



Vera C. O'Leary Middle School

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Excellence: Everybody, Every Day, Every Minute ~ No Exceptions

March 30, 2017

Hello Parents,

The Twin Falls School District will be modifying school start and release times for the 2017-2018 school year. This information is being provided now to allow parents as much time as possible to make preparations for the next school year. We understand that changing times can be difficult on families and want to make sure you have adequate time to make arrangements.

The bell schedule is a dynamic and complex issue that can be very challenging for large school districts. The bell schedule listed below was developed by a committee of 25-30 people. It included parents, teachers, students, and administrators. An initial survey was administered and over 3,000 people responded. There were two themes that emerged from the survey--1) the 2016-2017 schedule is widely unpopular, and 2) we should follow what research says about student learning and not start school before 8 AM. The committee examined a variety of available options. To make our transportation system work we need to have approximately 30 minutes between the elementary and middle school levels (our two largest ridership), and approximately 15 minutes between middle school and high school. Thus, if one time is moved it impacts the others. If we don't have this time, we will have students waiting for buses and will likely be over capacity on our routes. The bus company does not dictate to us how the schedule is going to be set, but we must operate within the transportation budget provided to us by the state. This means we can only afford a certain number of buses and routes.

In our second survey to parents, students, and staff the selected schedule had a super majority (over 66%) of respondents indicate they could support or live with the schedule. As a result the committee decided to move forward with the following schedule. We are exploring options for offering extra support and other alternatives before school.

Start Time	Release Time	Level
8:00:00 AM	3:00:00 PM	Elementary
8:10:00 AM	3:25:00 PM	High School
8:40:00 AM	3:50:00 PM	Middle School

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Keelie Campbell, Principal

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