

# Headlight

Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community  
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## More Zzz's=More A's: A Plea for a Later School Start

Paige Kelloway  
Co-Editor, Senior

Studies have shown that teenagers require 8 ½ to 9 ½ hours of sleep each night. But studies have also shown that most teenagers shortchange this requirement, sleeping a mere 6 ½ to 7 ½ hours. Delaying the high school schedule, even if only by half an hour, would be beneficial to the sleep needs of all of us.

Although society often views sleep as a luxury that many can't afford, getting enough sleep is actually a biological necessity – it is as important to good health as exercising and eating well. So, Marblehead High School should shift its start time by 30 minutes to 8:30 am. Allowing students an additional half hour of sleep creates teenagers who are safe, emotionally stable, and physically ready to learn.

About 100,000 car accidents each year are because of drowsy drivers and among drivers age 15-24, more than 1,500 deaths each year are associated with these crashes. Many high school students, at least in Marblehead, drive themselves to school in the morning – essentially asleep at the wheel. Imagine if school started at 8:30 instead of 8:00. This would result in drivers who are more alert and awake with fewer accidents.

In addition to keeping students safe, a later start time makes for happier learners. Studies have shown that when teenagers get more sleep they are less likely to experience depressed moods and more likely to have energy for the day. According to the Journal of American Medicine, students who were allowed to start school at 8:30 instead of 8:00 showed a large improvement in alertness, mood, and health. Fewer students reported feeling unhappy, depressed, ir-

ritated, or annoyed and fewer visited the nurse's office for fatigue-related concerns. With these new and more positive attitudes, students are also bound to get better grades because they will have more focus and be able to perform better.

It's easy to believe that more sleep results in happier teenagers. What is not common knowledge, however, is that the brain of a teen is different than that of an adult, at least when it comes to sleep. According to the National Sleep Foundation, the biological changes that occur during adolescence cause kids to fall asleep later in the night. So when a parent tells their child to go to bed and they argue "I'm not tired," they are actually telling the truth.

During puberty, teenagers' internal clocks shift due to the hormonal changes happening in the body, specifically the release of the sleep hormone melatonin. Melatonin helps to regulate the sleep cycle and is released later at night in teens than in adults. The secretions are also turned off later in the morning, which makes it harder to wake up early.

If school started later, late night teenagers wouldn't suffer as much in the morning because they would have the opportunity to sleep longer, leading to a decrease in absenteeism and tardiness.

St. George's, a private high school in Rhode Island, conducted their own sleep study with their students a couple of years ago. They pushed the start time of class from 8:00 to 8:30 for two months, and the results were staggering proof that this change is extremely valuable. The portion of students who got 8 hours or more of sleep on a school night jumped from 16% to about 55%, reports of daytime sleepiness dropped from 49% to 20%, and first period tardiness decreased by almost half. What started as one instructor's personal research project resulted in campus-wide

change: all St. George's students know get an extra half hour of sleep.

Some school districts worry that changing the school day would cause a host of problems like rearranging transportation or athletic schedules. But changing these schedules will actually contribute to the overall well-being of both students and teachers.

While some sports coaches may not like the idea of changing practices or games at first, they will come to realize that it is for the best because their athletes will be less tired and more mentally alert to play. Students are going to work more efficiently in their sports or other extracurricular activities because they have more energy after a good night sleep.

Starting the day later is worth the trouble if it means making our school and students more successful. It doesn't even require any more work or money out of the budget, like hiring more teachers or changing the learning atmosphere would, because it's simply a slight shift in habit.

As teenagers, we spend a lot of our day in school; however, we are unable to maximize our learning opportunities since sleep deprivation impairs our ability to be alert, pay attention, solve problems, deal with stress, and retain information. The primary focus of education is to increase human potential, yet as students are not able to reach anywhere near this potential if we do not get enough sleep.

Move the school day to 8:30 and make a positive change for students because it's clear, we learn best with enough rest.

## Super Bowl XLVI Offers Chance for Patriots to Finally Exact Revenge

Matt Lieberson  
Editor-in-Chief, Senior

On February 3, 2008, in Super Bowl XLII, the New England Patriots were two minutes and forty-two seconds away from history. What ensued during this time period was nothing short of shocking. I don't think I need to get into details, but it involves some dude named Tyree on the Giants with pine tar on his helmet making the luckiest catch ever, Plaxico Burress scoring a TD, and me almost throwing up the 3 pounds of shrimp cocktail I ate throughout the night. This was the most gut wrenching loss in Boston sports history, and potentially in Super Bowl history.

