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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 5, 2020

**Norfolk School Board Will Reconsider Decision to Change School Start Times**

NORFOLK, VA – The Norfolk School Board has voted to reconsider its decision on changing school start times and postpone discussions regarding the change until after June 30. The vote came at a School Board work session on March 4, 2020, at Granby High School.

This decision followed a presentation made by school administration that outlined inherent challenges in making the changes in the fall. The challenges cited included transportation scheduling conflicts, lengthening after-school programs, and increased capital improvement costs associated with lighting athletic fields.

Several board members pointed to community concerns that had been shared with them in recent weeks as key to causing them to want to revisit the matter. These concerns included the need for increased childcare, the inability to afford the increased cost, and the negative impact on athletic schedules and extracurricular activities at the high school level.

”No one disputes the research on the benefits of later start times for high school students,” said School Board Chairman Dr. Noelle Gabriel. “And I believe staff has done their due diligence in identifying the issues and complexities of such a change. However, can we make this happen for the upcoming school year? After hearing from staff tonight, I don’t think so.”

In February 2019, the School Board approved the change in start and dismissal times for the 2020-21 school year through a resolution to enable high schools to start at a later time. The change would have had elementary schools starting between 7:25 and 7:35 a.m., and high schools starting between 8:50 and 9:00 a.m. Middle schools would have remained the same.

For more details, watch the [School Board work session](#).

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Norfolk Public Schools (NPS) is on a mission to ensure that all students maximize their academic potential, develop skills for lifelong learning, and become successful contributors to a global society. We believe Norfolk Public Schools is the cornerstone of a proudly diverse community with highly qualified teachers and staff dedicated to providing diverse teaching and learning opportunities for all students.