

Weston Public Schools

Start Time/Scheduling Innovation Steering Committee

October 30, 2017

Start Time/Scheduling Innovation Steering Committee

- Formed in January 2017
- Superintendent, all Assistant Superintendents, principals, faculty, staff, parents and 2 School Committee members
- Tasked with a broad review relating to student health and wellness
- Decided in September 2017 to focus first on start time

Teens Don't Get Enough Sleep



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Among teens, sleep deprivation an epidemic

Sleep deprivation increases the likelihood teens will suffer myriad negative consequences, including an inability to concentrate, poor grades, drowsy-driving incidents, anxiety, depression, thoughts of suicide and even suicide attempts.

- National Sleep Foundation recommends 8.5 – 9.25 hours of sleep per night for teenagers
- According to a CDC study, 70% of U.S. high school students sleep less than 8 hours on school nights

Weston Teens Echo National Trends

According to Student Life Survey Data in Weston

- Less than half (45%) of our HS students sleep more than 7 hours a night
- Only 39% of girls sleep more than 7 hours a night
 - Less than 1/3 of junior girls sleep 7+ hours
- Just 10% sleep more than 8 hours a night

Sleepy Teens – It's Biology, Not Choice

Dr. Chun Lim, MD, PhD

Cognitive Neurology Unit

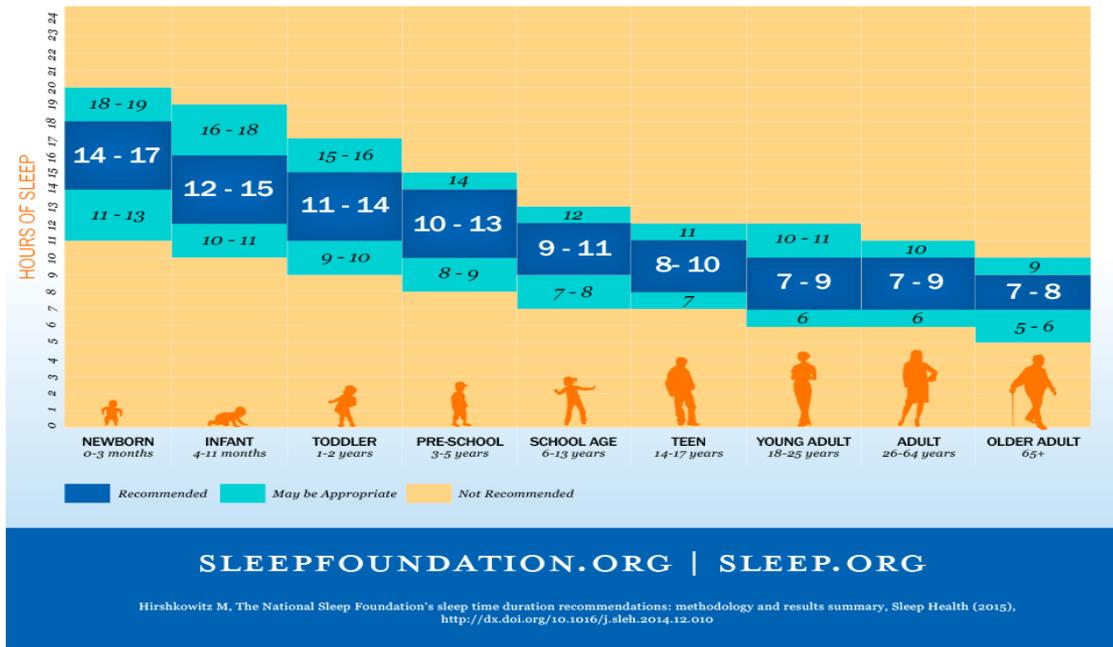
BIDMC and Harvard Medical School

Why Do We Sleep?

