

DATE: May 28, 2019

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: 2019-2020 Student Transportation Fees

ORIGINATOR: Dr. Lorne Parker, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE

STAFF: Alison Cheesbrough, Geoff Holmes, Christopher Wright

REFERENCE: [Bill 1: An Act to Reduce School Fees](#)

ISSUE

Annually, Student Transportation submits proposed fees to the Board of Trustees to review. At the May 22, 2018, Board Meeting, the Board of Trustees approved a fee increase of five per cent in each year remaining in the term of the present Board. While fees were increased by five per cent in September 2018, the Board voted to cover the fee increase for the 2018-2019 school year so that the amount charged to families remained unchanged (Attachment I). Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, families will begin to pay for both the September 2018 and the September 2019 increase (Attachment II). Fees are scheduled to increase an additional five per cent in September 2020.

BACKGROUND

Student Transportation is funded from two sources: provincial transportation grants and student transportation fees. In recent years, funding has fluctuated due to factors such as the inclusion and removal of the provincial fuel subsidy, enrolment growth and new school openings. For a number of years, carry-forward reserves accumulated through a combination of bus pass fees, operational efficiencies and provincial fuel funding were used to mitigate fluctuations and gaps in funding. In the 2017-2018 school year, due to increased ridership, all carry-forward reserves were depleted. Even after developing an extensive package of operational efficiencies totaling \$1.7 million for implementation in advance of September 2018, Student Transportation predicted a total funding gap of approximately \$4 million for the 2018-2019 school year.

The fee increase that was approved beginning September 2018, helped close the gap between funding and revenue by approximately \$375,000. As the Board of Trustees voted to cover the fee increase for parents in the 2018-2019 school year, this amount and the remaining funding gap was covered from District surplus funds. For the 2019-2020 school year, Student Transportation predicts a funding gap that will need to be addressed through a combination of operational efficiencies, fees and additional Board funding to avoid decreases to transportation services.

RELATED FACTS

- The last two fee increases paid by families were in the 2010-2011 and 2014-2015 school years. The 2010 increase represented an increase of 13 per cent on the elementary monthly pass price and 12 per cent on junior/senior high monthly passes. The 2014 increase represented an

increase of 11 per cent on the elementary monthly pass price and 15 per cent on the junior and senior high monthly pass price.

- The 2014-2015 bus pass prices have remained in effect through the end of the 2018-2019 school year.
- Yellow bus ridership has increased by an average five per cent annually and 33 per cent total since the last fee increase in 2014. The majority of the increased demand is from new and developing communities.
- Demand for special needs busing has also increased nearly 70 per cent since 2014. When these students also reside in new communities, ride times are increasingly exceeding Student Transportation service standards.
- Ridership on Edmonton Transit Service (ETS) has increased approximately 10 per cent since 2014.
- Since the September 2014 fee increase, the cost to the District for ETS passes has increased by \$6 (nine per cent) per student, per month. This cost has not been passed onto families.
- For 2019-2020, Student Transportation anticipates an increase in total ridership consistent with the District's forecasted enrolment growth of approximately three per cent. Student Transportation expects a significant portion of this growth to be accommodated with existing yellow bus resources, which will help limit increased costs.
- Operational efficiencies implemented in September 2018 which provide lower costs without erosion of service include:
 - A new yellow bus carrier contract that minimizes the impact of fluctuating fuel prices. The new contract contains predictable carrier rates until the end of the 2020-2021 school year.
 - Twenty-five bus routes using a shared transportation arrangement with Edmonton Catholic Schools. Sharing the cost of these routes results in annual savings of over \$600,000 for Edmonton Public Schools. All 25 of the shared routes are expected to continue in 2019-2020.
 - Working with schools to implement minor changes to bell times to allow more schools to share buses.
- For 2019-2020, Student Transportation has identified approximately \$500,000 in planned operational efficiencies that will maintain service and result in the increased utilization of existing resources.
- In total, approximately \$2.2 million in operational efficiencies will have been implemented between June 2018 and September 2019.

RECOMMENDATION

That the proposed 2019-2020 Transportation fee schedule be approved (Attachment II), as it reflects the Board's decision on May 22, 2018, to increase fees five per cent annually each September in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

If the recommendation to increase Student Transportation fees is approved, Student Transportation predicts an increase in fee revenue of approximately \$750,000. This, combined with planned operational efficiencies, means that Student Transportation will require approximately \$2.4 million in additional District funds for the 2019-2020 school year in order to avoid a decrease in service levels.

