



East Baton Rouge School Start Times Project
Phase 1 Update as of the End of the 2025-26 School Year

Summary

Old School Start Times:	New School Start Times:
Elementary: 8:25a - 3:25p	Elementary: 8:00a - 3:15p
Middle/High: 7:10a - 2:25p	Middle/High: 8:50a - 4:05p

Positive HS Student Trends:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Student enrollment increased over the course of the school year at both HS at a pace higher than in 2024-25.The # of unexcused tardies per student are down substantially:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capitol HS (-4.31 tardies, -64%)Glen Oaks HS (-9.01 tardies, -68%)The # of absences per student are down:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capitol HS (-2.73 days, -8%)Glen Oaks HS (-2.74 days, -9%)Expulsion percentages are down:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capitol HS (-3.1 pts, -38%)Glen Oaks HS (-0.2 pts, -5%)In math, students earned fewer Ds and Fs:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capitol HS (-6.3 pts)Glen Oaks HS (-10.4 pts)In 1st period classes students earned fewer Fs:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capitol HS (-1.2 pts)Glen Oaks HS (-3.7 pts)In 2nd period classes students earned fewer Fs:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capitol HS (-1.7 pts)Glen Oaks HS (-4.2 pts)
Mixed HS Trends:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Early checkouts increased slightly at each HS: +2.14 at Capitol HS and +0.78 at Glen Oaks HS.Teacher absences were up at both HS, but they were not out of line with non-Phase 1 HS.Breakfast and lunch participation rates were mixed, but generally above best practices levels in 2025-26.Suspension rates were up at Capitol HS, but down at Glen Oaks HS.In English, grades were lower at Capitol HS, but improved at Glen Oaks HS.

ES Trends:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There were no apparent negative impacts on school enrollment, tardies, student absences, school enrollment, meal participation, teacher absences, or student grades. ◆ Early checkouts increased year-over-year, but as the school end time only increased by 10 minutes, there is likely some other factor at play.
Confounding Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Of the 6 schools with new start times, only 1 (Glen Oaks HS) did not experience other major changes. Capitol HS changed grade configuration, attendance zones, and its physical location. The 4 ES changed grade configurations and attendance zones.
Positive Operational Impacts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reduced # of buses needed to serve the Phase 1 schools by 14 ◆ Better on-time transportation performance compared to Phase 2 schools

Impacts on High School Students

Two HS were included in Phase 1. Their start times shifted later, from 7:10a to 8:50a. This shift was in line with the recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics that middle/high school should not start earlier than 8:30a.

In addition to the start time change, the grade configuration, location, and attendance zone of Capitol HS changed this year. Because of this, one should view the year-over-year comparisons for Capitol HS with some caution. At Glen Oaks HS, only the start time changed, making its year-over-year comparisons more straightforward. With these caveats, EBR data for the 1st year of new school start times indicate a potential positive impact in school enrollment, student tardies, student absences, expulsion rates, passing math grades, and passing grades for classes offered in 1st and 2nd periods. There was not a clear indication of impact on meal participation. There were possible negative impacts on early checkouts and teacher absences.

Overall Enrollment – Likely Positive Impact

Between Day 1 and the end of the school year, student enrollment in 2025-26 increased in both HS. In contrast, in 24-25 enrollment decreased over the course of the school year at Capitol HS while it increased at Glen Oaks HS.

Change in Student Enrollment, Day 1 to Fall End

	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS
2024-25	-23.6%	+6.0%
2025-26	+12.4%	+18.1%
Change from Last Year	+36.0 pts	+12.1 pts
Enrollment at End of Fall Semester This Year	478	540

Unexcused Tardies – Likely Positive Impact

At the end of the school year, the number of unexcused tardies per student was down substantially in both HS – in both schools, the number was less than half what it had been in 2024-25. The percentage of students with 1+ unexcused tardies in the Spring semester was also down substantially. Both of these results indicate higher student attendance in the earliest periods of the school day.

