

Dr. Martin Karp, Vice Chair

**SUBJECT: LIMITED PILOT FOR LATER START TIMES IN HIGH SCHOOL**

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**

**LINK TO STRATEGIC  
FRAMEWORK: STUDENT, PARENT, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Numerous research studies and high school student testimonials support exploring a pilot during the 2014-15 school year for later start times at the high school level. Perhaps, a limited number of high schools in the District or a select number of students in each high school can be considered for a pilot program regarding later start times.

Typically, teenagers find it more difficult to go to sleep and rise early. Experts say the cause is biological. In addition, students maintain that school projects and greater workloads contribute to later bedtimes.

In Fairfax County, Virginia, a program has begun allowing eligible high school seniors to drop their first classes on the schedule. Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) can track this effort and review the results.

A lack of sleep may impact students' mental and physical well-being, and contribute to health problems including depression and headaches. Additional negative consequences have been cited due to early start times for high school students such as greater school absenteeism, lower school performance, and behavioral problems.

Certain student behaviors may further exacerbate the problems associated with sleep deprivation. M-DCPS can distribute information to parents and students addressing strategies to negate specific student behaviors such as poor study habits, increased usage of social media, or lack of guidance and establishment of routines, which all lead to staying up late and getting less sleep.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY VICE CHAIR  
DR. MARTIN KARP:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to:

1. explore on a limited basis the academic and financial feasibility of offering later start times to high school students, and providing information to parents and students including health benefits associated with earlier bedtimes, along with helpful tips and suggestions; and,
2. present a report on the proposed action above on or before the February 2014 Miami-Dade County School Board meeting.