

School Start Time Committee
Council Chambers
March 27, 2017
10:00 a.m.

Present:	J. Erardi	K. Joyce
	J. Davila	M. Ku
	E. Aho	M. Memoli
	D. Cruson	D. Roach
	R. Dufour	L. Rodrigue
	T. Einhorn	J. Vouros
	J. Fonovic	H. Werner
	K. Gombos	1 Public
	T. Harrison	

Dr. Erardi introduced Ellen Aho, Kim Joyce and Heidi Werner who are the community members of the committee.

Mr. Dufour spoke about the transportation options which would be doable for the 2018-2019 school year. One included converting to a two-tier system which would have the high school and middle school starting 40 minutes later. It will take eight or nine buses for this option. The next cost for eight to ten buses is a minimum of \$233,000.

Dr. Erardi said we use 25 buses for the high school and 25 for Reed. He asked if it was possible in the first tier to have one bus for a combination of two of the three schools.

Mr. Dufour felt that would be possible.

Mr. Cruson asked why this wasn't possible until the 2018-19 school year.

Mr. Dufour said it is based on enrollment numbers.

Mr. Vouros felt we should look at the current ridership on a daily basis and possibly combine the middle school and elementary schools. He feels the number of children riding on a daily basis will not overload the buses.

Mr. Dufour was not concerned with the numbers. For example, he has 10 students on Bus 15. He can combine buses but he can't use that bus for other schools.

Dr. Erardi said if all 50 buses on tier 1 are picking up high school students 25 are going to half of the town and 25 to the other half.

Mr. Dufour said you still would have three drop-offs.

Dr. Rodrigue said having the high school dismissal time closer to 2:30 p.m. would be better for sports and activities.

Dr. Erardi asked what Options 1A and 1B would look like minus four buses.

Mr. Vouros said he understood that some buses stop at houses along their route which takes more time and gas. He asked to see how many times they stop and where so we can consolidate and save time.

Mr. Dufour said there are some narrow and windy roads that necessitate stopping at each house. Each bus does about 20 stops. Going down to 15 only saves a few minutes.

Mr. Vouros requested that information.

Mr. Harrison said that Route 34 and Wasserman Way traffic is better at 7:00 than 8:00. Also, the 2:30 dismissal time from the teacher standpoint with a longer school day may be a problem as many live in other towns and it could cause childcare issues.

Dr. Erardi said we have to decide what is best for children and anyone involved will have to make adjustments.

Mr. Dufour said that regarding Options 2A and 2B, it would be possible to reduce a bus every year.

Dr. Erardi said Option 2A doesn't address our work as the high school still starts early.

Dr. Gombos said the sleep research goes from middle school to high school. We can flip the middle school and elementary schools.

Dr. Erardi doesn't think Option 2 meets our charge.

Mr. Cruson likes having Options 2A and 2B as a fallback.

Dr. Erardi asked how many buses ran at capacity.

Mr. Dufour said there were a few in the Yogananda area. The buses are never at capacity for Reed or the elementary schools.

Dr. Erardi asked if we only look at no cost opportunities or do we bring an increase to the Board. Mr. Cruson said he would have liked more options including any cost increases.

Mrs. Ku also felt more options would be good. She asked if we reduced the 2 tiers how difficult would it be to have elementary and Reed and the middle school and high school ride together.

Mr. Dufour said we had Hawley and Reed together but it didn't work well. Also, Reed students are there 20 minutes longer. The routes are designed to finish at the elementary schools.

Dr. Erardi asked him to look at staggering the start time for Reed if you have Reed with elementary runs.

Mr. Dufour said the elementary schools take 10 minutes to load the buses.

Dr. Erardi asked to set up a meeting with Mr. Dufour, Mr. Cruson, Mr. Harrison, Mrs. Ku, Mr. Bienkowski and Mrs. Vadas to discuss next steps. Monday we will end the conversation on transportation and break into work groups. The question is how Options 1A or 1B be done without any cost and what would happen if we moved Reed to the elementary second tier.

Mrs. Aho said her daughter waited a long time for her middle school bus last year. Combining different schools on the same bus there needs to be a concern for those who have to wait too long at their school.

Mr. Vouros asked for information on Option 3.

Mr. Dufour said that option is if you put Reed and the middle school on tier one and the high school on tier two.

Mrs. Davila said that some parents want older siblings home to care for the younger children.

Mrs. Ku said that was a big issue

Mr. Vouros said we are here to talk about the benefits for all children. The sleep study is driving this, not child care which is a concern for families.

Dr. Rodrigue would want to collect data on that. Many of the high school students stay after school. The later we go it might have a worse affect. 30 or 40 minutes is a good time.

Mr. Vouros said when the subcommittee meets they have to consider if there is a viable option that is less than \$233,000. We need to know the incremental increases to get to a solution. The Board has to defend the decision.

Mr. Cruson said he knows that some Board members wanted research on other districts.

At next Monday's meeting Dr. Erardi will divide out districts that made these changes with a possible site visit.

Mr. Cruson stated that some changed and then went back to the previous schedule.

Mr. Dufour said one district changed because of low test scores, added 25 buses, but the change didn't increase the scores.

Dr. Gombos said earlier is better for the elementary schools. It would be a major impact for Reed to be on the same tier.

Dr. Erardi said the Monday scenarios would be to investigate options with possible costs, drill down what we are looking to accomplish, look at possible field trips, and break out into groups. The meeting this week will be at All-Star Transportation.

The meeting ended at 10:56 a.m.

Submitted by: Kathy June