Student Tardies for 2025-26

	# of Tardies per Student Enrolled		% Students with 1+ Tardies	
	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS
2024-25	6.78	13.23	47%	49%
2025-26	2.47	4.22	29%	36%
Change	-4.31 tardies	-9.01 tardies	-18 pts	-13 pts

Recent research also found a decrease in tardiness with later start times (Barlaan et al, 2022, Wolfson et al, 2007).

Early Checkouts – Possible Negative Impact

At the other end of the school day, the number of parent checkouts per student increased in both HS. The observed pattern at each HS was consistent throughout the school year, with Capitol HS early checkouts about 50% higher and Glen Oaks HS about 15% higher compared to 2024-25. In examining the student-level data, no student this year was routinely checked out early. This would indicate that the early checkouts are not likely due to a student-held job or some other regular obligation.

When asked midway through the Fall semester, Glen Oaks HS staff noted that the majority of their student checkouts this year are for doctor's appointments. Capitol HS staff noted that their student checkouts happen for a variety of reasons, including:

- ◆ parent needing to go to work
- ◆ student appointments
- ◆ discipline
- ◆ interns leaving for work

Early Checkouts per Student Through the End of the School Year

	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS
2024-25	3.81	4.86
2025-26	5.98	5.64
Change	+2.17	+0.78

Researchers of later school start times do not appear to have explored impacts on early student checkouts. Prismatic could find no published studies addressing the topic.

Student Absences – Likely Positive Impact

The rates of student absence did not follow a consistent pattern during the 1st year of later STs, but both HS had overall positive results by the end of the school year. Comparing this year to last year, both HS had decreased days of absence per student and higher rates of students present. In 2025-26, students were present for an average of 2.7 more days of school than they were in 2024-25.

When asked midway through the semester, Capitol HS staff noted that students are absent this year for a variety of reasons, including oversleeping and then lacking transportation, having to care for younger siblings, and missing the bus.

Changes in Student Absenteeism and Percent Present

	# Absences per Student (Days) ¹							
	Through Day 30		Through Day 60		Through Fall		Through End of Year	
	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS	Capitol HS	Capitol HS	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS
2024-25	6.97	4.15	14.07	8.94	16.77	14.65	36.20	30.83
2025-26	5.52	4.30	11.18	8.57	17.09	13.34	33.47	28.08
Change	-1.45	+0.15	-2.89	-0.37	+0.31	-1.31	-2.73	-2.74

¹ Using average student enrollment over each time period.

	% Present							
	Through Day 30		Through Day 60		Through Fall		Through End of Year	
	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS
2024-25	78.8%	86.2%	76.2%	84.8%	80.5%	83.0%	79.2%	82.3%
2025-26	81.6%	85.7%	81.0%	85.5%	80.4%	84.7%	80.5%	83.7%
Change	+2.8 pts	-0.5 pts	+4.8 pts	+0.7 pts	-0.1 pts	+1.7 pts	+1.3 pts	+1.4 pts

Research indicates that one might not expect to see an impact on overall student absenteeism at the school level with later start times:

- ◆ One older study (Wahlstrom, 2002) found little difference in attendance rates 3 and 6 years after a number of HS switched from 7:15a to 8:40a start times among students who remained at the same HS. However, Wahlstrom did find improved attendance rates among grade 9-10 students who were not enrolled for 2 consecutive years in the same HS. In other words, younger HS students who tended to have increased student mobility did show statistically significant increases in school attendance with later start times (+2-4 percentage points).
- ◆ Another study (Wolfson et al, 2012) found no significant differences in absenteeism rates in 2 similar middle schools that differed only in start times.

