

## Dear Parents and Guardians:

This is the sixth in our series of publications on the High School's new **8:26 a.m.** start time, designed to keep you informed about the district's efforts to create an environment in which students are more alert and ready to learn.

Your family's efforts at home are much appreciated, as only your child can ensure he or she is using those extra 45 minutes each morning to improve his or her sleep quality and overall health. For additional tips and resources, check the High School home page at [www.gfsd.org](http://www.gfsd.org).



## Update coming Nov. 19

The Board of Education and members of the public will hear about the St. Lawrence University sleep study from lead researcher Dr. Pamela Thacher on Monday night, November 19.

Dr. Thacher and High School assistant principal Liz Collins will provide early observations on how the start time change is affecting the student body. The briefing is scheduled as part of the Board of Education's regular meeting, which begins at 7:30 p.m. in the administration building.

"We've seen a reduction in the number of students who are late to school this year, which we could reasonably expect," said Mrs. Collins. "Still, more students in school on time is a positive step towards better academic achievement."

Mrs. Collins plans to present data on tardiness rates and share High School staff members' anecdotal observations of student performance at the November 19 briefing. Dr. Thacher's report will include early data analysis from the Spring 2012 sleep study questionnaires, and discuss the data collection process so far.

Parents and community members are encouraged to attend the meeting. A summary of the briefing will be posted online at [www.gfsd.org](http://www.gfsd.org).

## Three-day "lookback" sleep diary included Students taking surveys this week

Students participating in the St. Lawrence University sleep study are answering questions about their sleep times, mood, and caffeine use this week, as part of the second round of data collection in the multi-year study on how the school start time change affects academic achievement and overall student health.

Dr. Pamela Thacher, lead researcher for the SLU study team, said the data collection has been going "very well."

"We took out the sleep diary component for this round," said Dr. Thacher, referring to the seven-day diary in which students log their bedtimes, wake times, and total hours of sleep in a day. "That's because we will be doing the sleep diary component in the spring, so as to be able to compare spring-data 2012 to spring-data 2013, which is our plan. We are including a three-day retrospective diary in the questionnaires that participating students fill out this week."

Data was collected in May so researchers could compare results from before and after the start time change took effect. A third round of data collection is planned for April of 2013.

"We're planning a more broad and deep data collection in the spring," said Dr. Thacher. Students were paid a small incentive for completing questionnaires and sleep diaries in the first round of data collection, as motivation to participate. The incentive is \$6 for the current round.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary for students, and they can choose to fill out surveys in any or all rounds of data collection. Parents can opt their child out of an invitation to participate by contacting the main office of the High School. Details and an opt-out form are available on the High School web page at [www.gfsd.org](http://www.gfsd.org). The questionnaires are also posted online for parents to view.

Aggregate results of the study—which researchers say could be one of the most comprehensive and thorough examinations of the effects of a start time change on a high school population, nationwide—will be shared with parents, students, and the school community once the research is complete.