

January 24, 2017

Dear Parents and Community Stakeholders,

The School Start Times Advisory Committee (STAC) wanted to send a quick update to let you know what's happening regarding a topic that's important to you and school-age students across Boxford, Topsfield, and Middleton. Below please find highlights and links to additional information.

Work continues across PreK-12 spectrum

With active participation among school committee members from the Tri-Town School Union (Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield) and Masconomet, and superintendents, principals, faculty, and parents, STAC has continued to address the feasibility of changing school start time. In November, elementary school and Masco faculty participated in several "listening tour" events, where we shared our thinking and listened to their feedback and concerns. As expected, the feedback ran the gamut from support to skepticism, and we were glad we heard it all. We are actively working with school administration and faculty members to take a closer look at some issues identified at these sessions. Stay tuned for more information regarding our community forums, which we plan on holding in March.

In December, Masconomet and the Tri-Town Union contracted with transportation consultants to analyze a wealth of bus data to see what efficiencies, from a schedule and financial perspective, could be recommended regarding our bus routes. Their analysis includes possible school day schedule scenarios and optimization of the bus schedules for all schools, regardless if any school day changes are made. We are awaiting their report, due in early February.

Evaluation Criteria

STAC has spent a considerable amount of time developing the criteria by which we will evaluate various options, including no change to start time. Follow the link below to a more complete list, but here are some key considerations:

- Student health and learning
- Before and after school activities (language instruction, band, clubs, extra help, athletics, academic competitions)
- Transportation efficiency and cost
- Budget implications (for Masconomet, the Tri-Town Union, our families, and our faculty)
- Impact on Child care

The criteria can be found here: <http://www.masconomet.org/Page/463>

Next Steps

- February: Receive the bus route analysis and work into our thinking. More fully develop our options and survey.
- March: Hold community forums. Conduct survey of parents, staff, and students to get feedback on the specific options.
- April/May: With community input, STAC makes recommendation to Tri-Town Union and Masconomet school committees.

More information can be found on the STAC page at <http://www.masconomet.org/Page/463>