

DATE: January 20, 2015

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Early Learning Students Reassessment and Transportation Costs (Response to Request for Information #068)

ORIGINATOR: Dr. Lorne Parker, Acting Executive Director, Infrastructure

RESOURCE STAFF: Carolyn Baker, Heather Raymond, Christopher Wright

REFERENCE: November 4, 2014 Board Meeting (Trustee Draper)

ISSUE

The following information was requested: Provide information regarding how many early learning students have a reassessment in their coding moving from severe to mild/moderate from one year to the next, and of those, how many access transportation (this could be based on trend or average for the past few years). What would that translate in transportation costs for those children for one year?

BACKGROUND

Curb service busing is provided at no cost for children approved for Program Unit Funding (PUF) by Edmonton Public Schools. Costs related to busing PUF children are partially recovered through the Early Childhood Services (ECS) curb service transportation grant. The balance of the costs can be claimed under the PUF budget, given the children are eligible for PUF funding.

By way of current interpretation of the Funding Manual by Alberta Education, children who are not eligible for PUF funding and cannot demonstrate a need for curb service busing (ie. significant mobility delay, etc.) are not eligible for submission on the ECS curb service transportation grant. The District cannot recover transportation costs from the PUF budget for children who do not qualify for PUF funding.

CURRENT SITUATION

It should be noted that district practice is when a student's coding changes from severe to Mild/Moderate (M/M), the option for programming is maintained for the child at the Early Education site even though PUF funding is no longer received.

The number of children having a reassessment and moving from PUF funding to M/M funding attending an Early Education site is as follows:

	September 30, 2012 Enrolment count		September 30, 2013 Enrolment count		September 30, 2014 Enrolment count	
Number of children reassessed from PUF to M/M.	17	2.4%	14	1.8%	7	0.8%

Currently, Student Transportation transports approximately 85 per cent of the children attending Early Education sites. The historical average is a similar percentage.

Based on the assumption that 85 per cent of the children attending an Early Education site are bused, the cost to transport children that transitioned from meeting PUF eligibility to qualifying for M/M funding over the past three years would be:

2011-2012: \$45,000
2012-2013: \$40,000
2013-2014: \$22,000

Additional Context

A number of years ago, district curb service to Early Education sites included as many as +/- eight per cent of children that did not qualify for PUF funding. Children with M/M coding were included on the Alberta Transportation curb service grant. In 2010, Student Transportation was notified by Alberta Education that, "...The general rule is that only PUF funded students riding a special transportation bus/taxi/aide because their disability prevents them riding regular transportation are eligible for ECS Special Transportation."

A similar M/M percentage of riders today, based on a total ridership of approximately 800 children to Early Education sites, would translate into approximately \$200,000 to \$250,000 in unfunded costs if a precedent was re-established.

ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES

N/A

CW:gm