Dear Board Members,

**PARENTS -CUSTOMIZE THIS PARAGRAPH and add your names at the end- My [son/daughter] will be a {freshmen/sophomore/junior/senior} at Desert Mountain High School and we oppose any change to the high school bell schedule.**

The District is proposing to change the bell schedule to an earlier start time and add instructional time for ALL high schoolers in order to allow a minority of seniors to only take four classes. **We OPPOSE any change to the high school bell schedule and request that the Board require seniors to take five classes.** Requiring seniors to take five classes simply means that they must remain at school until 12:40.

1. **Starting earlier will reduce enrollment in zero-hour classes**- An earlier start time will mean that zero-hour classes like marching band and jazz band will start at either 6:15 a.m. or 6:30 a.m. Because of the distance that many students drive to DMHS, the proposed earlier start time means that many students will need to leave the house well before 6 a.m.! This will likely result in a significant decrease in the number of students enrolled in zero-hour classes like marching band and jazz band.

2. **Starting earlier will cause more traffic problems because of Basis start times –** With Basis moving to 124th and Shea, there will be increased traffic and safety issues for DM families. Basis students with AM electives start school at 7:30 and moving the DM start time to 7:30 also will greatly exacerbate those traffic problems.

3. **Expanding the school day will cost SUSD thousands of dollars in wages and benefits -**Changing the bell schedule and adding 20 minutes of additional instructional creates an undue financial burden on the district as the district would incur additional wages for all hourly high school employees and presumably would need to pay all our hardworking high school teachers for the additional instructional time. This would be a significant and unnecessary expense in a time of budget shortfalls.

4**. Starting earlier causes logistical problems for families with middle schoolers** -Many DMHS families have students attending both Mountainside Middle School and DMHS. MMS start time is 8:15. Moving DM’s start time to 7:30 means families dropping off both students will be dropping off middle schoolers 45-60 minutes before school or be stuck waiting in the parking lot for the middle school start time.

5. **Starting earlier may have a detrimental effect on the IB program enrollment-**Many students from outside of the district travel significant distances in order to enroll in the IB program. An earlier start time will place unfair burdens on these families and likely reduce the number of students enrolling in this program. All IB students (including seniors) are required to have at least five classes.

6. **Starting earlier increases sleep deprivation issues in students -** Both the American Medical Association and the American Pediatric Association recommend that schools start at 8:30 a.m. or later due to circadian rhythm changes in teens and their resulting sleep deprivation. Moving the start time earlier simply is detrimental to student physical and mental health.

 **We request that the Board keep the current schedule of 7:45 a.m. to 2:20 p.m. and OPPOSE any schedule change.** The proposed change is detrimental in many ways to both the District and to the majority of students and imposing this change to accommodate a minority of seniors who want to leave earlier than 12:40 is unfair.

Thank you for your time and attention,