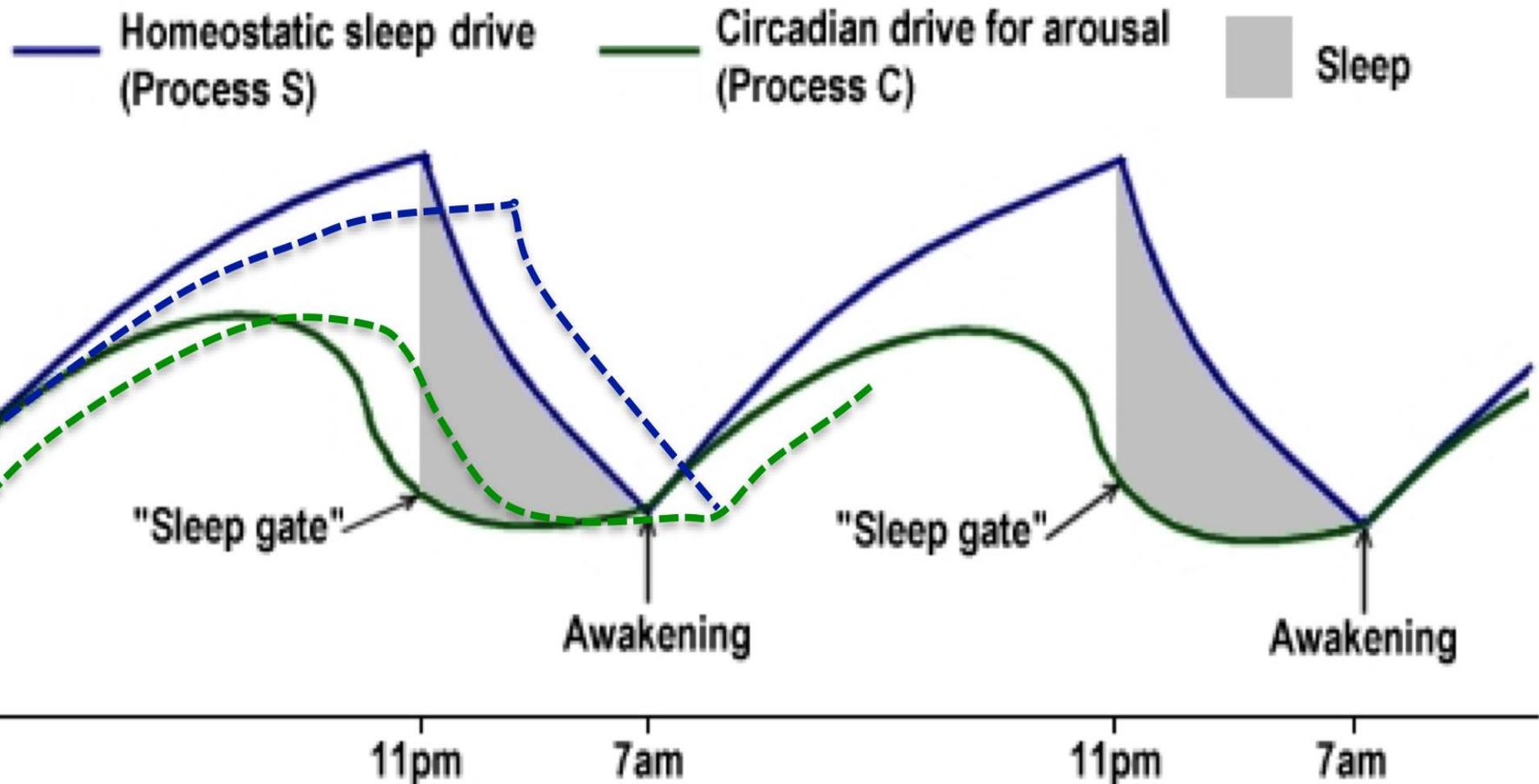
- Adaptive/Inactivity
- Energy Conservation
- Restorative
- Synaptic homeostasis (plasticity)
 - Sleep and memory consolidation
 - Sleep and motor learning

NATIONAL SLEEP FOUNDATION

SLEEP DURATION RECOMMENDATIONS



A Two-Process Model of Sleep Regulation



Borbély. Hum Neurobiol. 1982;1:195

Carskadon, Sleep, 1993; 16: 258

Carskadon, Pediatr Clin N Am, 2011; 58: 647

American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement

- “The evidence strongly implicates earlier school start times (ie, before 8:30 AM) as a key modifiable contributor to insufficient sleep, as well as circadian rhythm disruption, in this population.”
- “Furthermore, a substantial body of research has now demonstrated that delaying school start times is an effective countermeasure to chronic sleep loss and has a wide range of potential benefits to students with regard to physical and mental health, safety, and academic achievement.”

Benefits of a Later Start and More Sleep

School Performance

Decreased:

- Tardiness
- Absenteeism
- Sleeping during class
- Disciplinary actions

Increased:

- GPAs, test scores
- Focus, attention span
- Ability to solve complex problems
- Homework completion

Health and Safety

Decreased:

- Risky/impulsive behavior
- Depression
- Substance abuse
- Irritability
- Vehicle accidents
- Athletic injuries
- Fighting and violence
- Obesity

Increased:

- Physical activity
- Tolerance for frustration

Common Myths/Misunderstandings

- If school starts later, they'll just go to sleep later
 - Studies show that a later start leads to more sleep
- Parents just need to make their kids go to sleep earlier
 - It's not a choice for most teens
 - Importance of good sleep hygiene
- They can make up sleep on weekends
 - Weekend oversleep not sufficient and may be unhealthy

Proposed Plan for 2018/2019 School Year

- Middle School and High School
 - Current High School: 7:30 a.m. to 2:50 p.m.
 - Current Middle School: 7:40 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.
 - Proposed MS and HS: 8:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
 - Block times reduced
 - High School: 9 min per block
 - Middle School: 5 min per block
- “W Block” once weekly 7:45 a.m. – 8:40 a.m.
- Elementary Schools
 - Current: 8:10 a.m. to 2:20 p.m.
 - Proposed: 8:00 a.m. to 2:20 p.m.

Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities

- More sleep for our students!
- Improved academic performance
- Positive impact on safety and physical and emotional health
- Elimination of unstructured time after MS day
- Opportunity for teacher team meetings or class preparation at beginning of day

Challenges

- Athletics scheduling
- Transportation
- Impact on after-school activities
- Impact on family schedules and child-care arrangements

Summary

- Sleep deprivation is a real problem for our Middle School and High School students with serious implications for their physical and emotional health and academic performance.
- Moving school start times later for adolescents results in more sleep and measurable improvement in key areas of health and performance.
- We have a proposed plan and are actively soliciting feedback from the community through email, forums and surveys.
- While there are a number of challenges to address, past experience has shown that communities can adjust and be successful with later start times.
- We have the opportunity for the Weston Public Schools to be a leader in providing the healthiest, most successful environment for our students.

Next Steps

- Community Feedback and Input
 - Email: starttime@weston.org
 - Visit our web page: westonschools.org/school-committee/start-timescheduling-innovation-steering-committee/
 - See more data from our students: westonschools.org/school-committee/start-timescheduling-innovation-steering-committee/student-life-survey-data/
- Upcoming Forums: November 15, 2017
 - 8:30 a.m. Case House Large Conference Room
 - 7:00 p.m. Weston Public Library
- Survey

Questions