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TEMECULA: High school students seek later start

By BY CRAIG SHULTZ cshultz@californian.com 5:30 P.M. OCT. 31, 2011

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There's also concern about students whose parents work and must drop them at school early.

"The number one obstacle is the logistics of getting kids to school," said Ramsay, who added that her feedback from parents about the idea has been mostly positive.

Part of the plan would be a switch to block schedules, where instead of attending six classes for about one hour each day, students would have three two-hour classes, alternating each day.

"In a time when we're worried about kids in California not having the necessary skills to compete, we make it harder on them. Why? Because we can't change bus schedules?" Ramsay said. "It's counterproductive to what we're doing in education."

Club members wonder why schedules can't be flipped, with an earlier start for elementary schools, which now begin about 9 a.m., and a later start for teenagers.

The club meets each Thursday during lunch and new members are asked to sign a petition and then share the news about the club in their classes.

More than 200 students have signed up so far.

Newcomers are asked for pros and cons regarding a switch to help the leaders

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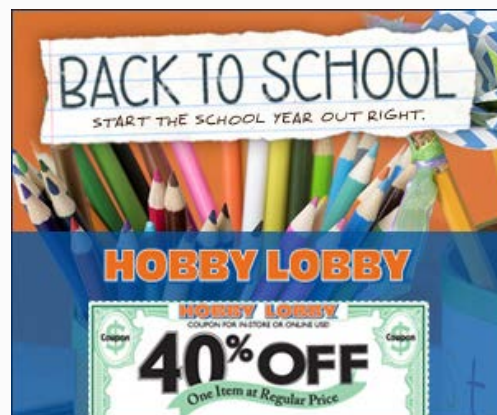
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form their argument for change, which they plan to present to the school board by the spring.

Club leaders are confident they will be able to enact a change.

"All the numbers are there. We just need people to back us," said vice president Alyssa Scott, 17. "It's not just the kids (who want this)."

Club secretary Maile Schoonover, 17, a senior, realizes she's doing a lot of work that she will never benefit from.

"My brother is a junior," she said. "I'd like to leave school knowing he'll be able to score higher on tests and be more prepared for college."

That's the kind of attitude Ramsay was looking for when she challenged her students to do something for the school.

"For 12 years, I've been encouraging my juniors to make the school better," she said. "This is the first group who took the challenge. They're determined to leave the school a substantially better place than how they found it."

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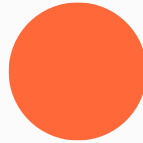
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