

## **Written Submission to the Board of Education**

**Anita Brierley**

**Subject:** Maple Ridge School Buses - Yes, Another Letter

Yes, another letter about the school buses being cancelled in Maple Ridge. One more letter from one more frustrated parent who wishes the Provincial (Premier, Minister of Education) and local government (Mayor, Council, MLAs), and the Maple Ridge School Board (SD42) would start putting a higher priority on access to education and the safety of **children** living in rural parts of Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, and Whonnock.

Let me get this right...School district 42 recently invited families of children who use the school bus to get to school to register to try to get into Albion Elementary. It said some spaces had been opened up and parents could try and get their children accepted at Albion (even though many of the children have been at Webster's/Whonnock since Kindergarten and don't want to leave). There are still new homes being built in the Albion catchment. When these homes are finished and families move in there may not be room in Albion Elementary (we are a few years away from a new Albion school) because the children who transferred to Albion are taking up spaces....all because the transportation for these same students was cancelled.

So in the end, the families moving in (at a rapid pace) next to and across the street from Albion may not get into Albion Elementary and will have to drive their children to either Webster's corners or Whonnock Elementary 9 kilometres away....the very same schools the original kids took the school bus to....Is it me or does this not solve the issue of transportation? We need a school bus to transport kids who live in the rural area period! We all know transit is not an option - the service in rural areas is almost non-existent and TransLink has said there are no plans to improve it.

Anybody supporting the cancellation of school buses (in Maple Ridge or any other school district with rural areas) or pointing the finger at others (and there are many in local and provincial government), should give their head a shake, re-direct financial resources for things that are less of a priority than our children (what higher priority is there?), and do the right thing - re-instate our buses!

Thanks.