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Research Proposal

For years, there has been an increasing issue with the impact of early school start times on the health and well being of growing students. Numerous studies suggest that early start times may be detrimental to the physical and mental health of adolescents, who become deprived of the necessary amount of sleep every night. The controversy of this issue lies in balancing educational needs with health concerns, and this research aims to explore how later start times in schools would benefit the health of students, and maybe even teachers. This is a very significant topic as it is absolutely crucial that our future generations stay healthy and are able to learn at the highest capacity. Insufficient sleep in teenagers has been linked to various issues including depression, decreased ability to learn, heart issues, and many other health problems. The main research questions for this study is: How do early school start times impact the health and academic performance of students, and would later start times be beneficial?

My secondary research questions are these:

- How much sleep is the average high school student getting and how does this compare to recommended sleep guidelines?
- What are the logistical challenges and potential solutions for implementing later start times in schools? (for counterargument)
- How would later start times affect students physically, mentally, and academically?
- What are the attitudes of parents and teachers towards current school start times, and are parents in support of later start times?
- What are long-term effects of not getting enough sleep for kids, as the brain is still developing at these ages?
- How does a college student who's class doesn't start til noon compare to a high school student who is leaving the house at 6:30am?

My working thesis is this: Later school start times would significantly benefit the health and academic performance of high school students. To do this research, I will find existing studies about this topic and the effect of low sleep on people from specialists and studies. I may also interview a few teachers or students at Cannon myself and see what they have to say about this. Sources will include reports from educational and health organizations, probably found on databases like Encyclopedia Britannica, or through Google searches.