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# Letter: Later school start time helps pupils

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I am an eighth-grader at PJ Jacobs Junior High School and find it hard to learn and stay focused at 7:45 a.m.

The junior high schools start at 7:45 a.m. I think the junior high schools and SPASH should change their starting time to later. Another option would be to switch starting times with the elementary schools because they don't start until 9:05 a.m. Research shows that young children aren't sleepy early in the morning, unlike a typical teenager.

The Minneapolis School District changed its starting time from 7:20 a.m. to 8:40 a.m., and it definitely affected its students positively. Students reported less depression and teachers said their students were more alert and ready to learn. Parents reported that their children were "easier to live with" because their emotions were more regulated with the extra sleep they got. In addition, there was a decrease in the number of students who dropped out of school or moved from school to school.

Teens need an average of 9.25 hours of sleep per night. School starts at 7:45 a.m. but many kids at my school said they get up at 6 a.m. or earlier to get ready and on the bus. Therefore, to get the proper amount of sleep and still get up at 6 a.m., they would need to go to bed at 8:45 p.m.

As many parents have recently found out, the Stevens Point School District is planning late start days. Shortly after writing this essay for my English class, I found out about these late start days. The four late start days this semester are not specifically meant to let kids sleep longer. They are meant to give teachers more time to plan lessons and learn new teaching techniques. Yet, I predict that this will benefit the students' performance at school more than the teachers.

Even though I wish every school day started later, this is a start and I am anxious to see how the late start days turn out.

Mary Siebert

Stevens Point

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## Letter: Later school start time helps pupils

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