Additional considerations include:

- Although Student Transportation continues to search for additional operational efficiencies, further opportunities are not anticipated without a corresponding decrease in service levels.
- The projected funding gap is based on the provincial government continuing to fund enrolment growth. If enrolment growth becomes unfunded, the impact on Student Transportation funding grants is estimated to be approximately \$1.3 million.
- It is anticipated that the District will continue to receive the same amount of funding for the 2019–2020 school year to offset parent fees reduced following the implementation of *Bill 1*. The Provincial allocation is based on 2015–2016 enrolment and has not been increased to align with the District’s enrolment growth. For 2019-2020, it is estimated that overall District enrolment will have increased by nearly 14 per cent since 2015-2016.

NEXT STEPS

If approved by the Board, the new Student Transportation fees will be submitted to Alberta Education for approval before May 31, 2019. Once approved by the Minister of Education, the new fees will be communicated to school administration and families prior to the start of the 2019–2020 school year.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Approved 2018-2019 Student Transportation Fees

ATTACHMENT II Proposed 2019-2020 Student Transportation Fees

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Grade 1 to 6

2018–19 Student Transportation Fees



Fee increase to cover rising costs

Student Transportation fees increased 5 per cent this year and are projected to increase an additional 5 per cent each year until September 2020. The Board of Trustees voted to cover the increase for the 2018–19 school year. This means there won't be any additional cost to families this year; however, families will see an increase to transportation fees in 2019–20. For more information, visit epsb.ca/schools/gettoschool/buspasses/.

	Yellow Bus						ETS					
	Monthly			Annual			Monthly			Annual		
	Family pays	District pays	Total paid	Family pays	District pays	Total paid	Family pays	District pays	Total paid	Family pays	District pays	Total paid
Attending their designated school												
Students attending their designated school and reside 2.4 km away or more	\$0	\$0	\$0	–	–	–	\$18	\$1	\$19	\$180	\$9	\$189
Students attending their designated school and reside less than 2.4 km away	\$30	\$1	\$31	\$240	\$12	\$252	\$30	\$1	\$31	\$240	\$12	\$252
Not attending their designated school												
Students not attending their designated school regardless of distance	–	–	–	–	–	–	\$55	\$3	\$58	\$470	\$23	\$493
Students attending bilingual or immersion program	\$30	\$1	\$31	\$240	\$12	\$252	\$30	\$1	\$31	\$240	\$12	\$252
Students attending other alternative program (not bilingual or immersion)	\$55	\$3	\$58	\$470	\$23	\$493	\$55	\$3	\$58	\$470	\$23	\$493
Special education needs curb service												
Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and students from Grade 1 to 12 with special education needs who are unable to use regular bus routes	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	–	–	–	–	–	–
Conditional riders (Kindergarten to Grade 12)												
	\$55	\$3	\$58	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Replacement cost (lost or stolen)												
	\$6	\$0	\$6	–	–	–	\$75	\$0	\$75	–	–	–
Family maximum (applies to Grade 1 to 6 only)												
Students attending designated school	\$72	\$4	\$76	\$570	\$28	\$598	\$72	\$4	\$76	\$570	\$28	\$598
Students attending bilingual or immersion program	\$72	\$4	\$76	\$570	\$28	\$598	\$72	\$4	\$76	\$570	\$28	\$598
Students attending other alternative program (not bilingual or immersion)	\$135	\$7	\$142	\$1149	\$57	\$1206	\$135	\$7	\$142	\$1149	\$57	\$1206

For more information, please contact **Student Transportation at 780-429-8585** or talk to your school.

ANNUAL PASS

- Annual yellow bus passes look different than monthly passes.
- Annual passes must be paid in full at the school office by September 14, 2018.

EDMONTON TRANSIT PASSES

- Students enrolled at a District elementary, junior high or senior high school can purchase an ETS bus pass at their school.
- Passes are valid for unlimited travel on Edmonton Transit, including statutory holidays.

- Students can buy a replacement ETS pass at their school, or request a free replacement for a damaged ETS pass by turning in an identifiable piece of the damaged pass.

Grade 7 to 12

2018–19 Student Transportation Fees



Fee increase to cover rising costs

Student Transportation fees increased 5 per cent this year and are projected to increase an additional 5 per cent each year until September 2020. The Board of Trustees voted to cover the increase for the 2018–19 school year. This means there won't be any additional cost to families this year; however, families will see an increase to transportation fees in 2019–20. For more information, visit epsb.ca/schools/gettoschool/buspasses/.

