

**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING  
CONSIDERATION OF A LATER START TIME FOR HIGH  
SCHOOL**

2020 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Suzanne Harrison**

Senate Sponsor: Ann Millner

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This concurrent resolution encourages school districts and charter schools to consider the possible benefits and consequences of a later start to the school day for high schools.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This resolution:

► encourages school districts, charter schools, and school community councils to consider the possible benefits and consequences of a later start to the school day for high schools.

**Special Clauses:**

None

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*Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

WHEREAS, the majority of adolescents are sleep deprived at school;

WHEREAS, research indicates that the natural biological rhythms of adolescents are a poor fit with early school start times and that most adolescents get their best sleep between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.;

WHEREAS, only a few Utah high schools start the school day after 8:00 a.m.;



28 WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association,  
29 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and over a dozen major medical organizations,  
30 including the American Psychological Association all recommend that high schools start no  
31 earlier than 8:30 a.m.;

32 WHEREAS, an average of only 10% of adolescents get the recommended 9.25 hours of  
33 sleep each night and the Center of Disease Control's 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey showed  
34 that 75.4% of U.S. high school students get fewer than 8 hours of sleep and 43% get less than 6  
35 hours of sleep on school nights;

36 WHEREAS, environmental factors such as homework, extracurricular activities, social  
37 activities, part-time work, and technology exacerbate the tendency for adolescents to decrease  
38 sleep time;

39 WHEREAS, the National Sleep Foundation reports that 20 to 30% of high school  
40 students sleep at least once a week during class and 14% are tardy due to oversleeping;

41 WHEREAS, research identifies numerous consequences and impacts on adolescent  
42 brain development associated with sleep deprivation, including lack of attention to learning  
43 tasks, poor retention of information taught, low grades, increased risk of auto accidents,  
44 increased disciplinary problems, impaired judgment, increased suicidal thinking, increased  
45 levels of anxiety and depression, decreased motivation, increased substance abuse, and other  
46 negative consequences;

47 WHEREAS, sleep loss in adolescents has been associated with increased risk of  
48 obesity, eating disorders, and cardiovascular morbidity which are likely to lead to increasingly  
49 poor health as adolescents progress to adulthood;

50 WHEREAS, the need to start the high school day later is a public health concern;

51 WHEREAS, a comprehensive national study by the RAND Corporation on the  
52 economic impacts of delaying the start of school to at least 8:30 a.m. found that the benefits of  
53 a later start time far outweigh the immediate costs to implement later school start times and  
54 that a nation-wide delayed start time would generate an estimated economic gain of \$8.6 billion  
55 to the U.S. economy after just two years and potentially \$83 billion after just ten years resulting  
56 from improved academic performance and decreased mortality rates as a result of a decrease in  
57 the number of car crashes;

58 WHEREAS, research indicates that later school start times for high schools result in

59 fewer car accidents, increased academic performance, fewer disciplinary referrals, improved  
60 mental health and athletic performance, reduced weekend oversleep, increased number of  
61 adolescents getting adequate sleep, and increased total sleep time;

62 WHEREAS, a major multi-state study conducted by researchers at the University of  
63 Minnesota and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention linked later high school  
64 start times with significant decreases in adolescent substance abuse, depression, and  
65 consumption of caffeinated beverages;

66 WHEREAS, a study of secondary schools in Seattle found that delaying the school start  
67 time by an hour resulted in an increased daily median sleep time and an increase in the median  
68 grades among participating adolescents with a larger impact on adolescents from economically  
69 disadvantaged families;

70 WHEREAS, the Seattle study also found that later school start times resulted in  
71 increased punctuality and attendance, especially among economically disadvantaged students,  
72 and could have a significant impact on decreasing the learning gap between low and high  
73 socioeconomic groups;

74 WHEREAS, research indicates that later school start times have a minimal impact on  
75 participation rates by adolescents in extracurricular activities;

76 WHEREAS, the community can support parents and families to ensure that adolescents  
77 get appropriate sleep by adjusting school schedules;

78 WHEREAS, even small changes to the start time for high schools can result in  
79 significant improvements to the health and academic performance of adolescents; and

80 WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes local control and that Utah's school districts and  
81 charter schools are responsible for school schedules and start times:

82 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the  
83 Governor concurring therein, encourages school districts and charter schools, in consultation  
84 with their respective school community councils, to consider the possible benefits and  
85 consequences of a later start to the school day for high schools.

86 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the State Board  
87 of Education, the State Charter School Board, and each school district and charter school in  
88 Utah that serves students in grades 9 through 12.