

Written Submission to the Board of Education
Cheryl Gallagher

Subject: Save The School Buses - Maple Ridge

Greetings from Maple Ridge,

I am a parent of two children effected by the bus cuts to School District 42, Maple Ridge. When my husband and I purchased property in Whonnock, ten years ago, we researched the best community to raise our family. We took into consideration our commutes to work, the commutes for our children to school and many other relevant issues for our choice. We were concerned about the distance we were situated to the local high school, but were assured that it is the districts philosophy to ensure that all students have access to a school for a proper education. I looked into this philosophy and noted that it was written directly in the school act at that time:

1. PHILOSOPHY

The Board of Education ("Board") believes that it is their responsibility to ensure that appropriate student transportation is provided for eligible students to their catchment area school.

I rested comfortably with our decision to purchase acreage in our beautiful community, knowing that my children would rely on bus services to accommodate their education. Now, it has come to our complete surprise and dismay that this is not the case. We are told that bus services to our community have been completely cut. We are told that if we are not able to get our kids to school by any other means, that we should consider cyber school. This is outrageous! This is not what we expected from our ministry. My children live 14.2 kilometers away from the nearest high school. They are expected to make their way there themselves or stay home and take their courses online. As a teacher myself, I know the importance of our education system and value the learning that takes place in a "real" venue, with "real" people. This decision by the ministry to abandon my children and leave us "high and dry" is totally unacceptable. There must be another alternative??? Please advise.

Thank-you,