2022 School Bell Time Study
Tactical Advisory Team(TAT) Presentation

April 6, 2022

Framing the Work

Throughout this process, our purpose has been:

- To review our school bell schedules, and start and end times, across schools, and to compare instructional minutes across school divisions.
- To ensure we are maximizing instruction and reducing the variations in start/end times to operate more efficiently.

School Bell Study Technical Advisory Team

Name	Title/Location
Erin Russo	Principal, Discovery ES
Judy Apostolico-Buck	Principal, Barcroft ES
Maureen Nesselrode	Principal, Campbell ES
Meghan Neary	Assistant Principal, Ashlawn ES
Keisha Boggan	Principal, Thomas Jefferson MS
Margaret Chung	Principal, Arlington Career Center
Tony Hall	Principal, Washington-Liberty HS
Mike Krulfeld	Director of Student Activities, Yorktown
Debbie DeFranco	Supervisor, Office of Academics
Heather Willis	Parent, Randolph ES
Melania Saraniero	Parent, Claremont ES
Julio Basurto	Parent, Kenmore MS
Amy Schirmer	Parent, Williamsburg MS
Rohini Chopra	Parent, HB Woodlawn
Ben Harris	Assistant Director, Extended Day

Name	Title/Location
Andrew Spencer	Executive Director, Transportation
Gladis Cruz-Zyoud	Dispatcher, APS Transportation
Cathy Lin	Director, Facilities and Operations
Deriba Reba	Routing & Planning Coordinator, Transportation
Susan Robinson	Executive Director, Arlington School Administrators (ASA)-Member from 1999-2000 Bell Study Group
Juana Veizaga Veizaga	Parent, Carlin Springs
Ariel Stevens	Parent, Hoffman-Boston ES
Trish Madden	Parent, Jamestown ES
Kia Stevenson	Parent, MPSA
Kenny Kraft	Parent, Arlington Traditional School
Jackie Winkelvoss	Parent, Abingdon ES
Dana Milburn	Parent, Yorktown HS, CCPTA
Susannah Keefe	Parent, Wakefield HS
Gillian Burgess	Advisory Committee on Transportation Choices (ACTC)

Historical data

The last comprehensive bell study was completed during the 1999-2000 SY.

- Key focus centered on sleep studies that showed teenagers' internal clocks were incompatible with most high schools' early start hours.
- 30 Schools - 19,000 Students

Before study:

High School-7:30 am,
Middle School/Elementary School-8:10 am
Elementary School-8:50 am

***Changes for 2001-02 SY:**

Middle School-7:50 am,
Elementary School-8:00 am, 8:25 am, or 9:00 am
High School-8:15 am

**To address shortage in instructional seat hours during 2004-05 school year, an additional 4 minutes were added to each level's time.*

Data considerations

- Total student enrollment as of September 30, 2021- 26, 911 (includes VLP enrollment)
- Students eligible for transportation services- 15,720
  - General education- 15,059
  - Special education-661
- Total bus drivers- 152
  - General education- 107 (includes 4 cluster leads and 4 swing drivers)
  - Special education- 45 (includes 2 cluster leads and 1 swing driver)
- Total bus runs- 161
  - General education-112
  - Special Education-49

Primary Preferences and Challenges to Navigate

- Standardizing/reducing eight bell schedules down to fewer, three, if possible
- Least amount of disruption to current schedules
- Maintaining 30-minute ride times for neighborhood schools; 60 minutes max for countywide programs
- Peak traffic congestion between 7:30 – 8:30 AM
- Infrastructure congestion with bus and parent traffic; shared bus loops
- Where possible, limiting dependence on cabs and contractors

Regional Instructional Time Comparisons

Division	Total Time
Falls Church	6 hours 55 minutes
Loudoun	6 hours 50 minutes
Arlington	6 hours 42 minutes- High 6 hours 41 minutes- Elementary 6 hours 35 minutes- Middle
Prince William	6 hours 40 minutes
Fairfax	6 hours 40 minutes

Proposed times for Arlington	
Elementary	6 hours 50 minutes
Middle	6 hours 45 minutes
High	6 hours 50 minutes

Regional bell time comparisons

Alexandria 2021-22

Elementary Schools(12)
- 8:00 AM – 2:35 PM

PMK-8 Academies (2)
- 8:00 AM – 2:35 PM

Middle Schools (2)
- 8:30 AM – 3:15 PM

High School (1)
- 8:35 AM – 3:15 PM

Falls Church 2021-22

Preschool (1)
- 8:15 am-2:20 pm

Elementary Schools (2)
- 8:50 am- 3:50 pm

Middle School (1)
- 8:05 am- 3:00 pm

High School (1)
- 8:05 am- 3:00 pm

Regional Bell Time Comparisons

Prince William 2021-22

High School (16)
- 7:25 am- 2:05 pm
- 7:30 am- 2:10 pm

Middle School (17)
- 8:10 am- 2:50 pm
- 8:15 am- 2:55 pm
- 8:20 am- 3:00 pm

Elementary Schools(65)
- 8:10 am – 2:50 pm
- 8:45 am – 3:25 pm
- 9:00 am – 3:40 pm
- 9:10 am – 3:50 pm
- 9:15 am – 3:55 pm

