



Developing a CBE Master Transportation Strategy Summary of What We Heard May 30, 2016

The Process

The CBE faces a \$13 million budget gap for transportation services for the 2016-17 school year. Without changes to transportation service levels and/or user fees, that gap is expected to grow into the future.

An engagement plan was finalized in early March 2016 that identified a collaborative problem solving process involving all CBE stakeholders in finding ways to establish financial sustainability for transportation services. Input was gathered from CBE community members on the CBE Master Transportation Strategy through the following opportunities:

- 300+ participants in 17 in-person workshops March 15 & April 6, 7 and 12 (15 for all participants and 2 specifically for staff)
- 1,600 responses to online survey open April 6 – 17, 2016
- 41 participants in two community forums May 3 and 4
- 1,750+ responses to online scenario survey open April 29 – May 8

In addition, there was a scenario-building workshop on April 21 involving members of the Transportation Engagement Advisory Committee (TEAC), CBE staff and some participants from the in-person workshops in April. Out of that workshop, there were three transportation scenarios that could be presented to the public for consideration. Following the workshop, CBE staff also took a closer look at the scenarios that were proposed and added some additional options for consideration and discussion.

All information presented in the above engagement opportunities was informed by a review undertaken by School Bus Consultants (SBC), a neutral third party who conducted an assessment of the overall effectiveness and efficiency of current CBE transportation services. Their results showed that, while some efficiencies can be found, they are not sufficient to materially close the transportation budget gap.

Though all members of the CBE community were invited to participate, some groups are better represented than others in this process.

What We Heard

The input and feedback gathered throughout the engagement process shows us that there are differing perspectives on transportation services. However, some common themes did emerge that should be considered in decision-making. They are as follows:

1. Minimize travel distance to the bus stop for younger students
2. Keep fee increases modest

3. Acknowledge that there are opposing views about how program choice should be considered
4. Recognize that mid-day kindergarten service is highly valued, but there may not be a clear understanding of the cost
5. Share transportation information as early as possible with families
6. Explore a fuller partnership with Calgary Transit
7. Avoid using funds allocated for student learning on transportation
8. Allow partial payment for waivers
9. Communicate guidelines for bus stop locations, route design and responsibilities for student safety

Though it was not a factor for consideration within the scope of this engagement, many participants made a point of stating that students with complex learning needs should pay the same fees as other students.

When asked about [specific scenarios](#) in an online survey, this was the overall response. For comparison purposes, we were also able to look at the responses from specific segments of our population (area of the city, regular or alternative program etc.). Full details on all these scenarios are available at the link above or web address listed below.

Scenario 1	41% support and 56% opposition
Scenario 2	66% support and 31% opposition
Scenario 3	45% support and 53% opposition
Scenario 4	17% support and 81% opposition
Scenario 5A	13% support and 84% opposition
Scenario 5B	32% support and 65% opposition

Scenarios were also discussed at the community forums on May 3 and 4.

Next Steps

We have reviewed and analyzed all of the input and feedback gathered throughout this process and will consider it in our decision-making for 2016-17 and beyond.

By May 31: Superintendents' Team will communicate decisions about transportation for 2016-17

By June 30: Direction the CBE will be taking towards finalizing a long-term strategy (to outline changes to CBE transportation services and/or fees in order to establish financial sustainability) will be announced. Some aspects of the long-term strategy will require more exploration and evaluation before any final decisions can be made.

More Information

The full reports, scenarios and notes of what we heard on each of the surveys and at in-person sessions can be found on our website: cbe.ab.ca/transportationdialogue.