



Transportation Strategy Engagement Workshop

Tom Baines School

April 6, 2016

30 Participants

Interests	# of Participants
My child takes transportation arranged by the Calgary Board of Education to get to school (yellow school bus, handybus etc.)	15
My child gets to school in another way (walks, private vehicle, public transit etc.)	17
My child attends an alternative program (language, Montessori, science, TLC) or complex needs program	15
I currently have no children in the Calgary Board of Education system	0



Tom Baines School Flip Chart Summary

Travel Distance

Preserve

- Max ride time – 34min K-6.
- K-6 – if it is alternative overflow then it should match the community school distance.
- Age is the main deciding factor.
- The younger the child the closer the stop.
- What does accessible mean?
- Access to choice.
- How do you get to stop or school?
- Current distances should be maintained and should be consistent across all programs.

Flexibility

- Program of choice: like TLC, Montessori, Science, All Girls, Sport school, etc. (French Immersion should be excluded)
- May have to accept a longer travel distance.

Observation

- Travel distances on bus should be directly correlated to distance or home from school, regardless of program.
- Must consider paved, cleared, walking route, not 'as the crow flies' through ravines or community paths that are not cleared in winter or lit.
- Safety of route and our unpredictable weather should be major consideration. Also the elevation change along the route (up and down major hills).
- Different distances could for alternative programs if parents are informed at the K level before starting down the path. Changes cannot be implemented once a child has started the program.



Bus Ride Time

Preserve

- 34min average ride time.
- Travel route – farthest to closest to school and then closest to farthest home. -> This doesn't seem to be consistently implemented -> would like reverse order on way home.
- Should be a maximum allowable time if you attend a school within your district.
- Yellow bus or designated transit routes should be shorter than the general transit.
- Should be a bus ride bias toward younger kids looked after first, but what age is the threshold for public transit?

Flexible

- Accept 10 or 15min longer for more bus stops in a neighbourhood due to safety.
- Add a stop if you drive past the stop to get to your starting point.
- Work with residential communities to set up car pool options for alternative options.
- Re-evaluate designated school boundaries – currently not necessarily the closest school.
- Re-evaluate walk zones -> create walking/community groups.



Eligibility for Ridership

Preserve

- Elementary - yellow bus.
- Alternate programs maintain CBE transportation.
- Maintain yellow bus and handi-bus for complex needs.
- Maintain conditional rides that pay fees if space is available.
- Need to consider siblings who've been grandfathered in as "eligible"

Flexibility

- Grade 7-9 – designated transit routes.
- Combine bussing with Catholic School Boards to manage cost and lower drive times and fill buses. Kids from common neighborhood share bussing to the schools.
- Perhaps different rules for programs in your area vs. across the city.
- Combine elementary and Jr. High kids from same area (stop on one bus) might help families – bigger ones walk little ones etc. Might require consistent bell times.
- If you are eligible for bus fee, should be same for all rides.
- Don't provide bussing to new subdivisions -> if you buy there you choose to drive your kids to school.



Bell Times

Preserve

- Early and late start.
- Partnered schools accommodate common non-instructional days.
- Later hours can be better for older grades -> more sleep.

Flexibility

- Coordinate early or late starts between 'designated' elementary/middle schools within the same neighborhood.
- Kindergarten bell times, more to Mon/Wed or Tues/Thurs from half days to save on busing.
- No bus pick-ups before 7am – no bus leaves school after 4pm.
- Jr. High should start later – not be the first bus route.



Number and Location of Pick-Up Stops

Preserve

- Maintain the elementary/jr high walking distances. Don't go closer.
- Maintain congregated stops.
- Preserve K-4 walk distance. More congregated stops -> middle school.

Flexibility

- Elementary kids closer. -> Safer for children that are more vulnerable.
- Assess the routes, so that elementary kids aren't crossing extremely busy roads (Beddington trail, etc).
- Stagger bus times at congregated stops.
- Organising "walking buses" for kids who go longer distances.

Observation

- Allow bids to other companies to offer transportation (low ridership).
- Look at Uber for a model as an option?
- Limit choice?
- Perhaps parents have too many choices for educational programming and now the CBE parents are paying the cost.



Access to Waivers: *No input was recorded for this factor.*

User Fees

Preserve

- No fees (as seen in other provinces).
- User fees should not restrict any child from school.
- Cannot affect quality of education.
- Fees should be the same regardless of whether they attend their regular school or alternative program.
- Pay per child, no family maximum on fees.
- More joined roots with CT?

