

DATE: October 21, 2014

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Student Transportation Average Ride Times (Response to Request for Information #052)

ORIGINATOR: David Fraser, Executive Director, Corporate Services

RESOURCE STAFF: Lorne Parker, Christopher Wright

REFERENCE: September 16, 2014 Board Meeting (Trustee Hoffman)

ISSUE

Provide information on the current minimum, maximum and average ride times for:

- Regular yellow bus services
- Alternative program yellow bus service
- Special needs yellow bus service

BACKGROUND

Annually, Student Transportation assesses ride times in order to inform resource allocation and any revisions to route design that may be required. Ride times are considered in relation to a number of integral factors such as program distribution, planned urban development, school designations, traffic congestion, the distance a student is required to walk to a bus stop, provincial funding, fees charged to parents through the sale of bus passes, and the ride time design parameters for different program types.

The District's cornerstone values of equity and accountability provide the lens through which a review of ride times is conducted.

CURRENT SITUATION

In total, approximately 10,800 students currently access yellow bus services. This results in approximately 18,630 one-way ride times which are analyzed in order to produce the ride time summary.

Ride times are summarized in Attachment I. A distribution of ride times is captured in Attachment II.

KEY POINTS

Considerations related to ride time data:

- 66 per cent of all yellow bus ride times are 30 minutes or less.
- 3 per cent of all yellow bus ride times are currently over 60 minutes.
- Ride times for students, routed by contract carriers, is being prepared for submission to Student Transportation. Approximately 950 out of 10,800 yellow bus riders (8.8 per cent) are routed by carriers.

Additional context:

- Previous Edmonton Public Schools in-house ride time summaries indicated similar overall ride time averages (25 - 28 minutes), but did not include approximately 200 special needs curb service routes now designed by Student Transportation planners. Factors such as an increased rate of urban development, lack of new school construction, and the 2014 District Accommodation Plan have also been incorporated into the overall service design without major implications on average ride times.
- Average load significantly influences ride times. The Edmonton Public Schools average rider count remains similar to previous years at 35 on buses with 72 passenger capacity. Kindergarten noon average load is 10 riders. Special needs average load is 10 riders on buses that typically accommodate 18 - 24 riders.
- In order to ensure integrity in route design and increase overall accountability, GPS technology has been incorporated for all routes designed by Student Transportation planning staff. The initiative evolved as a result of close collaboration with District Technology.

ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Summary of Ride Times

ATTACHMENT II Distribution of Ride Times

CW:em

| Program Type | Avg. One-Way Ride (Minutes) | Minimum | Maximum | Comments |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------------------|
| REGULAR (DESIGNATED SCHOOL) | 16.4 | 1.0 | 85.0 | **See Below |
| ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS | | | | |
| CHOICE | 30.3 | 1.0 | 80.0 | Single rider (1-way) |
| LANGUAGE | 31.0 | 2.0 | 82.0 | 2 Riders |
| SPECIAL NEEDS | 28.7 | 1.0 | 84.0 | 2 Riders - both out-of-zone |
| EARLY ED | 33.1 | 1.0 | 83.0 | 4 Riders - all out-of-zone |
| CONDITIONAL RIDERS | 30.2 | 2.0 | 80.0 | |
| Totals | | | 25.6 | |

Comments Regarding Regular Program Ride Times:

**One additional bus will be incorporated into the November route changes in order to remedy a single school with ride times to the designated school in excess of 60 minutes. Following the November 19 change date, only six 1-way ride times will remain over 60 minutes - all accessing service from rural addresses (0.001% of ride times).

