

DATE: January 23, 2018

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Edmonton Student Transportation Authority (ESTA)

ORIGINATOR: Dr. Lorne Parker, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE STAFF: Christopher Wright

REFERENCE: [February 12, 2013 Board Report – Motion re Joint Transportation Plan Feasibility](#)
[March 18, 2014 Board Report – Edmonton Student Transportation Authority Feasibility Study](#)
[Student Transportation Regulation AR 102/2017](#)
[Bill 1: An Act to Reduce School Fees, 2017](#)
[Bill 28: School Amendment Act, 2017](#)

ISSUE

Through motions in 2013 and 2014, the Board of Trustees requested that administration collaborate with the Edmonton Catholic School District administration to explore the feasibility of a shared student transportation system. Negotiations have progressed and studies have indicated the potential for cost savings and operational efficiencies.

BACKGROUND

On February 12, 2013, Trustees approved the following motion: *That Edmonton Public Schools carry out a feasibility study in conjunction with Edmonton Catholic Schools on a joint transportation plan that would improve efficiency, reduce ride times and reduce costs for both districts. This study should be complete by January 31, 2014.*

Following the February 2013 motion, administrations in both jurisdictions collaborated to review the feasibility of a joint student transportation system. On March 18, 2014, administration reported to Trustees on the results of the Edmonton Student Transportation Consortium Model Feasibility Study. The study showed that an Edmonton student transportation consortium was feasible and that financial savings and operational improvements could be achieved through the creation of a student transportation consortium model. The following motion was approved at the March 18, 2014 Board meeting: *That the Edmonton Public School Board and Edmonton Catholic School District enter into an Agreement in Principle and initiate Phase I of detailed design and implementation, as referenced in the Feasibility Study.*

Following the detailed design effort, senior administration from Edmonton Public Schools and Edmonton Catholic Schools collaborated to discuss the potential creation of ESTA. The establishment of ESTA will focus solely on the shared transportation of students. ESTA will not grant either school board any authority to govern over the educational and operational services of the other school board.

RELATED FACTS

- On June 5, 2017, Bill 1: *An Act to Reduce School Fees, 2017* was proclaimed into force with the intent to:
“...[reduce] the financial burden that school and transportation fees place on Alberta families; ...”
- On September 1, 2018, section 8 of Bill 28: *School Amendment Act, 2017* comes into force. It will include the following provision:
“Where in the opinion of the Minister it is reasonable to do so, the Minister may direct 2 or more boards to co-operate with respect to the transportation of students, and may, without limiting the foregoing, direct the boards to enter into specific transportation arrangements.”

RECOMMENDATION

That the Edmonton Public School Board authorizes administration to conclude ESTA negotiations with Edmonton Catholic Schools, with the intent to finalize the agreements and implement as much of Phase 1 as possible for the 2018-2019 school year.

OPTIONS

Based on the information provided in this report, the following options are considered most appropriate:

1. Approve the recommendation.
2. Not approve the recommendation and continue with the current service delivery model.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval of this recommendation:

- Administration will contact Edmonton Catholic Schools’ administration to schedule meetings for the purpose of concluding negotiations.

CW:kk