



Deer Park Independent School District  
*Department of Communications*

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DEER PARK--- During the May 12 special meeting of the Board of Trustees, board members approved a new time schedule affecting all schools in the district. Beginning with the 2008-09 school year, the school day will begin and end according to the following schedule:

7:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. for Elementary Schools

8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. for Junior High School

8:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. for High Schools

The new time schedule received significant air time on local news programs, and many parents, employees, and community members attended the board meetings to share their views on the subject, both in support and in opposition to the administration's recommendation. When some of these citizens suggested that more information was needed before a decision should be made, the board postponed its vote to seek more input.

According to Superintendent of Schools Arnold Adair, change is never easy, and the simplest solution would have been to not change a thing. "However, the legislature made changes to the high school instructional and graduation requirements, and the federal government made changes that affect students as well," he said. "The bottom line is that these changes were made by non-educators, but we must prepare our students as best we can to meet the new requirements.

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“Our current time schedule was designed to meet the old standards; it simply cannot meet the new requirements,” he continued.

The district investigated a number of different options for changing the schedule, but, after months of research and discussions, the administration presented a recommendation to the board that provides the best options and most flexibility for students, Adair said. High school students will be able to take a before-school or after-school flex period that will enable them to either recover lost credits from failed classes or earn extra credits. “These are two very important needs that will only grow as more students are affected by the new graduation requirements,” Adair added.

The new state requirements were effective beginning with this year's freshmen, but all students will be affected in the coming years as they enter high school.

“I feel strongly that this is one of the most creative, most flexible, most cost-efficient programs that I have heard of to date,” Adair explained. “At the end of the day, I have to make sure that I have made the right recommendation for 12,300 students, and this is that recommendation.

“I know that the change in schedule will be difficult at first, and it creates challenges for families in the district,” he concluded. “But our job is to provide the best for our students, and I sincerely believe that this is the best plan for them.”

Additional information about the new time schedule is available on the district website at [www.dpsid.org/HSstart](http://www.dpsid.org/HSstart) .

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