



March 17, 2022

Dear School Staff;

In alignment with the School District of Philadelphia's Goals & Guardrails, we are consistently striving to create educational conditions that empower all students to succeed. In the Fall of 2021, as part of a larger strategy to create those conditions, the District began its phased approach to standardizing daily start and end times at our schools. Standardizing the bell times is designed to reduce the amount of time students spend on buses, help ensure buses are on time more often, and allow for consistent cleaning of high-touch areas on buses between runs.

As discussed in previous forums during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years, we have started to implement a 3-tier bus schedule. In 2022-2023, we began to align schools to the three tiers and made substantial changes to Kindergarten-Grade 8 schools. Starting this fall, based on research linked here [School Start Times for Adolescents | Pediatrics](#), our efforts to reduce and improve transportation for students while we still deal with a national driver shortage community feedback from the Spring of 2021, we are making additional schedule adjustments for the 2022-2023 school year. Research shows that later start times for high school students enable them to arrive at a school more alert and ready to learn. In addition, since a majority of our high schoolers are responsible for making their own way to school, later start times promote safer travel in the mornings and afternoons. **Therefore, starting this fall all District high schools, except four schools whose schedules must align with partner institutions, will shift to a 9:00 a.m. start time – including high schools with middle grades and high schools. Pre-Kindergarten programs that are located in the high schools will maintain their current schedule.** All other elementary schools – schools serving Pre-K through Grade 8 – will maintain their current bell schedules.

We recognize that changing start and end times can present challenges to families, and remain committed to providing support to families wherever possible. Central Office is scheduled to host district wide parent and community forums to inform stakeholders of the bell schedule adjustments and collect input about the support families will need for the 22-23 SY. We will also be hosting forums with School Leaders, Teachers and Staff.

We thank you for your commitment and dedication to all students in The School District of Philadelphia.

Thank you.