

## EDUCATION

# Upper Darby looks at later high school start time

By Kevin Tustin

[ktustin@21st-centurymedia.com](mailto:ktustin@21st-centurymedia.com)

**UPPER DARBY** » Upper Darby school administrators and school board members will have a lot to sleep on as they start to investigate delaying the start time for high school students.

A number of potential scenarios were created by a committee of administrators and made public for the first time Tuesday night to push back the start time for secondary educa-

tion students (high school and/or middle school). The district's scenarios for potential delayed start time implementation come three months after the state published its own study making the case for later start times, with a general consensus being 8:30 a.m. to provide adequate sleep for adolescents who generally go to bed later and get up later than younger students.

At present, Upper Darby High School students start their day 7:30 a.m. and middle

school students start at 8 a.m.

Assistant Superintendent Ed Marshaleck provided the start times and some costs associated with seven options outlining what may work for the district if they and a delayed start:

Option 1 pushes high school start time back to 8:30 to have four-block days at 83 minutes per block, limiting the number of courses that can be taken to 24 credits. The middle school starts at 8 a.m. with the elementary schools, having their

times made earlier to either 8 a.m. or 7:45. This option will have an initial cost of \$3.6 million to the district to buy more school buses with a recurring \$3 million cost.

Option 2 also has high school starting at 8:30 a.m., but all students will have a first block cyber course that require checking in with that course's teacher or homeroom teacher. For this, the district would need to buy more Chromebooks and cyber licenses plus \$3.3 million for transporta-

tion, or invest \$390,000 in curriculum writing. There is no change to elementary and middle school start times.

Option 3 continues the 8:30 a.m. start time at the high school but shrinks the instructional time of the current five-block day from 79 minutes to 65. Some \$3.3 million in first-year transportation costs apply. There is no change to elementary and middle school start times.

Option 4 pushes back the high school start time to 8

a.m. and reduces the block instructional time to 71 minutes. \$2.2 million in first-year transportation costs apply. There is no change to elementary and middle school start times.

Option 5 has all current start times pushed back one hour. An initial investment of \$1.1 million would be need for transportation to accommodate bus routes for non-public and charter students the district is responsible to transport.

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