Loudoun 2022-23*

Elementary Schools
- 7:30 am- 2:15 pm (28 schools)
- 8:00 am – 2:45 pm (30 schools)

Middle Schools
- 8:30 am – 3:18 pm (4 schools)
- 8:50 am – 3:38 pm (7 schools)

High Schools
- 9:30 am – 4:17 pm (all 17 schools)

Special programs
- 9:30 am – 3:30 pm
- 9:50 am – 4:00 pm

Current bell schedule-Arlington

Middle Schools (6)

7:50 am-2:24 pm

Elementary Schools(20)

8:00 am – 2:41 pm (2 schools)

8:25 am – 3:06 pm (3 schools)

9:00 am -3:41 pm (15 schools)

High Schools (3)

8:19 am- 3:01 pm

Elementary Programs

8:25 am- 3:06 pm (Arlington Traditional)

8:00 am- 2:41 pm (Campbell)

9:00 am – 3:41 pm (Claremont)

9:00 am- 3:41 pm (Escuela Key)

8:00 am – 2:41 pm (Integration Station-PK)

9:00 am – 3:41 pm (Montessori)

Secondary Programs

8:00 am- 3:10 pm (Career Center)

8:15 am- 3:05 pm (New Directions)

8:19 am- 3:01 pm (Langston)

9:24 am – 4:06 pm (HB Woodlawn)

Scenario Proposals

Current schedule

7:50 am - 2:24 pm

- Middle Schools

8:00 am – 2:41 pm

- Abingdon
- Campbell
- Carlin Springs

8:00 am – 3:10 pm

- Career Center

8:15 am – 2:50 pm

- New Directions

8:19 am – 3:01 pm

- High Schools
- Langston

8:25 am – 3:06 pm

- Barrett
- Long Branch
- Arlington Traditional
- Randolph

9:00 am – 3:41 pm

- Remaining Elementary Schools

9:24 am – 4:06 pm

- Shriver

9:24 am – 4:06 pm

- H-B Woodlawn

SCENARIO 1

Scenario 1 maintains the current bell time structure with the movement of some elementary schools to different times; however, more runs are in the first two tiers to reduce the demand for buses in the third tier. Times have been standardized and additional instructional time added

7:50 am - 2:35 pm

- Middle Schools

8:00 am – 2:50 pm

- Elementary Group I- 5 schools

8:15 am – 3:00 pm

- New Directions

8:20 am – 3:40 pm

- Career Center

8:25 am – 3:20 pm

- High Schools
- Langston

8:25 am – 3:15 pm

- Elementary Group II- 5 schools

9:00 am – 3:50 pm

- Elementary Group III – 15 schools

9:24 am – 4:20 pm

- Shriver
- H-B Woodlawn

SCENARIO 2

Elementary schools are divided into two starting times instead of the current three starting times. All middle schools are slated to start later in the morning.

7:30 am - 2:50 pm

- Career Center

7:30 am – 2:20 pm

- Elementary Group I- 20 schools

8:15 am – 3:00 pm

- New Directions

8:20 am – 3:15 pm

- High Schools

8:20 am – 3:15 pm

- Elementary Group II- 5 schools

9:10 am – 3:55 pm

- Middle Schools

9:24 am – 4:20 pm

- Shriver
- H-B Woodlawn

SCENARIO 3

Creates more time between runs and will potentially reduce the number of buses needed to transport students to and from schools. This scenario also operates fewer buses in the third tier allowing the flexibility of drivers being utilized for extra-curricular activities during contractual hours.

7:30 am - 2:20 pm

- Elementary Group I- 5 schools

7:40 am – 2:25 pm

- Middle Schools

8:15 am – 3:00 pm

- New Directions

8:35 am – 3:55 pm

- Career Center

8:40 am – 3:35 pm

- High Schools

8:40 am – 3:30 pm

- Elementary Group II- 5 schools

9:20 am – 4:10 pm

- Elementary Group III- 15 schools

9:20 am – 4:20 pm

- Shriver
- H-B Woodlawn

SCENARIO 4

Operates fewer runs in the third tier allowing the flexibility of drivers being utilized for extra-curricular activities during contractual hours. Most of the elementary schools will be starting earlier versus the current schedule of starting later in the morning. All middle schools are slated to start later in the morning.