Teacher Absences – No Apparent Impact

At the end of 2025-26, the number of absences per teacher was greater at each HS compared to the previous year. At mid-year, staff at Glen Oaks noted that they believe the increase in teacher absences is due to some teachers going to doctor's appointments. However, compared to the other EBR MS/HS, the 2025-26 Capitol HS figure was lower than the MS/HS average, while Glen Oaks HS figure was just 1.4 days higher than the MS/HS average. Neither Capitol HS nor Glen Oaks HS had the highest rates of teacher absence in either year.

Teacher Absences Through End of School Year

	# Absences per Teacher (Days)			MS with Highest Teacher Absences	HS with Highest Teacher Absences
	MS/HS Average	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS		
2024-25	17.1	12.7	16.5	Istrouma MS (30.9)	Istrouma HS (21.8)
2025-26	18.6	16.6	20.0	Istrouma MS (30.0)	Scotlandville HS (22.8)
Change	+1.5	+3.9	+3.5		

Researchers of later school start times do not appear to have explored impacts on teacher absence rates. Prismatic could find no published studies addressing the topic.

Breakfast and Lunch Participation – No Apparent Impact

Comparing across the years, student meal participation results were mixed. Breakfast participation decreased at Capitol HS but was unchanged at Glen Oaks HS. Lunch participation decreased at Capitol HS but increased at Glen Oaks HS.

Annual Rates of Student Meal Participation

	Breakfast		Lunch	
	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS	Capitol HS	Glen Oaks HS
2024-25	42%	29%	66%	49%
2025-26	33%	29%	63%	52%
Change	-8 pts	-	-3 pts	+3 pts

Established by the USDA, the Healthier US School Challenge (HUSSC) established meal participation goals that are considered best practices. At both HS, student breakfast participation rates were commendable each year. Lunch participation rates in both HS were somewhat below best practice levels in 2025-26.

Meal Participation Rates Considered Best Practice Levels

	Breakfast	Lunch
Elementary	35%	75%
Middle	35%	75%
High	25%	65%

A number of research studies indicate that students with later school start times or sufficient nightly sleep are more likely to have healthier eating habits (Franckle et al, 2015; Kruger et al, 2014), which could translate into improved school meal consumption.

Student Discipline – Likely Positive Impact on Expulsions

Comparing this year to last year, Glen Oaks HS had lower suspension and expulsion percentages. The picture at Capitol HS was more complex, with an increased suspension rate, but a decreased expulsion rate.

Annual Rates of Student Discipline

	Suspension Percentage			Expulsion Percentage		
	2024-25	2025-26	Change	2024-25	2025-26	Change
Capitol MS	80.2%			8.2%		
Capitol HS	100.3%			8.1%		
Capitol MS/HS	86.2%	97.6%	+11.4 pts	8.1%	5.0%	-3.1 pts
Glen Oaks HS	66.1%	62.3%	-3.8 pts	4.0%	3.8%	-0.2 pts

Recent research indicates that later school start times are associated with improved student behavior (Chen et al, 2017; Hildenbrand et al, 2013). In Prismatic's experience, drawing conclusions from year-over-year school-level discipline data can be challenging, as they are frequently highly impacted by changes in school leadership, or even changes in faculty. Across the 2 years, Capitol HS changed principals, while Glen Oaks HS did not.

Class Grades – Likely Positive Impact for Students at Risk of Failing

Comparing this year's 4th quarter grades to last year's, a few patterns emerged. At Capitol HS, students earned lower English grades this year compared to last. However, they tended to earn higher math

grades this year. In English, math, and all other subjects, Glen Oaks HS students earned fewer F's overall compared to last year. They also earned fewer Ds in math.

