

# Middle School Classes Should Start Later

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Category : Education/Family

## Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

- 1. **suburban** / səˈbʌr bən / (adj) – describing an area outside the city  
*Example:* I can’t visit malls that much because I live in a **suburban** area.
- 2. **drowsiness** / ˈdraʊ zi nɪs / (n) – a feeling of sleepiness  
*Example:* I keep yawning because of **drowsiness**.
- 3. **doze off** / doʊz ɔf, ɒf / (phrasal) – to sleep lightly or for a short period of time  
*Example:* He suddenly **dozed off** while in class.
- 4. **predispose** / ˌpri dɪˈspoʊz / (v) – to have a certain tendency  
*Example:* Teenagers are **predisposed** to sleeping late, so they have difficulty waking up early.
- 5. **academically** / ˌæk əˈdɛm ɪ kli / (adv) – in relation to education  
*Example:* Students who perform well **academically** may apply for a scholarship.

## Article

Read the text below.

A US study suggests that starting middle school classes at a later time can help students be more awake during their lessons in the morning.

Researchers from the non-profit organization Child Trends tracked almost 1,000 students in 11 middle schools in a **suburban** school district. Three schools start classes around 7:23 a.m., while the rest starts at around 8:00. a.m.

For the study, parents and students accomplished online surveys that stated certain bedtimes. Students also ranked their **drowsiness** during the day and described situations wherein they **dozed off**.

Survey results revealed that students who started school at an earlier time slept for eight hours and nine minutes on average. On the other hand, those who started school later got to sleep for around eight hours and 23 minutes. In addition, students who started school at a later time were more awake and were less likely to fall asleep during daytime.

Middle school students belong to an age group that is naturally **predisposed** to stay up later. Starting classes later thus means that students will get additional time to sleep and will be more alert during class. As a result, they are more likely to perform better **academically**.

In another study, the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) recommended starting schools after 8:30 a.m. to ensure not only students’ academic performance but also their health and safety. The AASM emphasized that students with sufficient sleep are less likely to be absent, to be involved in driving-related accidents, and to suffer from depression, obesity, and cardiovascular diseases.

## Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

### Discussion A

- Do you think that starting classes later can be implemented in schools in your country? Why or why not?

- In your opinion, should schools be accountable for the insufficient sleep of students? Explain.

**Discussion B**

- How does lack of sleep affect your productivity?

- What are some things that you do to boost your productivity? Discuss.