

**Written Submission to the Board of Education**  
**Amy Bontron**

Subject: Save Maple Ridge School Buses

I am sending in my letter (and in hopes that it's not too late to be taken into consideration) to help with any possibility of saving the Maple Ridge School Buses. My children go to Whonnock Elementary, and will later attend Garibaldi Secondary. As there is no reasonable public transit (nor should elementary students be expected to take public transit), the only option we have is for me to find part-time employment or quit my job (which I cannot afford). As right now, my in-laws walk to the bus stop to pickup my kids, if there are no buses, I will no longer have this as an option as they cannot drive to the school every day in time for pickup. I also can only get to work on time by getting them on the bus and racing right to the office. As I cannot drop my grade 1 & 2 kids off before 8 a.m. (and never would), I cannot drop them off to school before work and am unable to start later. I could go on, but I'm sure you have heard many 'poor me' stories. School buses have been in our community for about 90 years. We bought in Whonnock knowing that we had this as an option. The fact that you are cutting expenses by getting rid of buses, is really beyond belief. I am agreeable to paying for buses, but \$150/month/child? This is a bit out of reach for most with more than 1 or 2 kids. The survey sent out was very unrealistic, as it did not even ask what people would be willing to pay; it seemed to me that it was more so that it could be stated that 'we tried, but didn't have enough people willing to pay'. I understand a budget is a budget and cuts are required, but there must be other areas that this can be accomplished.

The re-zoning of schools for high school, which parents have no control over is another huge reason that buses are required. You are going to send kids from Thornhill to Garibaldi, even though SRT is closer, and then tell parents that it's their problem to get their kids there? Likewise with kids being sent from the Albion area to schools further away due to numbers.

It's really disappointing to see how the people who need the assistance are just being left to 'figure it out' - we did not move to Whonnock and other rural areas and ask for a bus service to be implemented - we moved here, knowing it was already in place.

Please consider the hundreds of families you are affecting in SD 42 before you cut this services.