutral=2; Worse than current bell=1

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Flip Scenario 1</b> ES: 8-9:15 HS: 8:30 TJ: 9:30 MS: 9:15	<b>Flip Scenario 2</b> ES: 7:70-8:55 MS: 8:35-8:55 HS: 9:20-9:40
<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

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Flip Scenario 1</b> ES: 8-9:15 HS: 8:30 TJ: 9:30 MS: 9:15	<b>Flip Scenario 2</b> ES: 7:70-8:55 MS: 8:35-8:55 HS: 9:20-9:40
<b>After School Activities</b>		

Key: Better than current bell=3; Neutral=2; Worse than current bell=1

ES	3	3
MS	1	2
HS		
Mon and Wed clubs/other activities	1	1 or maybe 3
Sports – practices vs. games	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>Cost of Bus Operations</b>	?	?

Key: Better than current bell=3; Neutral=2; Worse than current bell=1

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Flip Scenario 1</b> ES: 8-9:15 HS: 8:30 TJ: 9:30 MS: 9:15	<b>Flip Scenario 2</b> ES: 7:70-8:55 MS: 8:35-8:55 HS: 9:20-9:40
<b>Bus Run Duration</b>		
Special Ed		
ES	2	2
MS + HS	3	3
GT		
ES	1	1
MS	3	3
Magnet - ES	1	1
TJ	1	1 or maybe 3
HS Academies	3	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>	?	?
<b>Impact on neighborhoods near schools</b>	2	1

Key: Better than current bell=3; Neutral=2; Worse than current bell=1

**NOTE: PLEASE SEE ACCOMPANYING MINUTES OF FLIP COMMITTEE 10/4/07 MEETING FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.**