Class Grades, 4th 9 Weeks
Change in Grade Distribution from 2024-25 to 2025-26

	English				
	A	B	C	D	F
Capitol HS	-5.7	-4.9	-0.5	+7.0	+4.1
Glen Oaks HS	+0.5	-1.3	+0.5	+6.7	-6.4
	Math				
	A	B	C	D	F
Capitol HS	+5.9	+10.1	-9.7	-2.9	-3.4
Glen Oaks HS	-0.1	+3.8	+6.6	-5.4	-5.0
	All Other Subjects				
	A	B	C	D	F
Capitol HS	-8.6	+4.7	+2.7	+2.8	-1.6
Glen Oaks HS	-6.6	+3.0	+3.1	+3.3	-2.9

Prismatic hypothesized that the greatest differences in grades would be in the 1st 2 class periods. With the previous start times, those 2 class periods were at least partially timed to be earlier than experts advise middle/high schools to start. Looking at those class periods, both HS had positive results – students earned fewer Fs.

All Subjects - Class Grades, 4th 9 Weeks
Change in Grade Distribution from 2024-25 to 2025-26

	A	B	C	D	F
	1 st Period Classes				
Capitol HS	+4.6	-0.3	-7.8	+4.7	-1.2
Glen Oaks HS	-7.2	+3.44	+1.4	+6.1	-3.7
	2 nd Period Classes				
Capitol HS	-10.8	+6.4	+2.6	+3.6	-1.7
Glen Oaks HS	-2.5	-2.1	+3.8	+4.7	-4.2

A number of studies point to improved academic performance from later middle/high school start times, including:

- ◆ increased grade-point averages (Barlaan et al, 2022)
- ◆ improved math and reading test scores (Heissel, J. & Norris, S., 2017)
- ◆ improved math and reading test scores more for students at the lower end of the distribution (Edwards, F., 2012)

Impacts on Elementary School Students

Four ES were included in Phase 1. Their start times shifted earlier, from 8:25a to 8:00a. This was done in order to move the HS to later start times without requiring additional transportation expenses.

From 2024-25 to 2025-26, the grade patterns of the Phase 1 ES changed. In 2024-25, each ES served grades PreK-5. In 2025-26, Melrose ES and Merrydale ES only served PreK-2 students, while Capitol ES and Glen Oaks Park ES served only the older ES students. In addition, the attendance zone for sister schools Capitol ES and Melrose ES changed. Because of this, one should view the year-over-year comparisons for Capitol/Melrose ES with some caution. At sister schools Glen Oaks Park/Merrydale ES, only the start time and grade configuration changed, making those year-over-year comparisons more straightforward. Because of the change in grade configurations and the substantial changes in overall enrollment in some of the ES, one should view the year-over-year comparisons with some caution. To account for the grade level changes, in most cases Prismatic analyzed the results for the pairs of sister schools, rather than the individual schools.

In general, EBR data for the Fall semester for the 4 ES do not indicate any clear negative impact in the areas of school enrollment, tardies, absences, or meal participation. Early checkouts increased year-over-year, but as the school end time only increased by 10 minutes, there is likely some other factor at play. The rate of D/F grades given in 2025-26 at Capitol/Melrose ES was somewhat higher than in 2024-25, while they were flat to slightly down at Glen Oaks Park/Merrydale ES.

Research indicates that moving ES start times earlier should not negatively impact students, as long as the new start time is 7:30a or later (Appleman, E.R. et al, 2015; Keller, P.S. et al, 2014). Because the shift for these schools (25 minutes earlier) was much smaller than the shift for the HS (100 minutes later), any impacts on the analyzed areas would likely be small.

Overall Enrollment – *No Apparent Negative Impact*

At the end of 2025-26, enrollment totals changed quite a bit among the 4 ES, due to changes in grade configurations, attendance zones, and the addition/subtraction of pre-K or special education classrooms. With so many changes that directly impact student enrollment, any potential impact from the start time change would be difficult to detect.

