

Evidence That Decides

Select evidence that fits a decision-making audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.2b “Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the three details that most strongly support moving the start time later, and circle one sentence that addresses a school board member's practical concern. Your marks should show which information is most useful for this audience.

A Later Bell

- ① This proposal asks the district to move the high school start time to 8:30 a.m. or later. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools begin at 8:30 a.m. or later so adolescents can obtain enough sleep. That recommendation matters because teenagers' internal clocks shift later during puberty, making early sleep difficult even when students try to go to bed sooner. In the 2019 national Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 77 percent of U.S. high school students reported sleeping less than eight hours on school nights. For a school board, these facts establish both a health need and a clear scheduling target.
- ② Sleep loss is not just a private problem for families. It can affect attendance, attention, and learning during the hours the district already pays to provide. A 2018 study of two Seattle public high schools found that, after start times moved later, students slept 34 minutes longer per night on average. The study also reported a 4.5 percent increase in median grades. These results do not guarantee the same outcome here, but they offer a concrete example instead of a vague claim that later starts “help students.” For board members, the numbers connect a schedule change to classroom learning.
- ③ Because board members must weigh benefits against practical limits, the proposal should include a planning step. The transportation director can map revised bus routes before the board sets a date, since many districts use the same buses for several school tiers. The athletic director can identify practices or games that would end later, especially when daylight is limited. A one-year pilot at the high school would let the district compare attendance, course grades, and student sleep surveys with results from the previous year. Those details answer the audience's likely questions about cost, timing, and evidence rather than pretending that one study settles every local concern.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- 1** For school board members, which source provides the clearest scheduling target? State the target and name the source.

- 2** Identify the two numerical details in paragraph 2 that make the effects of later start times concrete. State what each number measures.

- 3** Why is the sentence beginning “These results do not guarantee” an important choice for this audience?

- 4** Match a planning detail from paragraph 3 to each concern: transportation, after-school scheduling, and local evidence.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a 130-170 word recommendation to a real school decision-maker about a change you want. State a precise claim, develop it with at least three significant and relevant facts or concrete details, including one number, and include one implementation detail that addresses a likely concern.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the three details that most strongly support moving the start time later, and circle one sentence that addresses a school board member's practical concern. Your marks should show which information is most useful for this audience. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	For school board members, which source provides the clearest scheduling target? State the target and name the source.	The American Academy of Pediatrics provides the target: middle and high schools should begin at 8:30 a.m. or later.
2	Identify the two numerical details in paragraph 2 that make the effects of later start times concrete. State what each number measures.	Students slept 34 minutes longer per night on average, and median grades increased by 4.5 percent.
3	Why is the sentence beginning "These results do not guarantee" an important choice for this audience?	It avoids claiming that Seattle's results will automatically occur locally, showing board members that the writer recognizes the limits of one study.
4	Match a planning detail from paragraph 3 to each concern: transportation, after-school scheduling, and local evidence.	Transportation: map revised bus routes. After-school scheduling: identify practices or games that would end later. Local evidence: conduct a one-year pilot and compare attendance, grades, and sleep surveys with the previous year.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The school board should convert the unused 10-by-20-foot courtyard beside the science wing into a native pollinator garden. This small site would give biology classes a place to observe plant-insect relationships instead of relying only on photographs. The need is concrete: monarch caterpillars eat only milkweed, so a garden without milkweed cannot support their larvae. Pollinators also contribute to the production of about one-third of the food crops people eat, making the garden relevant to lessons about ecosystems and agriculture. To control cost, the district could begin with 30 native perennial plants and request donations from local garden groups. Perennials return each year, reducing the need to replant the entire space. Science classes could record monthly insect observations, giving the board evidence about whether the garden is being used before it expands the project.

Accept defensible choices of significant evidence when students explain how each detail serves a school board audience. For the open response, look for a focused claim, carefully selected evidence or concrete details, and a practical detail that anticipates the decision-maker's concerns.