



## Transportation Strategy Engagement Workshop

### Ernest Manning High School

April 6, 2016

25 Participants

Interests	# of Participants
My child takes transportation arranged by the Calgary Board of Education to get to school (yellow school bus, handybus etc.)	18
My child gets to school in another way (walks, private vehicle, public transit etc.)	6
My child attends an alternate program (language, Montessori, science, TLC) or complex needs program	8
I currently have no children in the Calgary Board of Education system	1



## Ernest Manning High School Flip Chart Summary

### Travel Distance

#### Preserve

- Max. Distance to P/U pt. 800-1000m.
- Maintain the minimum length walks for K-4 regardless of program.
- Why 1.6km for 5-11 year olds. There are 4 buses for Battalion Park with two stops each, more stops.
- Keep shorter walk zone of 1.6km for Grade 4-6 who attended a middle school (i.e. they should be bused if > 1.6km)
- Work with Calgary transit for efficient routes.
- Safety of route stops.
- Preserve same travel distance up to and including junior high.

#### Flexibility

- Longer distance to P/U pt. for older students.
- Fee increase acceptable to facilitate shorter travel distance (particulars for K-4 students).
- Try to lower ride times.
- Cost of service.
- Look at overflow school.
- Designated schools do not necessarily work in the direction of savings of transportation time.
- Change elementary travel distances to 1km.
- More efficient school planning so that CBE and parents don't have to deal with overflow schools.

#### Observation

- Alternative programs. Should expect longer travel distances compared to community 'programs'.



## Bus Ride Time

### Preserve

- K-6 Ride Times -> don't increase them.
- Average is 34 min out what's the max? Currently 50 min average for my public school for K + G1 -> that's a long drive on major roads. I'd like to try and shorten the max times to get average down. Current route was split into 2 and time dropped by 15mins this year which was good.
- For sure older kids can handle longer routes but should be minimized for K-4.
- Ride times last year was also impacted by service provider – driver showing up late or not at all, bus breaking down, etc. Again priority should be given to K-4.

### Flexibility

- Combine with other schools in area.
- Regardless of school board (i.e. CBE, CSSD).
- Elementary/Junior – Junior/Senior.
- If offering an alternative program, centralize in encatchment area (i.e. gate south is more S.W. - > centralize in Fairview area).
- 50min is an acceptable amount of time for elementary children.
- Distance vs. time which is the better metric? Distance is fixed, time variable.
- Fixed distance to designated: regular programs – overflow – F. Immersion.



### Eligibility for Ridership

#### **Preserve**

- Keep yellow buses for designated regular programming, overflow and French for K-6.
- Keep walk zone for 1.6km for grades 4-6 who attend a middle school (i.e. grades 4/5-9).
- Low price, high usage to minimize drop-off traffic at schools.

#### **Flexibility**

- Grades 7+ CTS.
- Increase size of walk zone.
- Specialized program user pay.
- Build schools in the middle of a community zone (rather than one end, eliminate bus zone in some cases (i.e. West Springs).
- Alternate program pay a small portion more per person.

#### **Observation**

- While I have no issue with this statement; this may put stress on community schools and create over-crowding. -> Then bussing to over flow schools will be required.
- There needs to be a “reset”. Student being bused out of zone to a school and student in walk zone bumped in to over flow schools should not happen. Siblings should not be allowed to be included if they are out of zone? – being bused in, this is what is causing more bussing needs.



### Bell Times

#### **Preserve**

- Align West Springs and West Ridge Middle School start times and bus routes within 15min.
- Preserve the married runs.
- Later start time for junior/senior high.
- Existing (9:10 am) start time for Olympic Heights.
- Schools with large encatchment area (i.e. South Gate program at Louis Riel...) Keep early start... Allows kids to get home at decent time.

#### **Flexibility**

- Alternating all day kindergarten to reduce mid day bus routes. (Times/Thurs or Mon/Wed and Fri)
- Eliminate early dismissal and keep a standard schedule.
- Congregate/stagger start/end times to do 3 pick-up/drop offs daily. (change start/end times of schools) – agree!
- No earlier 8:15am.
- No later than 4pm.
- Could the same laws bring a.m. km's home and pick up p.m. km's.



## Number and Location of Pick-Up Stops

### Observations

- Students shouldn't be on a bus longer than 30 minutes.
- Area transportation system has suffered from development without capacity in schools. People are going to alternative schools where there is no room in designated schools.
- Why does CBE not prioritize pick-ups from locations like day cares where multiple students would get on. It would be more efficient.
- Why 1.6m? Needs to be less for 5-11 year olds.
- Proper bus size/route. (e.g. bus has shown up full with parents waiting-then what especially if no parents.
- CBE should review the before and after care options at each school as that would reduce the number of children needing bus services. Currently, due to ownership /asset management situation, many schools cannot allow companies to operate such programs at the school facility.
  - Less stops.
  - On time.
  - Efficient.
  - Distances are shorter.
  - Opportunity in some distance 1km mark to walk with kids.
  - Green space and playground.
  - Current benefits.
  - Realistic walking distances.
- Walk should be no more than 10 minutes for an alternative program. 6 min for regular.
- Preserve number of steps and location.
- Max stops to ensure a doable route.
- Avoid idle bus times, improve efficiency.
- Yes we would pay more to have closer stops.
- Rates are very reasonable.
- Alternative program is ok to change a little more if bus is dependable and within designation.
  - >Do not have bus stop at Westside dangerous.
- 17<sup>th</sup> Ave by train not safe.
- Safe first on choosing bus stop example not at city bus transportation hubs.