Student Enrollment at End of School Year

	Student Enrollment at End of 2025-26			
	Capitol ES	Melrose ES	Glen Oaks Park ES	Merrydale ES
2024-25	353	281	447	262
2025-26	515	391	300	292
Change	+162 students +46%	+98 students +39%	-147 students -33%	+30 students +11%

In 2025-26, student enrollment increased from Day 1 to the end of the school year in all 4 ES; this was also true in 2024-25. However, in Capitol and Glen Oak Park ES, the percentage increase this year was smaller than the increase last year. The opposite was true for Melrose and Merrydale ES, with each having a higher percentage increase in enrollment this year compared to last.

Change in Student Enrollment

	Change in Student Enrollment, Day 1 to End of School Year			
	Capitol ES	Melrose ES	Glen Oaks Park ES	Merrydale ES
2024-25	26%	11%	22%	13%
2025-26	7%	17%	8%	24%
Change	-19 pts	+6 pts	-14 pts	+11 pts

All Tardies – No Apparent Negative Impact

Because the number of tardies was generally much lower in the Phase 1 ES than in the Phase 1 HS, the actual figures for all tardies (excused and unexcused) are shown. At the end of the school year, there was no discernable pattern. From last year to this year, the number of students with 1+ tardies and the total number of tardies increased in Capitol/Melrose ES; however, the opposite happened in Glen Oaks Park/Merrydale ES.

Student Tardy Data at End of School Year

	# Students with 1+ Tardies		# of Tardies Total	
	Capitol/ Melrose ES	Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES	Capitol/ Melrose ES	Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES
2024-25	22	106	72	402
2025-26	59	3	252	3

Early Checkouts – Possible Negative Impact

Through the Fall semester, the number of early checkouts by parents were generally small in both years (less than 1 per student). By the end of each of the school years, the number of early checkouts was greater than 1 per student in both years for both sets of schools. This suggests that early checkouts increase rather substantially in the Spring semester. From last year to this year, the rate of early checkouts increased in both sets of schools. As the difference in school dismissal time for these schools is just 10 minutes (from 3:25p to 3:15p), one would not expect to see much of a difference in early checkouts from last year to this year. This suggests that some other factor is perhaps impacting the rate of early checkouts, not just the change in start time alone.

Early Checkouts Through End of School Year

	Early Checkouts Per Student	
	Capitol/ Melrose ES	Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES
2024-25	1.71	1.21
2025-26	2.34	2.95
Change	+0.63	+1.74

Student Absences – No Apparent Negative Impact

By the end of 2025-26, both sets of schools had an increase in the number of days absent per student compared to 2024-25. Both sets also had a decrease in the rate of student attendance. Both of these patterns were less pronounced at the end of the 1st semester. The changes in the attendance zone for

Capitol/Melrose from last year may explain the somewhat greater negative results for that set of schools compared to Glen Oaks Park/Merrydale.

Annual Student Absence Rates

	# Absences per Student ²		% Present	
	Capitol/ Melrose ES	Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES	Capitol/ Melrose ES	Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES
2024-25	15.63	12.69	91.0%	92.7%
2025-26	19.91	14.06	88.4%	91.8%
Change	+4.27 days	+1.37 days	-2.6 pts	-0.9 pts

Teacher Absences – No Apparent Negative Impact

Comparing this year to last year, overall, the average number of teacher absences per ES increased by 0.46 days. In the Phase 1 schools, absences per teacher decreased in the Capitol/Melrose ES pair and increased slightly in the other. In addition, while Capitol ES had the highest number of absences per teacher in 2024-25, that was no longer the case in 2025-26.

Annual Teacher Absence Rates

	# Absences per Teacher, Full School Year			ES with Highest Teacher Absences
	All ES	Capitol/ Melrose ES	Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES	
2024-25	17.5	22.6	20.2	Capitol ES (26.2)
2025-26	18.8	18.0	20.6	Sharon Hills ES (25.7)
Change	+0.46	-4.6	+0.4	

ES Student Meal Participation – No Apparent Negative Impact

Comparing both years, student meal participation rates were commendable in both sets of sister schools and within each ES individually, well above national best practice levels.³ In 2025-26, breakfast participation rates decreased at Capitol/Melrose but increased at Glen Oaks Park/Merrydale. Lunch participation rates decreased slightly in both sets of sister schools.