7:50 am - 2:40 pm

- Elementary Group I- 20 schools

8:15 am – 3:00 pm

- New Directions

8:20 am – 3:40 pm

- Career Center

8:40 am – 3:35 pm

- High Schools

8:40 am – 3:30 pm

- Elementary Group II- 5 schools

9:20 am – 4:05 pm

- Middle Schools

9:20 am – 4:20 pm

- Shriver
- H-B Woodlawn

SCENARIO 5

Operates fewer runs in the third tier allowing the flexibility of drivers being utilized for extra-curricular activities during contractual hours. Elementary schools will be divided into two groups – one group with an earlier start time and one group with a later start time.

7:45 am - 2:35 pm

- Elementary Group I- TBD

7:45 am - 2:30 pm

- Middle Schools

8:20 am – 3:40 pm

- Career Center

8:40 am – 3:35 pm

- High Schools
- New Directions

9:20 am – 4:10pm

- Elementary Group II- TBD

9:20 am – 4:20 pm

- Shriver
- H-B Woodlawn

Survey Data

To garner feedback from parents, students, and staff about potential changes in bell times for schools, Arlington Public Schools created a series of surveys (parent, student and staff) regarding proposed changes to the bell schedule for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Survey Highlights

- ***Maintaining the current bell schedule was the most favored response***.
- None of the proposed scenarios garnered the support of the majority of any of the three constituent groups.
- There was uneven representation in the responses to the survey. This was true across:
  - School settings
  - Student grade levels, and
  - Responses by constituent group on individual questions.
- Parents, staff and students easily identified potential benefits and challenges to changes in the schedule.
- It is also clear that the different constituent groups perceived the complexity of the trade-offs both for individual students and between student groups (e.g. elementary vs. secondary)

Survey Highlights

Response Rates

- There were 6192 respondents, in total, to the surveys.
- Of these, slightly over half (3394 or 54.8%) of the respondents identified themselves as parents of students within Arlington Public Schools.
- The second largest group of respondents (1565) identified as APS staff members.

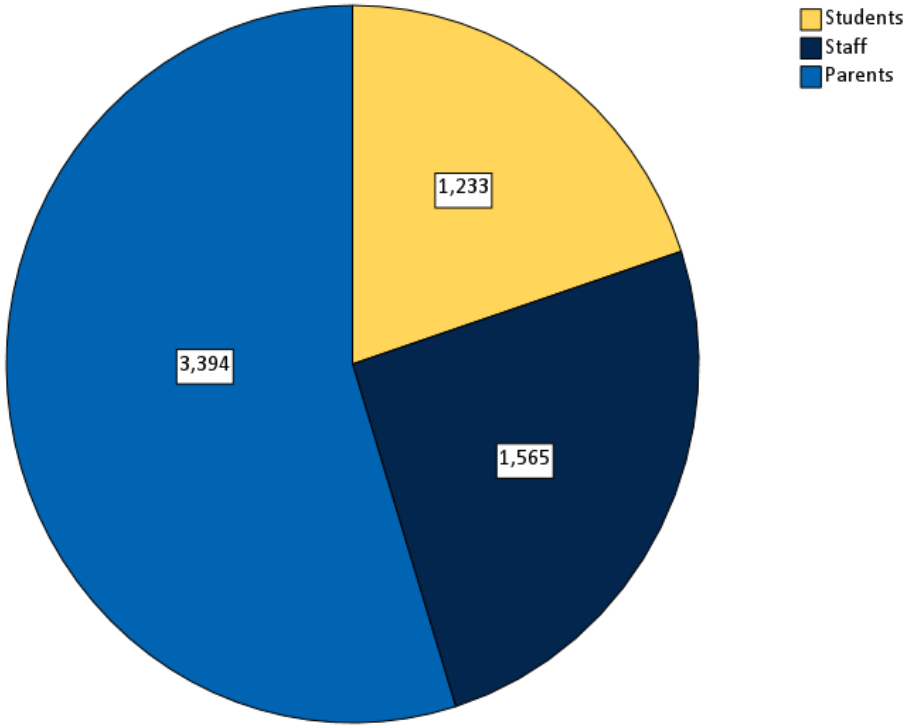


Figure 1. Response by Role.

Survey Highlights

- There were responses from 46 school or work site.
- Over half (53.4%) of the responses came from 10 sites:
  - Gunston Middle
  - Wakefield High
  - Swanson Middle
  - Yorktown Middle
  - Dorothy Hamm Middle
  - Washington-Liberty High
  - Williamsburg Middle
  - Jefferson Middle
  - Kenmore Middle
  - Arlington Tech/Career Center)

There were ***24 schools in total with over 100 responses,*** and these represented 82.8% of the total responses to the survey.

Students in grades 4-12 responded to the survey. ***Students in 6th and 7th grade provided 52.1% of the student responses.***

The response rate by grade is provided in figure below. Response rates for grades 4, 5, and 12 were individually under 4% and collectively represented less than 10 percent of the responses.

