



# SD45 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION REVIEW

ADOPTED RECOMMENDATIONS



*March 9, 2010*

*West Vancouver Board of Education*

# 16 Recommendations



At the March 9, 2010 public Board meeting, trustees moved to adopt a proposal that will implement cost reductions in transportation spending, while working with our three communities and TransLink to improve local bus transportation services for our students.

*The Board accepted the Transportation Review Committee's advice to adopt 13 (as amended), reject two, and defer one recommendation out of the 16 recommendations contained in the consultant's independent report.*

# Recommendation #1

The District adopt the Ministry walk limits. If Ministry walk limits are not acceptable to the District, an agreed set of District walk limits should be established. It should be recognized however that shorter walk limit distances would have a corresponding cost impact on the District.

## Committee Advice

- *The committee **supports** this recommendation. Implementation of these walk limits will provide greater control over the growing costs of student transportation and will provide a clear mechanism for determining eligibility for transportation. These walk limits are largely consistent with those currently enforced in most other school districts.*

## Board Approved?



- Yes (as amended)

# Recommendation #1

The District adopt the Ministry walk limits. If Ministry walk limits are not acceptable to the District, an agreed set of District walk limits should be established. It should be recognized however that shorter walk limit distances would have a corresponding cost impact on the District.

## Committee Advice

- *The committee further recommends that:*
  - ▣ *School District staff be available to assist any school district residents who wish to investigate a user pay system to continue current services. A slight majority (56%) of parents indicated that "they would consider contributing to a user pay system" when responding to the online survey;*

## Board Approved?



- Yes (as amended)

# Recommendation #1

The District adopt the Ministry walk limits. If Ministry walk limits are not acceptable to the District, an agreed set of District walk limits should be established. It should be recognized however that shorter walk limit distances would have a corresponding cost impact on the District.

## Committee Advice

- *School District staff continue to work with municipal staff in an effort to provide improved TransLink bus service to schools in West Vancouver and on Bowen Island; and*
- *In recognition of the unique rural setting that characterizes much of Bowen Island, that a working committee of Island residents and staff be established to consider new strategies that will facilitate student transportation to Bowen Island Community School that is both safe and cost effective.*

## Board Approved?



- Yes (as amended)

# Recommendation #2

Cross boundary students not be eligible for transportation.

## Committee Advice

- *The committee **supports** this recommendation, although respondents to the online survey were evenly divided on this question. The committee is clear in its belief that students choosing to attend a school other than their catchment school should be expected to walk, use public transportation, or be driven to and from that school.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes

# Recommendation #3

Students electing to attend programs of choice (such as French Immersion, International Baccalaureate, and the sports academies) outside their school catchment not be eligible for transportation.

## Committee Advice

- The committee **supports** this recommendation. Just over 50% of the respondents to the online survey agreed or strongly agreed with this recommendation, and the committee is of the opinion that the current Administrative Procedure (AP 550) should be enforced ("Transportation will not be provided for students who attend a program of choice").*

## Board Approval?



- Yes

# Recommendation #3

Students electing to attend programs of choice (such as French Immersion, International Baccalaureate, and the sports academies) outside their school catchment not be eligible for transportation.

## Committee Advice

- The committee further recommends that:
  - ▣ *District staff investigate alternative transportation arrangements for those students currently attending programs of choice and who would be required to leave this program if bus transportation were no longer available.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes



# Recommendation #4

Administrative Procedure 550 (Student Transportation) be revised to clearly establish who is eligible for transportation and who is not.

## Committee Advice

- The committee **supports** this recommendation, noting that this is best completed following a decision by the Board of Education regarding the Transportation Review.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes

# Recommendation #5

The District eliminate transportation to courtesy riders (students who live less than the walk limit to their catchment school).

## Committee Advice

- The committee **supports** this recommendation. Again, a slight majority (55%) of respondents to the online survey agree or strongly agree with this recommendation. Implementation of this recommendation will help to ensure that the school district is fully aware of which students are being transported, and may reduce the number of busses required.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes

# Recommendation #6

Consideration be given to changing the catchment school for Bowen Island students from West Vancouver Secondary School to Rockridge Secondary. Bowen Island students currently attend WVSS after Grade 7. If Bowen Island was included in Rockridge's catchment, transportation routes could be consolidated and simplified. Bowen Island students would spend less time on the bus and the possibility of missing the afternoon ferry would be reduced.

## Committee Advice

- *While the committee fully understands the rationale behind this recommendation from a transportation perspective, it is of the opinion that any decision to re-align school catchment boundaries should be made only after a thoughtful and carefully developed process that includes all stakeholders. It is the committee's understanding that such a process is just getting underway. As such, the committee suggests that this recommendation be **deferred**.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes—(*Deferred*)

# Recommendation #7

The Manager of Purchasing and Transportation be held accountable for the transportation budget. In order to do so, the Manager must have the authority and ability to refuse transportation requests that are not eligible.

## Committee Advice

- The committee **supports** this recommendation, and is confident that a revision of Administrative Procedure 550 will facilitate the Manager's ability to do so.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes

# Recommendation #8

If courtesy riders are allowed on the bus, the Administrative Procedure must be clear that courtesy riders are only allowed where there is space on an existing route; additional buses will not be added to accommodate courtesy riders; and courtesy riders may be removed because of lack of space or district reconfiguration of routes. It should be noted that once a student has been provided space on a bus, the "courtesy" is soon seen as a "right" and it is difficult to remove the student.

