



ITEM 5A

To: **Board of Education**

From: Chairperson
Mike Murray

Re: **TRANSLINK CORRESPONDENCE**

Date: March 25, 2015
(Public Board Meeting)

Decision

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE

As part of the 2014/15 Preliminary Operating Budget the Board committed to review transportation services before the transportation services contract is renewed in 2015. Currently, the district runs 12 regular bus routes and 5 special needs routes. Regular buses have a capacity of 48 seats for secondary students and approximately 60 seats for elementary students.

Within the School Act, there is no requirement for the board to provide student school bus transportation service to and from school. Consideration will be given to discontinuing regular bus services as part of the 2015/16 Budget Process.

Attached is the response received from TransLink regarding School District No. 42's consideration of discontinuing regular school bus services in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board forward the correspondence received from TransLink to the Mayor and Council of Maple Ridge and the Mayor and Council of Pitt Meadows.

Attachment

Attachment



TransLink

400 - 287 Nelson's Court
New Westminster, BC V5H 4N2
Canada
Tel 778.375.7500
translink.ca

March 11, 2015

South Coast British Columbia
Transportation Authority

Paul Harrison
Purchasing & Transportation Manager
School District 42

Dear Mr. Harrison,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding School District No 42's consideration of discontinuing regular school bus services in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.

We have worked with a number other School Districts across the region that have or are considering implementing similar approaches to school busing. As a public agency, we share your interest in finding cost efficiencies in the face of budget pressures. With that context, we will be pleased to work with you to support identifying transportation solutions in the area. However we cannot replace the school buses you currently provide due to regulatory and funding constraints.

As the regional transportation authority, providing exclusive school bus service (similar to yellow buses) is not a part of our mandate. TransLink and our bus operating division Coast Mountain Bus Company (CMBC) are governed by the Motor Vehicle Act, which states that school trips can be provided only as long as they do not provide exclusive school-specific service. Any of our transit services must be a public route for use by all customers, not just students.

TransLink does want to instill in students the habit of using sustainable transportation modes: walking, cycling, and public transit. To promote transit use by students, TransLink can provide additional service to meet demand on existing routes when resources allow. These supplemental services are intended to accommodate overloads to ensure that regular bus services continue to have capacity, without experiencing pass-ups or overcrowding due to student-based ridership. Our ability to provide additional service currently is limited by funding availability, and so any increase in existing service requires a re-allocation of service.

TransLink already provides bus service close to many of the schools in School District 42. Pitt Meadows Secondary is directly served by route C41, which operates every 30 min during peak periods using a community shuttle vehicle with capacity for 24 passengers. That school is also within walking distance of Hammond Rd, which has frequent service at all times of day provided by routes 701 & 791, connecting to Lougheed Hwy and Dewdney Trunk Rd. Garibaldi Secondary is served by route 701, with some additional morning service already provided to accommodate school-related ridership. This bus route only provides access to the school from the west along Dewdney Trunk Rd.

The majority of the 13 school bus routes identified for cancellation by School District 42 serve outlying parts of Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge, areas that are not served by existing TransLink



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bus routes. Some of those areas for new service are identified in the Mayors' Plan for the region, however TransLink does not have funding to expand service and provide new routes into those areas at this time. As a result, most students currently using your school bus routes will not have any TransLink bus options available to them to access schools if you decide to cancel those services this year.

We'd be happy to put you in touch with our TravelSmart team, who has resources available to explore opportunities through carpooling, ridesharing, walking or cycling, as well as school-specific programs at www.travelsmart.ca. Further, there is benefit to the School District working directly with local municipalities on this issue. This could include discussions on roadway improvements to accommodate students who are able to walk or cycle to school.

Thank you again for contacting us in advance of this decision. We look forward to working with you to further the discussion. Please contact me for any further issues at 778-375-7822 or daniel.freeman@translink.ca

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Daniel Freeman".

Daniel Freeman
Manager, Transit Network Management
TransLink

400 - 287 Nelson's Court
New Westminster, BC V3L 0E7