### Access to Waivers

#### Preserve

- Access to waivers for those families who qualify. -> no point in increasing bad debts (charge folks that cannot pay)

### User Fees

#### Flexibility

- Full day kindergarten (for 3 days) would reduce transportation cost.
- Separate out transportation costs for different types of alternative programs.
- Alternative programs got used as over-flow schools with population growth – hence should alternative schools suffer the fee hike?

#### Observation

- Create a zone system (like Vancouver Transit) for alternative programs to acknowledge the true cost of busing. ->under 5km = fee 1 -> 5-10km = fee 2 -> 10-15km = Fee 3 - distance from school.
- Differentiate between those busing 1-2 neighbourhoods to alternative program and those busing across the city.
- Fees increase should consider the current bus pass price and the fact that Calgary Transit can operate routes for profit at \$65/\$105 per month. Calgary Transit has closed routes (redirected) several schools (e.g. West Springs, Coach Hill ect Children would go East on Bow Trail to 5 schools and walk less than 5 min to the school).



## Low Ridership Routes

### Preserve

- Schools/Programs being services (comm., alternative options).
- Maximum length of ride time maintained.
- Reliability of service.
- Quality of service (driver standards).

### Flexibility

- Bus size.
- Consolidating routes. (But don't forget ride time!)
- Congregation points (within reason).
- Increased fees (or cancel busing) to alternative programs.
- Review of taxi service.
- Charge fees reflective of the total number of students using the bus per day – low ridership routes should have a higher per person fee (use categories to reduce admin costs).
- Short turnaround time on routes announced at beginning of school year is unacceptable. Get on it sooner.
- Communicate - later than Aug 1.
- Tiered fees for alternative schools.
- Bike pods, walking, school bus, encourage fitness.
- Reduce the amount of alternative programming offered -> cost more for transportation and to administer.
- Promote walk zone -> promote as fitness initiative.

### Observation

- Combine elementary and middle school busing (i.e. West Springs + West Ridge only small number in bus zone for middle school).
- Encourage car pads on low rider routes and compensate for mileage.
- Offer incentives or closer drop off if carpool other kids.





**2 or 3 Year Implementation Plans:** *No input was received for this factor.*

**Other**

- Alternative school should charge higher bus routes as parents choice (as per increase of bus rates for charter schools).
- Leave transportation funds in transport budget. Do not take from other “less glamorous” older kids that were recently cut back.
- Encourage parents that do not work and cannot afford busing to drive their kids as accepting an increase in waivers only makes the situation worse. Working parents do not get the breaks.
- Hold an engagement meeting with bus drivers/companies who have experience in these areas! (to get further ideas)
- Survey models in other provinces if recognized as having a good solution.
- Survey charter/private schools to collaborate their bussing solution/routes, ect. As they are like alternative.
- Walk zones and weather dependent bike zones, what neighbourhoods can bike based on season?
- Alternating day kindergarten – busing efficiencies.



## Public and Parents Engagement Evaluation – Ernst Manning High School

To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements:

**P1) I was encouraged to share my thoughts and/or feedback during this engagement.**

13 Agree      5 Somewhat Agree      0 Somewhat Disagree      0 Disagree      0 Not Applicable

**P2) I was able to ask questions and learn about the opportunity for input/feedback prior to my participation in this engagement.**

16 Agree      1 Somewhat Agree      0 Somewhat Disagree      1 Disagree      0 Not Applicable

**P3) I had the information I needed to participate in a meaningful way.**

9 Agree      9 Somewhat Agree      0 Somewhat Disagree      0 Disagree      0 Not Applicable

**P4) I was able to provide input on the best way for me to share my thoughts and ideas.**

12 Agree      4 Somewhat Agree      2 Somewhat Disagree      0 Disagree      0 Not Applicable

**P5) I clearly understand all of the factors being considered in the decision making process and which of these factors I can and cannot influence.**

6 Agree      11 Somewhat Agree      1 Somewhat Disagree      0 Disagree      0 Not Applicable

**P6) My input was documented as part of the engagement process.**

14 Agree      4 Somewhat Agree      0 Somewhat Disagree      0 Disagree      0 Not Applicable



**P7) What did you like most about this engagement?**

- Interacting with parents and administration rather than just listening.
- I felt comfortable expressing my ideas easily.
- A good effort to a very tough problem.
- Nice to hear other opinions.
- Interactive! And small group.
- Small group discussions.
- Learning other stakeholders opinions and thoughts.
- Talking with CBE folks.
- Hearing other ideas.
- Providing opportunity for my input.
- Thanks for the opportunity.
- Being heard. I feel that the capacity issues has fallen on the shoulders of the transportation department. It's a no win situation and the CBE Transportation department is first class.
- Staff is knowledgeable and forthright in responses.

**P8) What did you like least about this engagement?**

- More time, less table switches.
- Could have used more time.
- Every individual has differing needs and it's hard to get consensus in a 'public type' forum.
- Difficult with diverse group, everyone has their own problem.
- Better to have 3 groups – elementary, junior/senior and alternative schools.
- More CBE representatives should have been on hand to sit at tables and hear feedback and discussion directly. Reviewing comments will not give the same benefit.
- Suggestion to provide high level introduction to frame the issue and provide background.
- Suggestion to provide fee information (historical, current and proposed).
- I feel the proposed approximate \$200/child increase X my 3 children I will experience after the increase is excessive. An extra \$600/year is about a 70% increase in 1 year.