Flexibility

- Keep status quo.
- If Calgary Transit would require a transfer to get to a designate school, regardless of which CBE program, CBE should have a designated bus.
- Fees should be equitable for transit riders and yellow bus riders and should not exceed current Calgary transit fees. (Yet can meet CT fees.)
- In the future, consider alternate (higher) fees for alternate programs and let parents know before entry to program (at K level, not midway).
- Encourage and foster a community-centered solution ->parents helping parents ->carpooling.
- Regardless of yellow or CT bus, increase Jr High bus fees to \$650 with the CT pass flexibility.



Low Ridership Routes

Preserve

- Transportation to all designated schools.

Flexibility

- Can we join forces with the Catholic Board to fill busses?
- If the lone student in a neighborhood that buses to another, maybe that student could be able to attend another school charged by CBE so that busing could be arranged.
- Flexibility considering siblings grandfathered to increase numbers at stops (decrease redundant travel expenditures).
- Congregating stops going to multiple schools within a close distance.



Two-Year or Three-Year Implementation Plan for Changes

Preserve

- Eligibility -> this could be preserved and not need to be changed.

Flexibility

- If change is slow to come – where is the funding coming from in the mean time and how does this affect teaching and learning?
- Possible changes – fees, distances, alternative setting services, ride times.
- **Travel distance:**
 - Increase in distance should be done slowly because parents are reframing pick-up times and walking routes ect.
 - Long term possibilities as infrastructure needs to be in place – i.e. crosswalks, lights, crossing guards. -> Not giant changes -> given a few months notice, parents should be able to prepare adequately for this change.
 - Dangerous road crossings need to be considered.
 - Grandfathered for different age student's affects practicality of accessing the bus stop -> gets up in am, leave house ect.
- **Bus Ride Time:**
 - Could happen quickly on bus for certain time. Might affect parents pick-up time and child care (after care).
 - Given enough prior notice – 6 months max, for example: students/parents made aware of changes in June for September (at least).
- **Number and Location of Bus Stops:**
 - By considering stops -> fewer buses needed and less lost to transportation.
 - Changes should be immediate but WELL COMMUNICATED.
- **User fees:**
 - Compare to other provinces -> taxes -> changes have to be concurrent and over long term -> could it be tiered for multiple children -> could this be determined based on ratio for student not attending designated schools.
- **Access to Wavers:**
 - If there is a quick large change is user fees, the changes to the waiver need to coincide.
 - Can't leave people in hardship -> making more waivers than bus fee payers because that would equal more gap/deficit.
- **Low Ridership Routes:**
 - If this is communicated clearly and in enough advance - i.e. 6 months, parents should be able to accommodate the change.



Public and Parents Engagement Evaluation – Tom Baines 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.

12 Agree 2 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.

8 Agree 5 Somewhat Agree 0 Somewhat Disagree 0 Disagree 1 Not Applicable

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

11 Agree 1 Somewhat Agree 2 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.

7 Agree 5 Somewhat Agree 1 Somewhat Disagree 0 Disagree 1 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.

9 Agree 5 Somewhat Agree 0 Somewhat Disagree 0 Disagree 0 Not Applicable

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

12 Agree 1 Somewhat Agree 1 Somewhat Disagree 0 Disagree 0 Not Applicable



P7) What did you like most about this engagement?

- The ability to talk and brainstorm with parents from other communities and programs in a calm, conversational manner. Hot topics, respectful conversations.
- Good opportunities to discuss with other parents. Great opportunities to ask questions of CBE staff and Trustee.
- Brainstorming with other parents.
- I thought the workshop was very respectful and very transparent.
- Opportunity to openly discuss different points of view re: all the factors.
- None of the CBE representatives were negative. They were all positive and very opening to listening. Thank you!

P8) What did you like least about this engagement?

- Would like to have visited more tables.
- There were many steps to register for session concerned it may turn others off coming.
- Somewhat chaotic even with table topics.
- Each factor is interconnected plus to other larger issues like capacity of schools in designated neighbourhood. How did we get to this point? Need to consider if things can be changed now?
- Not enough time.
- Could be longer.
- Where is the dollars coming from to fund an engagement from?
- How did we get to this huge gap?
- Could only participate on 3 due to time.
- Might have been better to discuss each as a group.
- A minimum of 6 required at a table, some topics not accessible.