

NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BUSINESS COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING

INFORMATION SHEET

DATE: June 8, 2022
TO: Business Committee
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer
SUBJECT: Emergent Bussing Concerns

Background

This Information Sheet intends to bring the Board up to date on emergent bussing concerns that may have a service impact on our students in the 2022-23 school year. At this time no changes are being proposed. However, that could change if the strategies laid out below are unsuccessful.

Discussion

Similar to many other areas of the District and wider community, our bussing service has faced difficulty in recruiting staff. While the District has a strong contingent of long term employees upon retirement or other departures replacements have become increasingly difficult.

To address the issue, Facilities and HR have worked together to increase recruitment and visibility of opportunities in the District. They have also created new positions that allow for additional hours for employees with multiple skillsets. Ultimately, through these efforts and the commitment of our current staff we have been able to maintain service levels for the 2022-23 school year (including our swing space schools, although multiple routes were merged due to ridership and human resource availability).

If this trend continues staff are unsure if current service levels will be maintained. Service gaps could result in students waiting significant times to be picked up or if current ridership is maintained, changing to routes that create early drop offs to school and late pick ups from schools.

As noted, no current changes are being proposed. However, staff are currently reviewing the following options:

1. Continuing our recruitment drive;
2. Reviewing routes to determine whether any merger of routes is feasible; and
3. Determining the number of courtesy riders which we anticipate is approximately 8% of our total ridership (this is excluding students with dangerous walk routes). These students will likely be the first to be impacted. We note that the Frank J. Ney riders are all courtesy riders but would not be impacted without Board motion, which is not being sought at this time.

There is no Board action required at this time, but it is important for the Board and the community to be aware of the risk associated with human resource gaps in our transportation system.