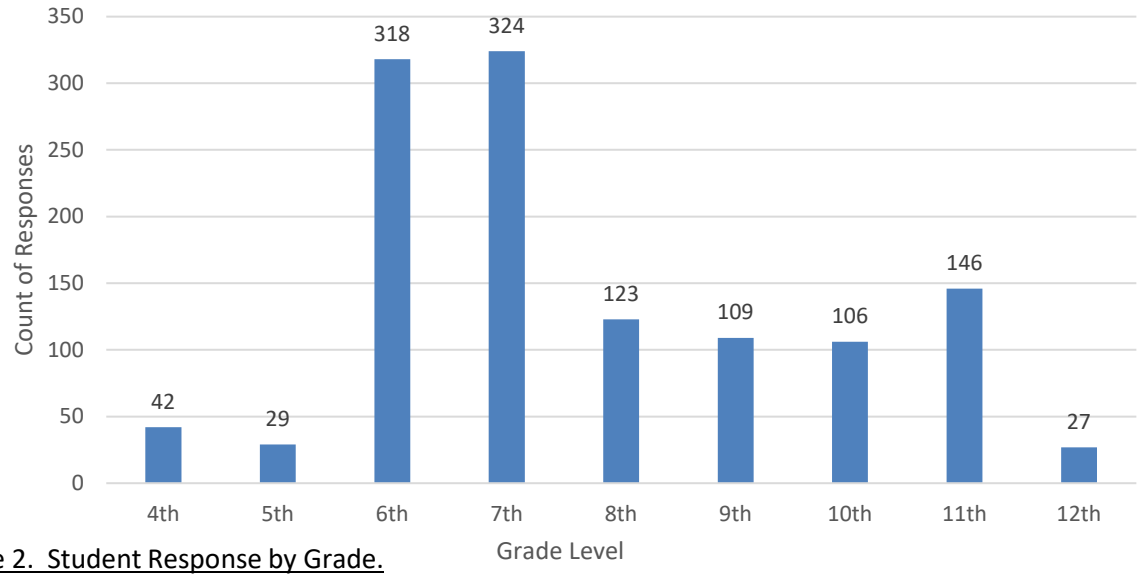
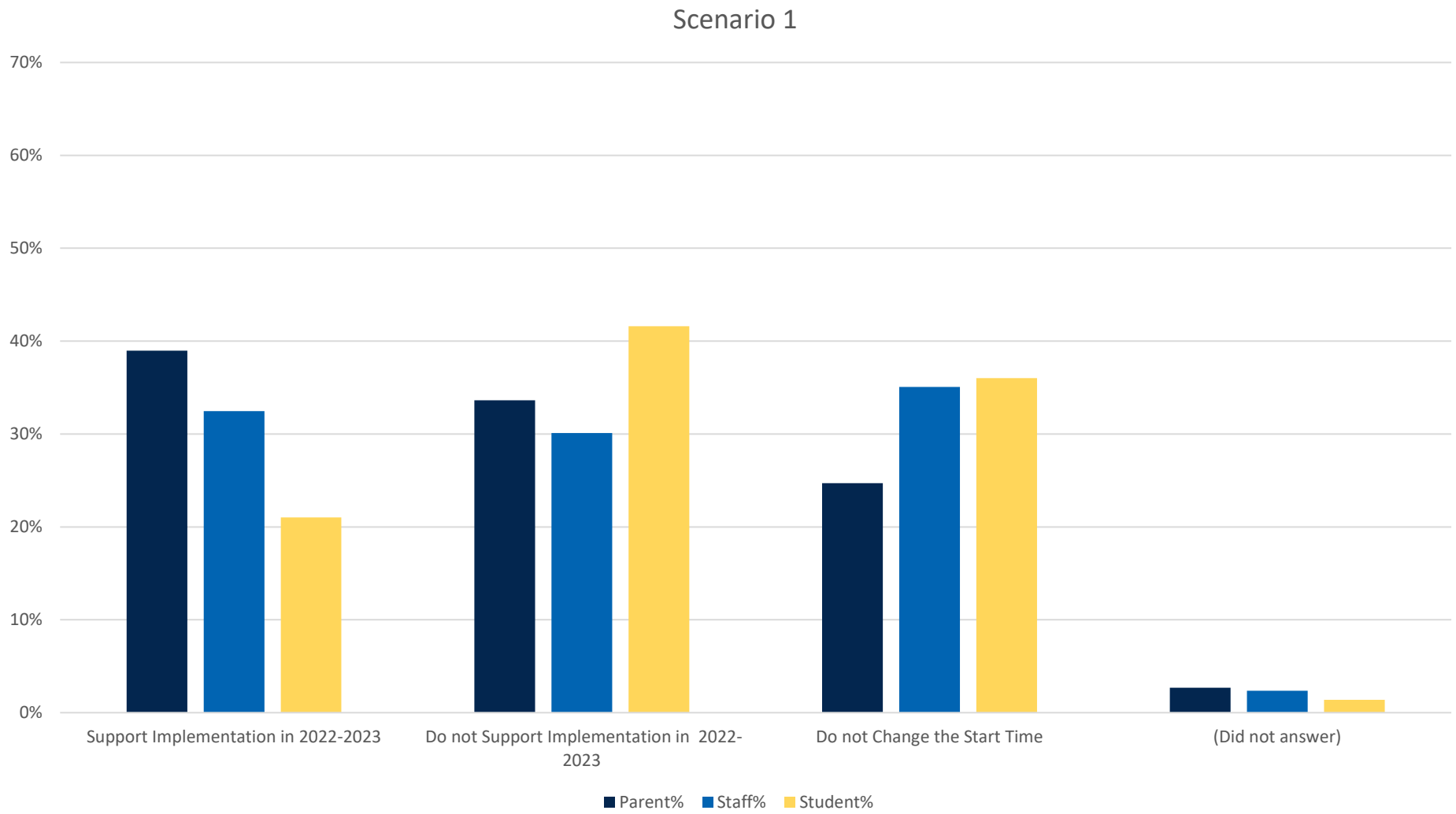