Annual Student Meal Participation

	Breakfast		Lunch	
	Capitol/ Melrose ES	Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES	Capitol/ Melrose ES	Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES
2024-25	61%	55%	87%	87%
2025-26	55%	59%	84%	86%
Change	-6 pts	+4 pts	-3 pts	-1 pt

² Using average student enrollment over the time period.

³ At elementary level, Healthier US School Challenge Criteria are 35% participation for breakfast and 75% participation for lunch.

Class Grades – No Apparent Negative Impact

The pairs of ES schools showed different year-over-year results for 4th quarter grades. In Capitol/Melrose ES, there was an increase in the percentages of students given Ds and Fs. In Glen Oaks Park/Merrydale ES, the percentages of Ds and Fs was generally flat for English and slightly decreased for math. This same trend was also observed in the 1st and 2nd quarter grades.

Class Grades, 4th Quarter 9 Weeks Change in Grade Distribution from 2024-25 to 2025-26

	A	B	C	D	F
	English				
Capitol/Melrose ES	+0.7	-4.2	-2.6	+3.1	+3.1
Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES	+6.3	-6.4	-2.3	+0.6	+1.8
	Math				
Capitol/Melrose ES	-7.7	-1.6	-0.8	+6.8	+3.2
Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES	+3.3	+1.3	-1.6	-2.2	-0.8
	All Other Subjects				
Capitol/Melrose ES	-4.6	-1.5	-0.3	+2.5	+3.8
Glen Oaks Park/ Merrydale ES	-4.7	+3.2	+0.6	+0.9	0.0

Operational Impacts

In preparing for the start time change, Prismatic reworked all the bus runs for the Phase 1 schools. As a result:

- ◆ No Phase 1 students are routed through transfer.
- ◆ Average student travel times are shorter on the 2025-26 runs than they were in 2024-25.
- ◆ From a total of 46 direct and 14 shuttle runs in 2024-25, Prismatic trimmed runs to an initial 50 in July 2025. Then, while watching daily enrollment figures starting on July 8th, Prismatic further consolidated runs to maximize bus usage. On Day 1 of 2025-26, 47 runs were in use for Phase 1 schools. By the end of the Fall semester, only 45 runs were needed to serve Phase 1 schools. This was expanded by 1 run as of the end of the school year, to 46.

Change in Number of Bus Runs

	Bus Runs				
	2024-25	Day 1	Day 30	End of Fall Semester	End of School Year
Capitol HS	5	12	12	12	13
Capitol MS	13	-	-	-	-
Capitol ES	5.5	16	14	14	14
Melrose ES	6.5				
Winbourne ES	7	-	-	-	-
Glen Oaks HS	11	10	9	10	10
Glen Oaks Park ES	7	9	9	9	9
Merrydale ES	5				
Total	60	47	44	45	46

Prismatic had a team member at each Phase 1 school on Day 1. Phase 1 schools had no more than the usual start-of-school transportation issues.

On school mornings, buses operating on-time arrive between 20 and 10 minutes prior to the start of instruction to allow students time to eat breakfast and get to class. In the afternoons, on-time buses are at school prior to the dismissal bell. Prismatic calculated on-time statistics for the Phase 1 and other similar EBR HS for the period September 2-15. During that time, Phase 1 HS buses were more on-time than those of Phase 2 HS buses. A review of a few days in November showed the same pattern. Prismatic continued to monitor on-timer performance throughout the school year.

Bus On-Time Performance, Select Weeks in 2025

	September 2-15		November 4-5	
	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon
Phase 1 HS	92%	93%	100%	73%
Phase 2 HS	76%	74%	82%	65%
Difference	+16 pts	+19 pts	+18 pts	+8 pts