



SCHOOL DISTRICT No.69 (QUALICUM)

June 12, 2009

A letter to parents and guardians of students in School District 69 (Qualicum) regarding changes to the District bus services for 2009-10:

Background

Maintaining transportation services has been an ongoing challenge for our school district. The funding for transportation from the Ministry of Education has remained frozen since 2002. Costs of providing this service have risen steadily since then.

Of more significance, a minimum of 5 buses must be removed from our current bus fleet as they have reached the end of their useful lives. Although the District has received replacements for these older buses, they have remained in our fleet to address requests from parents for additional service or stops on the routes.

The District can no longer maintain the current system.

Transportation Review & Board of Education Decisions

This year the Board conducted a complete review of its transportation services and held a public meeting to share that review. As a result, the Board has made several decisions changing the transportation system. The District is redesigning its entire system using the following criteria:

- Walk limits for kindergarten to Grade 5 will be a maximum of 3.2 kilometres.
- Walk limits for Grades 6 – 8 will be a maximum of 4.0 kilometres.
- Walk limits for Grades 9 – 12 will be a maximum of 4.8 kilometres.
- Transportation for students attending schools outside of their catchment area is the responsibility of parents, and in the past they have been advised of this when they apply for cross-boundary enrolment. The new routes will be designed to transport students to their catchment area schools only and transportation for cross-boundary students is not guaranteed for 2009/10.
- Pick-ups will be done using collection points, rather than individual stops for students.
- Collection points will be established taking safety concerns into consideration.

Walk Limits, Maps, Routes and Fees

To assist parents in determining whether they are within the walk limits, the District has drawn up maps showing the walk limits for each school. These maps are available at your school and on the District website, www.sd69.bc.ca under 'Important Bussing Information'.

As in past years, the full list of collection points (bus stops) will be made public near the end of August. The information will be published in the local newspaper on August 21, 2009, and will be posted on the District website.

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