Figure 2. Student Response by Grade.

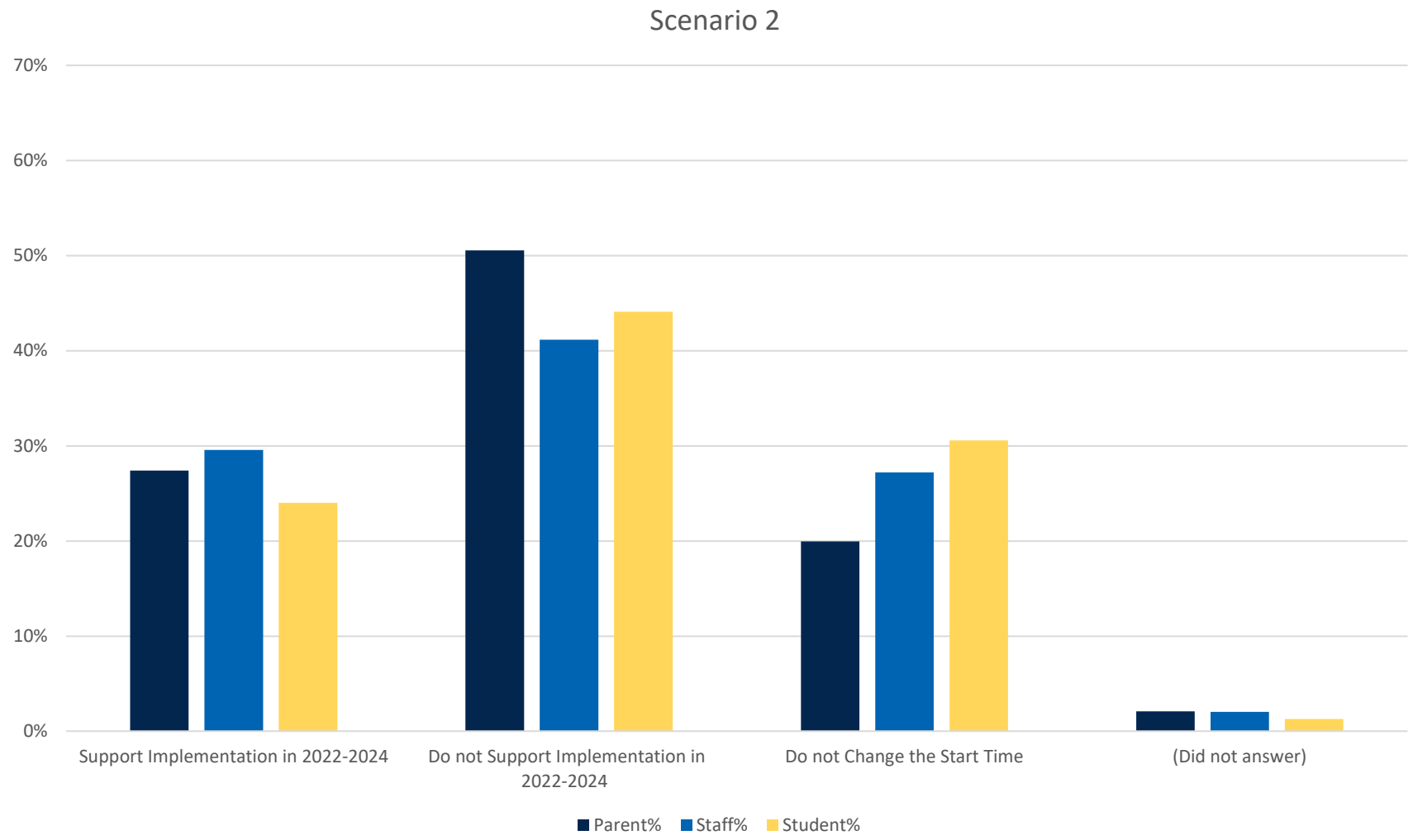
Survey Highlights-Scenario 1

Scenario 1 had a slight advantage over Scenario 4 when participants were asked about the scenarios individually. ***This was the most favored Scenario by parents and staff with 39% of parents and 32% of staff supporting implementation of Scenario 1 in 2022-2023.***