## Committee Advice

- As referenced earlier, the committee does not support the transportation of courtesy riders. Should the Board of Education approve Recommendation #5, this recommendation would **no longer be pertinent.***

## Board Approval?



- Yes

# Recommendation #9

- Bus passes be provided for all students who qualify for transportation.
- A list be maintained at each school of students who have been provided with a bus pass.

## Committee Advice

- The committee **supports** this recommendation. Parents responding to the online survey strongly support this recommendation (69%), and the distribution of school bus passes to eligible students would clearly identify for the bus driver and the School District those students currently being transported.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes (as amended).

# Recommendation #9

- Bus passes be provided for all students who qualify for transportation.
- A list be maintained at each school of students who have been provided with a bus pass.

## Committee Advice

- *The committee further recommends that:*
  - *Any costs associated with the development and distribution of these school bus passes be assigned to the parents of those students receiving transportation.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes (as amended).

# Recommendation #10

Principals be provided adequate notice regarding transportation changes so that they can work with their students, parents and community in order to investigate walking bus programs, healthy lifestyle initiatives and alternative ways for students to get to school.

## Committee Advice

- The committee **supports** this recommendation, and encourages the continuation of the significant efforts that have been made by parents, students, and staff at many schools to reduce the number of students being driven independently to and from school each day. The committee recommends that any changes to AP 550 begin in the 2010/11 school year.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes



# Recommendation #11

A District school catchment map be created. Within each school catchment, walk limit boundaries should be drawn.

## Committee Advice

- The committee notes that a new map has been prepared, and **supports** the recommendation that walk limit boundaries be included on this map should the Board of Education approve Recommendation #1.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes

# Recommendation #12

The School Locator and School Boundaries shown on the District website be corrected so that both provide the same information.

## Committee Advice

- The committee **supports** this recommendation.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes

# Recommendation #13

The catchments for Ecole Pauline Johnson and Ecole Cedardale be revised. Currently both schools show the entire School District as their catchment. This should be corrected so that their catchments do not qualify for transportation.

## Committee Advice

- *The committee **does not support** this recommendation. These two single track French Immersion schools have been designed to provide an intensive French language experience for children whose parents choose this program. This unique program of choice is available to any child living in any one of our three communities, but the committee recommends that transportation should not be provided for this program, even for those students living beyond the recommended walk limits.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes—(Does not support)

# Recommendation #14

Alternatives to providing transportation to International Students be considered. Home stay families could be selected closer to the school the student attends or transportation to school by the home stay parent could be a condition of the home stay contract.

## Committee Advice

- ❑ *The committee **does not support** this recommendation.*
- ❑ *Rationale:*
  - ❑ *In order to ensure a more even distribution of our International students, transportation to schools in the western portion of the community must continue to be provided. The large number of International students hosted by District 45 makes it difficult to locate a sufficient number of home stay families, and this would only increase should these families be required to transport these students to and from school.*
  - ❑ *The fee currently charged to International students each year is the highest in British Columbia. The committee would anticipate that this \$14,000 annual fee could cover bus transportation for these students.*

## Board Approval?



- ❑ *Yes—(Does not support)*

# Recommendation #15

Student transportation for the school year commence on the second day of school. Eliminate busing on the first day for all schools. (Busing may be required for Bowen Island students.) A number of school districts do not start busing until the second day. Each year, the district pays a premium for busing on the first day. Because the school day is reduced, bus schedules are revised. To accommodate the schedule, additional buses are required to provide service to a significantly reduced ridership.

## Committee Advice

- *The committee **agrees** with the spirit of this recommendation, but would vary the recommendation as follows:*
- **Suggested changes** to recommendation:
  - *Morning bus transportation on the first day of school be provided for eligible secondary school students (Bowen Island and Lions Bay). It is essential that students begin their new school year in a manner that allows learning to start as quickly as possible, and this is best facilitated by full student attendance on the first day. Secondary students told us clearly during the focus group discussions that they would be able to use public transportation to return home at their leisure.*
  - *Similarly, morning only bus transportation on the first day of school be provided for Grades 4 - 7 students living in Lions Bay, but attending Gleneagles Elementary School.*
  - *That no transportation be provided on the first day of school for students attending Bowen Island Community School, and that instead parents be asked to develop a plan to ensure that all students were able to attend the first day of school.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes

# Recommendation #16

Student transportation be reduced during exam week to reduce costs, where possible.

## Committee Advice

- *The committee **agrees** with this recommendation, and suggests that eligible students in Gr. 10 - 12 be transported in the morning only. This would ensure that all students are able to arrive at school in time for their examinations (9:00 am or 1:00 pm), but would have flexibility in their plan to return home on public transit. This suggestion came directly from students participating in the focus group discussion at each secondary school. This recommendation could be implemented in June 2010.*

## Board Approval?



- Yes

# Financial Impact

Recommendations	Cost Savings
Exam Weeks (2)	
First Day of School in September	
BICS Full Day Kindergarten Savings (2010/11)	
Reduction of One Bowen Island Bus	
Reduction of Service for West Vancouver Schools	
<i>Total Cost Savings:</i>	