	Yellow Bus						ETS					
	Monthly			Annual			Monthly			Annual		
	Family pays	District pays	Total paid	Family pays	District pays	Total paid	Family pays	District pays	Total paid	Family pays	District pays	Total paid
Attending their designated school												
Students attending their designated school and reside 2.4 km away or more	\$0	\$0	\$0	–	–	–	\$18	\$1	\$19	\$180	\$9	\$189
Students attending their designated school and reside less than 2.4 km away	\$55	\$3	\$58	\$470	\$23	\$493	\$55	\$3	\$58	\$470	\$23	\$493
Grade 7-9 students continuing to attend the same designated school as attended in elementary and reside less than 2.4 km away	\$30	\$1	\$31	\$240	\$12	\$252	–	–	–	–	–	–
Not attending their designated school												
Students not attending their designated school regardless of distance	–	–	–	–	–	–	\$55	\$3	\$58	\$470	\$23	\$493
Special education needs curb service												
Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and students from Grade 1 to 12 with special education needs who are unable to use regular bus routes	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	–	–	–	–	–	–
Conditional riders (Kindergarten to Grade 12)												
	\$55	\$3	\$58	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Replacement cost (lost or stolen)												
	\$6	\$0	\$6	–	–	–	\$75	\$0	\$75	–	–	–

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**Proposed 2019-2020 Transportation Fees
Grades 1-6**

	Yellow Bus						ETS					
	Monthly			Annual			Monthly			Annual		
	September 2014 Fee	Increase	September 2019 Fee	September 2014 Fee	Increase	September 2019 Fee	September 2014 Fee	Increase	September 2019 Fee	September 2014 Fee	Increase	September 2019 Fee
Attending their designated school												
Students attending their designated school and reside 2.4 km away	\$0	-	\$0	-	-	-	\$18	\$1	\$19	\$180	\$10	\$190
Students attending their designated school and reside less than 2.4 km away	\$30	\$3	\$33	\$240	\$20	\$260	\$30	\$3	\$33	\$240	\$20	\$260
Not attending their designated school												
Students not attending their designated school regardless of distance	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$55	\$5	\$60	\$470	\$45	\$515
Students attending bilingual or immersion program	\$30	\$3	\$33	\$240	\$20	\$260	\$30	\$3	\$33	\$240	\$20	\$260
Students attending other alternative program (not bilingual or immersion)	\$55	\$5	\$60	\$470	\$45	\$515	\$55	\$5	\$60	\$470	\$45	\$515
Special education needs curb service												
Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and students from Grade 1 to 12 with special education needs who are unable to use regular bus routes	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conditional riders (Kindergarten to Grade 12)												
	\$55	\$5	\$60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Replacement cost (lost or stolen)												
	\$6	\$0	\$6	-	-	-	\$75*	-	\$75	-	-	-
Family maximum (applies to grade 1-6 only)												
Students attending designated school	\$72	\$8	\$80	\$570	\$55	\$625	\$72	\$8	\$80	\$570	\$55	\$625
Students attending bilingual or immersion program	\$72	\$8	\$80	\$570	\$55	\$625	\$72	\$8	\$80	\$570	\$55	\$625
Students attending other alternative program (not bilingual or immersion)	\$135	\$15	\$150	\$1,149	\$101	\$1,250	\$135	\$15	\$150	\$1,149	\$101	\$1,250

*updated in Sep 2018

**Proposed 2019-2020 Transportation Fees
Grades 7-12**

	Yellow Bus						ETS					
	Monthly			Annual			Monthly			Annual		
	September 2014 Fee	Increase	September 2019 Fee	September 2014 Fee	Increase	September 2019 Fee	September 2014 Fee	Increase	September 2019 Fee	September 2014 Fee	Increase	September 2019 Fee
Attending their designated school												
Students attending their designated school and reside 2.4 km away	\$0	-	\$0	-	-	-	\$18	\$1	\$19	\$180	\$10	\$190
Students attending their designated school and reside less than 2.4 km away	\$55	\$5	\$60	\$470	\$45	\$515	\$55	\$5	\$60	\$470	\$45	\$515
Grade 7-9 students continuing to attend the same designated school as attended in elementary and reside less than 2.4 km away	\$30	\$3	\$33	\$240	\$20	\$260	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not attending their designated school												
Students not attending their designated school regardless of distance	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$55	\$5	\$60	\$470	\$45	\$515
Special education needs curb service												
Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and students from Grade 1 to 12 with special education needs who are unable to use regular bus routes	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conditional riders (Kindergarten to Grade 12)												
	\$55	\$5	\$60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Replacement cost (lost or stolen)												
	\$6	\$0	\$6	-	-	-	\$75*	-	\$75	-	-	-

*updated in Sep 2018