

## **GET YOUR PETITONS SIGNED AND RETURNED BY JULY 18**

Petition form "attached". Copy form, get signatures. For pick up, e-mail [andrea@lospine.com](mailto:andrea@lospine.com), or [Savecommschools@aol.com](mailto:Savecommschools@aol.com)  
Signers must be over 18 and Orange County Residents. Thanks!

## **NOW YOU KNOW!**

CALENDAR, NEWS AND NOTES

## **IT'S NOT OVER!!!!**

Editor: Andrea Samson

### **COMMUNITY TOWN HALL MEETING**

**Monday, July 13, 2008**

Education Leadership Building  
445 W. Amelia St.  
Orlando FL 32801

Guess what? It seems San Diego County received such parent protests about their schedule flip, the school board decided not to implement it. The decision was made one week *before* Ms. Flynn informed us that San Diego County did the flip and were very pleased. Hmmm.

Special invitation to the Hispanic Community! Position Statements & petitions in Spanish will be available, translators on hand. **YOUR PRESENCE IS NEEDED, YOUR VOICE MUST COUNT!** You are especially invited if you have not yet attended one of these meetings - Someone at OCPS seems to be looking to see if there are new faces. Make yours one of them! All are welcome. Mr. Jim Martin, Orange County School Board member hosting. Other OCPS board members, community members will be available to answer your questions.

Our thanks to State Representative Daren Soto for all his help making sure his constituents have access to information in their language about issues that affect their lives.

### **SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE NIGHT**

**Monday July 28, 2008**

Sponsored by OCPS, Inc. Foundation; Orange County League of Women Voters, Orange County Arts and Education Center

6:30 - 7:00 p.m. - MEET THE CANDIDATES

7:00 - 9:00 p.m. - CANDIDATE FORUM

This is your opportunity to ask all Orange County School Board Candidates all your questions before you vote. We cannot complain unless we participate in the election and make wise choices. Please plan to be there.....your candidates will be:

District 4: Deeba Ahmad, Vicky Bell, Louis Roeder III

District 7: Bert Carrier, Christine Moore Curtis, Laura Keller, Michael Kimbrough

District 6: Nancy Robinson

District 5: Kat Gordon (invited/unopposed)

## **ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITY MEETING**

**August 20, 2008    Evans 9th Grade Center    6:30 p.m.**

Mayor Scott Vandergriff invites all concerned to attend a meeting concerning the proposed new project (Project #S-0028) Evans Replacement High School. No further review will take place by the Orange County Development Review Committee until after this public input meeting. Meeting conducted by O.C. Government Planning Staff

## **NEWS YOU MAY NOT HAVE HEARD ANYWHERE ELSE!**

Unless all Orlando's media decides to be "fair and balanced"

**THANK YOU!      THANK YOU!      THANK YOU!**

## **ORANGE COUNTY COUNCIL OF MAYORS**

A special thank you to Mayor Gary Bruhn, Mayor Town of Windermere, Chairman, Orange County of Mayors. On July 8, 2008, the Mayors met and discussed the OCPS schedule flip and the impact on the various communities represented at the council meeting. The OCCOM is comprised of every Mayor in Orange County and represents over one million residents!

The mayors have issued a statement to all the members of the OCPS School Board urging them to further investigate and analyze all the potential impacts and unintended consequences before making this change.

Editor's note: Let's see... should the opinion of twelve elected community leaders who represent over 1,000,000 people matter? Or, should the opinion of four who seem to represent only themselves matter more. As Mr. Dick Bachelor said in a "My Word" Orlando Sentinel column last week, "The Orange County school system has time and time again shown total disdain for the public's interests." Although he was speaking on another issue entirely, we must say we kind of know how that feels.

## **ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF CANDIDATE ARMSTRONG**

Orange County will elect a new sheriff this year. *Sheriff's Candidate Bill Armstrong*, 34-year veteran of law enforcement, speaking out on issues he feels are important to his community, has issued a press release stating firmly and resolutely that the OCPS decision to flip the middle school and high school schedule will result in higher juvenile crime rates, gang involvement and other far reaching and undesirable consequences in our communities. This statement concurs with another letter to OCPS written by *Ms. Kathy Till*, City of Apopka Commissioner and founder of the city's newly formed commission on gangs and youth.

Editor's note: Think they might know something OCPS does not?

