

Alton School District proposes new start, end times for 2016-2017 school year

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON – The **Alton School District** has released proposed changes to school start and end at the elementary levels.

The proposed start and end changes are part of an elementary restructuring plan for the 2016-2017 school year.

In the fall, the Alton school board members approved a plan to convert the district's seven, K-5 elementary buildings to primary (K-1) and intermediate (2-5) schools and divided into three pairings. The pairings include: 1) Lewis and Clark (K-1)/North (2-5), 2) Gilson Brown (K-1)/West (2-5) and 3) Lovejoy (K-1)/Eunice Smith (K-1)/East (2-5).

The move is estimated to save the district over \$560,000 annually in operating expenditures, Alton Schools Superintendent Ken Spells said. Parent letters, regarding student school placement under the new plan next year, are slated to be mailed later this week, he said.

"We are to do this out of necessity, but we can save \$560,000 by doing it," Spells said. "We sent out information to staff a couple weeks ago letting them know the placements for students and hopefully by the end of the week it will be to the parents. We think this be very efficient and we think the community will embrace the changes."

Spells said the Alton School District has to be proactive in dealing with finances and getting the most for taxpayer money.

"We want to ensure our students are receiving a top-flight education and don't want to cut programs or jeopardize student achievement," Spells said. "We are making sure our students have opportunities to be successful. We have to be good stewards of taxpayer money and when we have an opportunity like this we have to take it."

In order to successfully implement the paired school plan for elementary buildings, a change in school start and end times was required to accommodate the district's bus transportation schedule. Earlier this month, district administrators sought input from both parents and staff regarding proposed changes to start and end times through an electronic survey.

While responses varied greatly, administrators were able to glean excellent information regarding parent/staff needs and any potential childcare concerns.

Using this information, district officials are now providing the proposed start and end times for the 2016-17 school year to give parents and staff an early start on any scheduling adjustments that may be needed prior to the start of next year. The attached schedule provides a detailed description of the start and end times for each grade level (s). In the district's original plan, it was estimated that adjustments to school start and end times would be minimal (15 minutes or less on each side) in limiting the impact on families. This goal was accomplished as the attached schedule demonstrates, Spells said.

PROPOSED START AND END TIMES FOR 2016-17

SCHOOL/LEVEL	START	END	CHANGE IN MINUTES
AHS	8:45	3:15	0
AMS	8:45	3:15	-15 minutes
Elementary – <i>Primary</i>	8:15	2:40	0
Elementary - <i>Intermediate</i>	8:00	2:25	0
Early Childhood	A.M. - 8:25	A.M. – 10:55	0
	P.M. – 12:25	P.M. – 2:55	0
MAC	9:00	2:30	0