On February 5, 2012, the New England Patriots will have sixty minutes of football to erase the haunting memories from that harrowing evening in Arizona. The same two teams from that night, the Patriots and the Giants, will square off in Super Bowl XLVI in Indianapolis.

Looking at the Giants, their run to the Super Bowl has been eerily similar to their run from the 2007-2008 season. They were sluggish through the regular season, and they caught fire late. Their formula for success this season worries me most. What they do best attacks what the Patriots do worst- The Giants throw well and rush the passer well.

This season, Eli Manning has played on a higher level than he has throughout his career. What has made him so successful this year has been who he is throwing the ball to. The Giants have three receivers playing top-tier football right now in Hakeem Nicks, UMass alum and salsa-dancing aficionado Victor Cruz, and Mario Manningham. Cruz scares me the most. While Nicks is big and physical, Cruz has the ability to break away at any instant and score on a deep ball. With a suspect Patriots secondary, New York could exploit

this matchup. The ragtag Patriots secondary needs to play to the top of their game in the Super Bowl to stop these three receivers. Safety Patrick Chung needs to be all over the field to keep them from breaking loose.

The New York Giants have always had a fearsome pass rush, and this season is no different. With usual standouts Osi Umenyoria and Justin Tuck, along with emerging star Jason Pierre-Paul, the Giants have tortured quarterbacks throughout the season and through the playoffs. They got potential MVP Aaron Rodgers to play off of his game in the divisional round, and they were able to force 49ers QB Alex Smith into bad throws in the NFC Championship game. Like I've said before, when the Patriots lose, Tom Brady gets beat up. This is what happened in Super Bowl XLII, and if it happens again I worry for New England. It's not like the Patriots have a bad offensive line. They played great against Baltimore and limited high quality pass-rushers like Haloti Ngata and Terrell Suggs from the Ravens.

But the Giants are a different animal, and if the O-Line is not at their best, New England is in trouble. The Patriots still have a lot to take advantage of on the Giants. Beyond the defensive line, the Giants' defense is not extraordinary. The Patriots have enough weapons to abuse the Giants' defense if the offensive line can keep the pass rush in check. The big offensive question is if Rob Gronkowski will be at full strength. I'm not so sure it matters as much as many fans think. If he is, then he is the same beast he's been all year. If he's not, then the Giants move their better coverage man to equally dangerous Aaron Hernandez, and I think a slightly hobbled Gronk can beat a poor coverage man. Unless this is a serious injury, I don't know how much this will matter.

This brings me to my two X-factors for New

England. First, I think that the Patriots run game is key to a victory for New England. Last week BenJarvus Green-Ellis played one of his best games this season. If he has success, the Giants' pass rushers can't focus all of their energy on hitting Tom Brady and will have to put some effort into stopping the run. Kevin Faulk, potentially in his last game as a Patriot, could have a big role. He is always a great receiver out of the backfield, and if Brady needs a checkdown option he could have Faulk open to dump the ball off to and pick up yards on broken plays.

My off-the-board choice for X-factor is Julian Edelman. Edelman has become a jack of all trades lately, through playing defensive back, wide receiver, and punt returner. On special teams, Edelman is shifty and dangerous, and he is liable to bring a punt back for big yards. On offense, the Giants don't have the manpower to cover Edelman as well as Welker, Branch, Gronkowski, and Hernandez, so Edelman potentially has some ability to get open looks.

On defense is where I expect big things. Don't get me wrong, he is liable to get torched. But Mario Manningham of the Giants recently said that New York plans to test Edelman. With his receiver ball skills, Edelman could possibly make a huge play. Keep in mind that the last three Super Bowls, as well as four of the last five, have had defensive touchdowns. If Edelman plays big on the big stage, that streak could continue.

My Broncos-Patriots preview had no prediction, and that worked, so I don't plan to make one here. But I do think we are in for a classic game this Sunday, and hopefully the Patriots can exact some revenge on the Giants and get the bad taste of shrimp cocktail out of my mouth from four years ago.

*Comment with your own predictions at <http://mhs-headlight.weebly.com> or on Marblehead Patch!*

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