



Friday, May 28, 2021

Hello Brave Nation,

We wanted to communicate with you a couple of changes that will be coming during the 2021-2022 school year which may affect you.

1. All elementary schools will have a dismissal time of 2:45 p.m. We understand that this may be problematic for some parents, but when surveyed over 90% of participants said they thought the 2:45 p.m. dismissal time was a good idea.
2. Because there may be problems caused by the earlier dismissal time, each elementary school will now offer an afterschool program. The program will run from school dismissal - 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The program will be up and running at all locations on Monday, August 9th. The cost will be \$5 dollars per student per day (\$25 dollars for a full week). All three elementary schools will have a director who will be in charge of this program. Much more communication will be coming from the schools throughout the summer regarding the afterschool program.

The biggest change which will occur as a result of the two changes listed above is the changing of afternoon routes for Ephesus and Centralhatchee students. When those students are dismissed they will get on a bus and be brought home rather than sitting and waiting for middle and high school students to arrive at their schools. Those afternoon dropoff times are still being worked on and will be communicated later in the summer. It could be possible for an elementary student at EES or CES to get home as early as 2:55 p.m. If the afternoon bus dropoff time does not work for a family then the after-school program will be an option (Over 90% of survey participants said they do not rely on an older sibling to watch their child in the afternoon until they get home from work). Centralhatchee and Ephesus middle and high school students will also have some afternoon dismissal times changes. Those students will be leaving the middle and high schools and will be taken directly to their homes. *HCES, HCMS, and HCHS students should have little to no change in their bus pickup and dropoff times unless they reside in Ephesus or Centralhatchee.*

Many people will ask "WHY?" The heart behind this change is simple. We want to separate our elementary and middle/high bus routes and we want to shorten the day for our youngest learners. On average our elementary school day is equivalent to the time of 20 extra school days. We obviously value instructional time with our children, but there is also a balance when you look at how long a 4 to 10 year old can stay engaged in a school day.

In closing, we thank you for your participation in the survey and we thank you in advance for your patience as we work out these new changes to begin the 21-22 school year. Your child's school will be communicating next week. We hope you have a restful summer and enjoy your time off!

Respectfully,

Rodney Kay
Superintendent