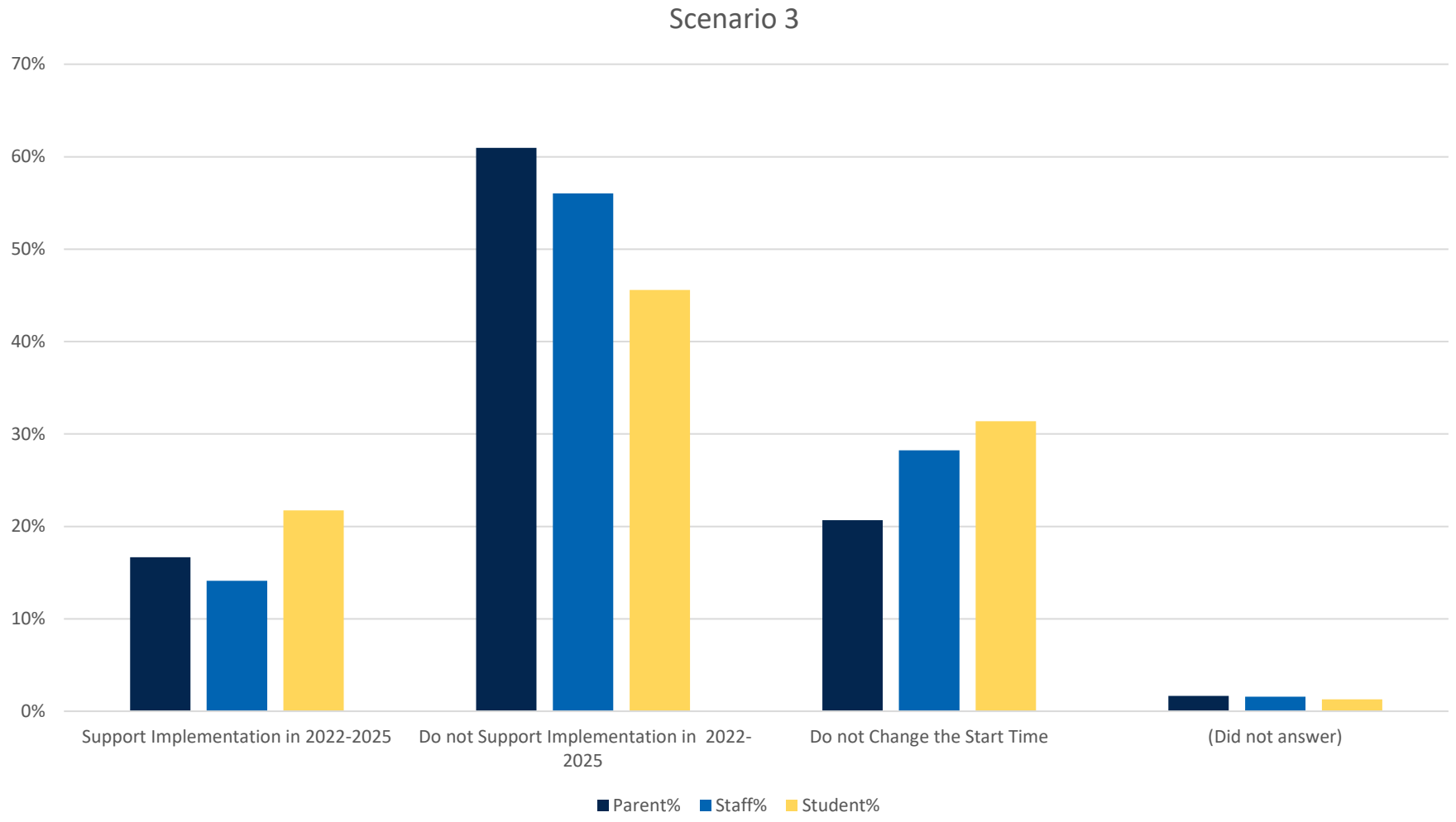
Survey Highlights-Scenario 2

Slightly more than half (51%) of parents were opposed to the implementation of Scenario 2 in the 2022-2023 academic year. There was little variation in student support across the first four scenarios.