\*We will be happy to publish statements from the other sheriff's candidates, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Demings and Mr. Tegg. And, they don't necessarily have to agree with us!

**STATE REPRESENTATIVE BRYAN NELSON**

Thanks to Representative Nelson for taking the time to issue a letter to OCPS stating his objections to the schedule flip. He has also been available to fully and patiently explain the scope and nature of the budget cuts. Any of your representatives can do the same. Get involved with them on a personal level. Ask the hard questions.

### **FROM THE DESK OF ROBERT STUART, Orlando City Commissioner, District 3**

As a City of Orlando Commissioner, we are tasked, specifically, with its fiscal responsibility. I'm deeply concerned over the financial impact of the change of the school start times as has been approved by the Orange County School Board. Let me cite just two examples that concern me:

First, much of our after school day care at our 11 facilities throughout Orlando is supplemented by quality staff provided through local high schools. This quality core of working students have allowed us to keep our rates far below the market and well within the reach of hard working families. These employees are available for assistance and leadership with our elementary school students since they are dismissed from school well before our elementary schools. The impact of a later start and release time for high schools requires that we seek staff who are more likely to be less reliable and more expensive. This, in turn, may require that we increase our daily and weekly fees in order to maintain the quality program...something that effectively will pass along this proposed savings to those who can least afford it.

Second, I am concerned about crime. Adding more unsupervised time for middle school students may create an increase on criminal mischief and vandalism. We see this trend each summer as school moves into summer recess and many of these students have more time on their hands without quality supervision. I don't know the financial impact on our community but expect it to be substantial, even though it may not be adequately measured.

I'm convinced that there may be more creative and permanent solutions to cutting our OCPS budget that should be implemented before this is put into operation. I would hope that the Orange County School Board would reconsider their action and return the school start times to the previous times.

Robert

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**WISH I HAD CONNECT-ED** to reach every single household with children in Orange County! It would make this whole protest job so much easier. Have you been told by a pleasant lady on your phone that every thing is just smooth as peanut butter? GUESS WHAT? IT'S NOT. It's unfortunate that some of what comes out of that copper building that is just pure spin and damage control.

There was no information on cost to the parents for all this middle school care. There won't be any accounting for the extra costs of running lights, air, and extra staff and supplies for all these extended hours either. Can someone tell me what happens to the child whose parent is caught in traffic at 5:30 when the programs end? How much extra cost is incurred by the "Y" or the Boys & Girls Club for more staff to take care of more kids?

Some middle school teachers and/or staff have been asked to fill in the time between the dismissal bell and the time the Y or the Boys and Girls club starts up at 4:00 p.m. Some have yet to be told.

High school young people who have to work can be released after third period....not so good if you want a viable education, and a choice they did not have to make before the flip.

West Orange High has not planned a "O" period yet, and sports is still up in the air.

It would be nice if there was factual data available to students, parents and teachers. What we've been complaining about all along...there has been no research and no planning.

The **"it's a done deal"** spin has been floating around school since a week before they actually took the vote! Not only does that make one wonder why they even had a vote May 13, or bothered with public input, but if they knew they were going to do this, would you not assume they also planned for implementation? Given the chaos, it's safe to say there is more planning going into the weekly grocery list than this project has seen.

**WANTED:** PROJECT MANAGER, capable of anticipating consequences and planning for them.

One of our parents spoke to the lady who conducted the sleep study quoted by OCPS. That's the study they say proves high school children need more sleep. She was a tad upset our school was using that study to justify bell time decisions. She also pointed out that the study was conducted on children ages 7-17 and that middle school children were shown to need as much as older teens....it's the old "bell curve."

### **OPEN LETTER TO OCPS BOARD.**

No one who stands on the outside the ELC building looking in wants this kind of strife.

All we have ever wanted is for the flip to be postponed until proper research can be done to prove that this is necessary or will deliver the promised savings.

We have asked why you did not invite sincere discussion and input from your community and families so you can properly evaluate all the academic, safety, economic and community consequences of flipping the schedule.

All we have said over and over again is that the trade offs are not worth 1/5 of 1% of your budget. It's especially not worth it, when no routing analysis has been done, and nothing is in place to track the flip's success or failure. Without the research, it's a guess.

We don't want you to give us canned responses and undocumented factoids. We want the flip postponed until a complete budget and routing analysis is performed by the board. We would like our opinions and priorities reflected in the life-changing decisions made by you, our elected officials.

Thank you.