



NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BUSINESS COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING

ACTION SHEET

DATE: May 10, 2022
 TO: Business Committee
 FROM: Mark Walsh – Secretary-Treasurer, Pete Sabo – Executive Director of Planning and Operations, Dale Burgos, Executive Director Communication, Privacy & Engagement
 SUBJECT: Transportation Administration Fee

Recommendation

The Business Committee recommends that the Board of Education of School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) institute a yearly administration fee beginning with bussing registrations submitted after October 1, 2023 for all students who register for the bus who are inside of the walk limits as set out in Administrative Procedure 512 including students who are bussed to specialized programming with the exception of Special Needs associated bussing and BCTEA related riders and that staff include an update in the yearly Transportation Update to the Board.

Background

At the February 8, 2023 Business Committee Meeting, the annual [Transportation Review](#) laid out the consideration of an annual registration fee for all bus riders in the school district.

Following that meeting staff have consulted with the community. This memo will outline the feedback and recommended next steps.

Community Engagement Plan

Utilize the community engagement webpage and include background information with instructions on how to participate during the consultation period: <https://www.sd68.bc.ca/board/community-engagement/>

Information on the community engagement period was:

- Emailed to all district staff via district email
- Emailed to all families via School Messenger platform
- Posted in district news
- Shared on social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram)

The consultation period began on April 3, 2023. The community had until April 14, 2023 to provide feedback by emailing consultation@sd68.bc.ca or through [ThoughtExchange](#).

Consultation Timeline

- Monday, April 3, 2023
 - Email to families
 - Social media posts
- Thursday, April 6, 2023
 - District news for staff
- Thursday, April 13, 2023
 - District News

Written Feedback:

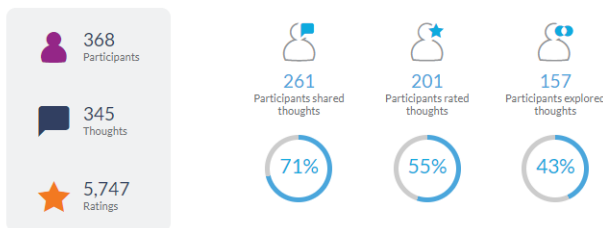
The district received 39 emails. The majority of emails were opposed to the implementation of the administration fee.

ThoughtExchange big question:

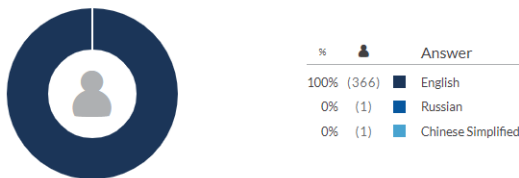
What are your thoughts on the district's consideration to address operational inefficiencies through the implementation of a \$25 annual registration fee for all registered bus riders?

Below is a summary of participants:

What are your thoughts on the district's consideration to address operational inefficiencies through the implementation of a \$25 annual registration fee for all registered bus riders?



- Participation languages



Three options to view the top thoughts and ratings:

- [Eligible Riders](#)
- [Courtesy Riders](#)
- [Non-riders](#)

Discussion and Next Steps

As a reminder of the 2,108 registered riders (47 accessible bus riders not included) an average ridership is about 808 each day in the morning and about 907 in the afternoon, which is an average of 858 riders per day.

As previously noted, the Transportation Department is challenged with predicting the number of buses required since registration does not reflect the number of seats actually needed. This also provides a challenge in planning the location of bus stops as it is difficult to know where students will load and/or unload. This affects the timing of the route and scheduled stop times. Routes may be longer than they need to be, meaning earlier pickup times and longer bus rides for students.

In reviewing the feedback there was generally an acceptance that the issue presented by staff is a legitimate one. However, there was also concern that the solution being proposed impacts just as many regular riders as those that register and fail to ride.

Given the feedback and the continued need to address the issue to maintain the system, staff are proposing the following steps:

1. The Transportation Department will closely monitor registration and usage of individuals riders over the 2023-24 school year and more actively enforce AP 512 with respect to removing inactive riders from routes. However, the Transportation Department will also provide communication and information prior to making a removal.
2. With the approval of the Board, effective October 1, 2023 any registrations of riders inside of the approved walk limits, with the exception of specific needs bussing and BCTEA related bussing, will be charged a yearly \$40 administrative fee subject to waiver due to financial circumstances.

This proposal is intended to respond to the concerns of the feedback while also attempting to address the issue. It should be noted that any applications received prior to October 1, 2023 (including courtesy) would not be required to pay this fee in the first year. This allows time for the Transportation Department to ensure the logistics of collection are in place and also to respect the fact that individuals have already applied for the 2023-24 school year.

It should be noted that the application of the administrative fee would impact riders that may be within walk limits but are bussed due to safety issues. The concern is that by removing these students from consideration would result in significantly increased requests for safety related bussing. Further, Board initiated routes that are contrary to AP 512 (either bussing to specialized programming or within walk limits) would also be subject to the administration fee.