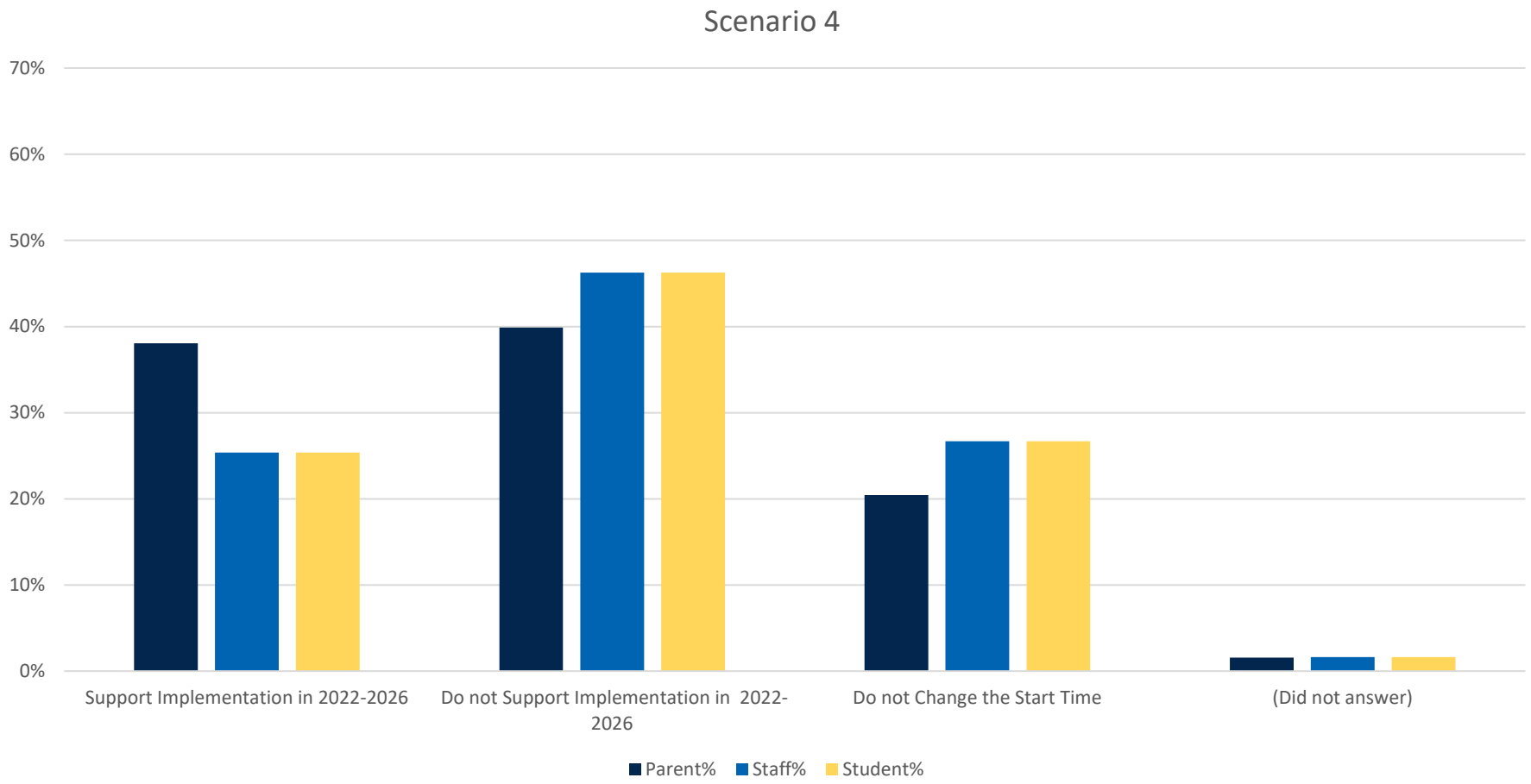
Survey Highlights-Scenario 3

Over half the parents and staff who participated in the survey were in opposition to the implementation of Scenario 3.



