Start Time Decision

Analyze how evidence and limits shape a school board proposal.

8.P.EICC.2.d "Interpret and construct texts to aid the analysis and evaluation of texts and ideas. (I/C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the central proposal, circle each piece of evidence, and number each sentence that points out a limit or unanswered question. These marks will help you judge how well the proposal is supported.

Should High School Start Later?

(1) Our district is considering an 8:35 a.m. start time for high school, moving classes 50 minutes later than the current schedule. In a student survey of 600 high school students, 71 percent reported getting fewer than eight hours of sleep on most school nights. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that middle and high schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later. A later start could give students more time to sleep consistently before each school day begins for many students.

(2) Supporters say the change may improve learning because tired students can struggle to focus during first period. They also point to a neighboring district that moved its start time to 8:40 a.m. last year. After the change, that district reported fewer first period tardies, although it has not yet released attendance data for a full year. This example supports the proposal, but it does not prove that a later start alone caused the improvement in tardiness.

(3) Critics raise a practical concern: high school buses currently take younger students home after the morning high school route. If high school begins later, the district might need to change bus schedules or add drivers. The proposal estimates that new transportation costs could reach $180,000 per year, but it does not explain how that estimate was calculated. Before voting, board members should compare possible benefits with a detailed transportation plan and ask for updated student sleep data.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is the central proposal? Give one piece of evidence from the passage that supports it.

2. How does the passage prevent the neighboring district's tardy data from becoming proof that later starts cause better outcomes?

3. What information is missing from the transportation cost claim, and why does that missing information matter?

4. What comparison does the passage recommend that board members make before voting?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence decision note to the school board. State your position on the later start, use two pieces of evidence from the passage, and name one limitation or unanswered question the board should consider.

ANSWER KEY

Start Time Decision

GRADE 8 · 8.P.EICC.2.d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the central proposal, circle each piece of evidence, and number each sentence that points out a limit or unanswered question. These marks will help you judge how well the proposal is supported. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the central proposal? Give one piece of evidence from the passage that supports it.	**The proposal is to move the high school start time to 8:35 a.m. One supporting piece of evidence is that 71 percent of surveyed students reported getting fewer than eight hours of sleep.**
2	How does the passage prevent the neighboring district's tardy data from becoming proof that later starts cause better outcomes?	**It states that the district has not released a full year of attendance data and that the later start alone may not have caused the improvement in tardiness.**
3	What information is missing from the transportation cost claim, and why does that missing information matter?	**The passage does not explain how the $180,000 estimate was calculated. Board members need that information to judge whether the projected cost is reliable.**
4	What comparison does the passage recommend that board members make before voting?	**They should compare the possible benefits of a later start with a detailed transportation plan, including costs and bus schedule changes.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I support a one-year trial of an 8:35 high school start. In the survey, 71 percent of 600 students reported fewer than eight hours of sleep, and pediatricians recommend starts at 8:30 a.m. or later. Before approving the trial, the board should verify how the $180,000 transportation estimate was calculated.

Accept any accurate central claim, evidence, and explanation that distinguishes support from proof. For the decision note, accept either position if it uses two accurate passage details and identifies a relevant limitation or unanswered question.