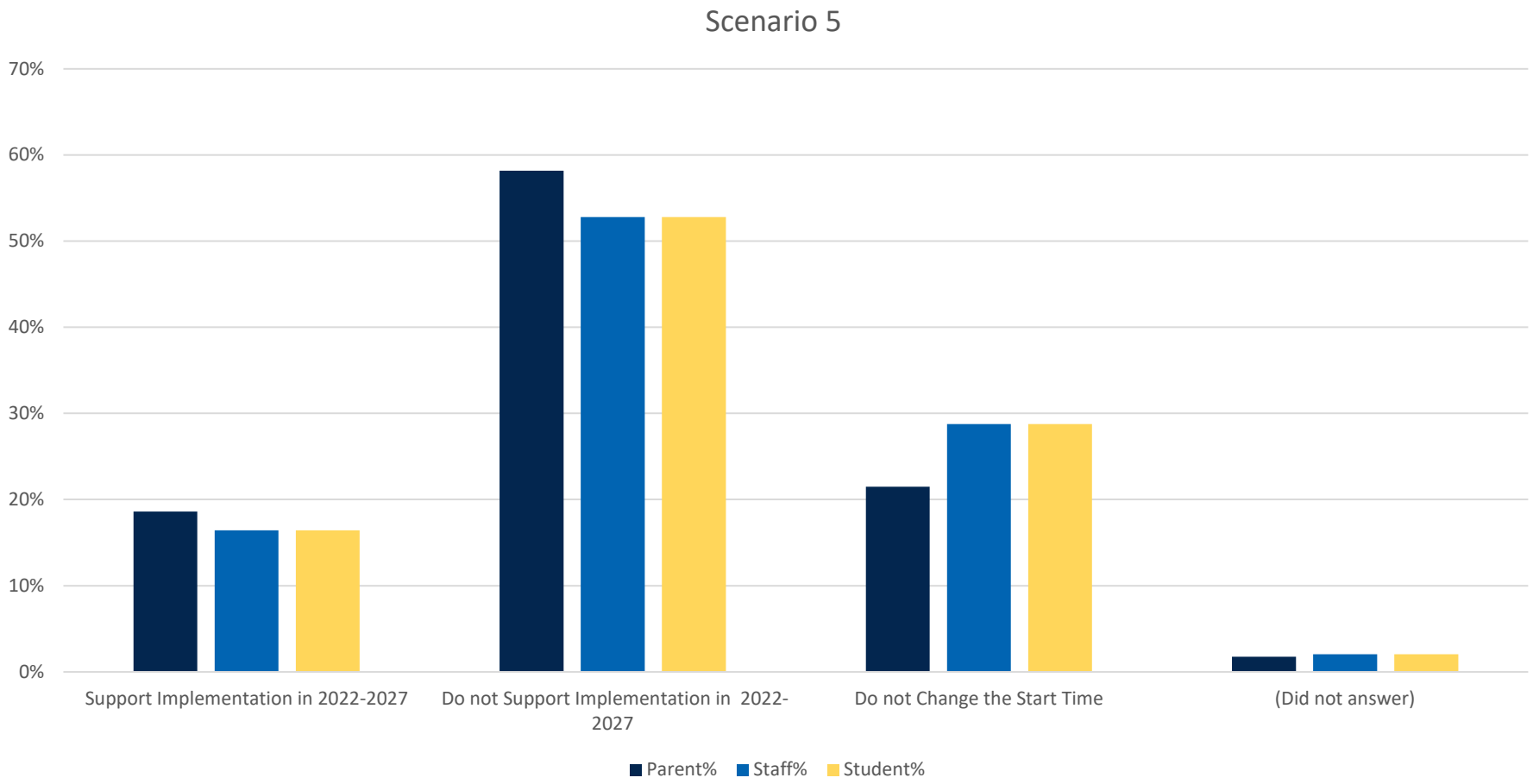
Survey Highlights-Scenario 4

Scenario 4 had favorable responses at a rate similar to Scenario 1. Of the parents who participated in the survey, 38% supported the implementation of Scenario 4 in the 2022-2023 academic year. Students favored Scenario 4 (25%) in comparison to Scenario 1 (21%)



Survey Highlights-Scenario 5

Scenario 5 was the most negatively viewed of the options with over 50% of each respondent group indicating that they did not support the implementation of this scenario in the 2022-2023 academic year.



Superintendent's Recommendation

The proposal will standardize times and operate fewer runs allowing greater flexibility for drivers. Elementary runs will be divided among the first and third tiers. Middle will remain at the earlier start time. Instructional time will increase at every level with Career Center remaining at current level.

7:50 am - 2:35 pm (6 hours 45 minutes)

- Middle Schools

7:50 am - 2:40 pm (6 hours 50 minutes)

- Abingdon
- Barrett
- Campbell
- Carlin Springs
- Claremont
- Integration Station
- Long Branch
- Randolph

8:00 am - 3:00 pm (7 hours)

- Career Center

8:20 am – 3:10 pm (6 hours 50 minutes)

- High Schools
- New Directions

9:00 am – 3:50 pm (6 hours 50 minutes)

- Remaining Elementary schools and Elementary programs
- Shriver
- H-B Woodlawn

Considerations

- Schedule proposal will allow:
  - Flexible schedule of routes
    - Tier requirements
      - 1st - 102 route runs
      - 2nd - 82 route runs
      - 3rd- 92 route runs
  - Ability to address the transportation needs for all countywide programs
  - Greater flexibility in meeting extra-curricular and/or sports transportation needs
  - Potential cost savings with need for fewer bus drivers and attendants to address route demands.
    - 170 drivers- allocation for 194.5 in FY 2023 proposed budget
    - 80 attendants- allocation for 94 in FY 2023 proposed budget

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