

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 8, 2007

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee D. Colburn, Planning and Policy Committee
Trustee D. Fleming, Chair Planning and Policy Committee
Trustee S. Hansen, Planning and Policy Committee
Trustee W. Keiver, Planning and Policy Committee

SUBJECT: Transportation Services Policy Review EEA.BP

ORIGINATOR: C. McCabe, Executive Director

RESOURCE
STAFF: Jenise Bidulock, Dorothy Sombach

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the revision of Board Policy EEA.BP – Student Transportation Policy be introduced.
2. That the revised Board Policy EEA.BP – Student Transportation Policy be considered for the first time.
3. That the revised Board Policy EEA.BP – Student Transportation Policy be considered for the second time.

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Rationale

Transportation Services Policy EEA.BP was last reviewed in 1990. The intent of the revised Student Transportation Policy EEA.BP (Appendix I) is to guide the users and staff in the implementation of transportation for the district. Statements shown in bold have been added and wording deletions are shown with strikethrough markings.

The most significant change to the policy is the term for the call for proposals from at least every three years to at least every seven years. Over the seven year period, the initial contract of three years would consist of a series of one year contracts with rates pre-determined. After the initial three years, the district would have the option of issuing a request for proposals or negotiating the contract for an additional one year period up to a maximum of four one year periods. At the end of seven years, the district would be obligated to call for proposals with no further negotiations.

Negotiations with bus contractors are not completed until after provincial grants are announced and this has lead to a delay in determining budget expenditures and transportation fees until the end of the school year. The initial three year period block under this proposal promotes stability in predicting transportation expenditures and allows for early communication with schools regarding transportation fees and completion of budget.

While the district has issued a call for proposals every three years, the same five bus contractors bid on the proposal. There are a limited number of school bus contractors that can meet the district's transportation requirements. Negotiating the contract expenditures in the interim years of the three year period has never resulted in a call for proposals before the three year term is completed. Contracting with the same carriers for at least three years provides continuity of service to students.

A survey of surrounding jurisdictions determined that most are now awarding contracts ranging from five to seven years. Edmonton Catholic Schools term for their bus contracts is currently seven years.

Background

The Transportation Services policy review web-survey (Appendix II) was conducted in accordance with board policy review procedures and was open for input during the period February 22 to March 22, 2007. Seventeen respondents participated in the web survey and administration has, where relevant to the policy, incorporated the advice and input received from parents and staff.

The revised policy was presented at a meeting held in September of the Planning, Student Accommodation and Transportation Principal Committee. Principals did not have any concerns with the revisions to this policy.

Planning, Student Accommodation and Student Transportation staff reviewed the revisions and no changes were recommended as a result of the discussion. Student Transportation staff have been involved in drafting the revised policy with meetings being held in August and October, 2006.

A revision of the district Transportation Services Administrative Regulations EEA.AR will be recommended for approval by the superintendent after the new provincial funding formula for metro boards is in place (targeted for October, 2008). A number of the suggestions received from stakeholders will be considered during the revision of the district student transportation administrative regulation. Discussions with principals, planning and student transportation staff has been held around possible revisions to the administrative regulation related to this policy. Consultation will continue with staff and parents during the course of the development of a final copy of the revised district administrative regulation.

DS:sh

- Appendix I Copy of Proposed Student Transportation Policy Showing Revisions
- Appendix II Web Survey Feedback
- Appendix III School Act, Section 51
- Appendix IV Alberta Regulation 250-98, Student Transportation Regulation, School Act

Edmonton Public Schools Board Policies and Regulations

CODE: EEA.BP
TOPIC: Student Transportation Services

EFFECTIVE DATE: 09-1990
ISSUE DATE: 05-11-1991
REVIEW DATE: 06-1995

The board is committed to providing access to transportation for those of its resident students who are entitled to transportation under the *School Act and Alberta Regulation 250/98, Student Transportation Regulation*, or who are designated by the district to attend a specific school or program.

Further, in support of the district's philosophy of encouraging parent and student choice among schools and programs, the board may consider providing access to additional transportation services.

All ~~transportation services'~~ expenditures **for transportation services** will be recovered through provincial transportation grants and student transportation fees.

The board's goal for district-arranged transportation services shall be to minimize the number of students who have a one-way ride of more than 60 minutes.

At least every ~~three~~ **seven (7)** years, proposals shall be called for the provision of transportation services to district students. **Through the RFP process, bus contracts will be set for a three (3) year period with the option to negotiate contract rates for an additional one (1) year period up to a maximum of four (4) additional one (1) year periods.** ~~In the interim years, the administration shall attempt to establish rates with the contracted carriers.~~

Reference(s):

EEA.AR – **Student Transportation Services**

IC.BP - Student Accommodation

IC.AR - Student Accommodation

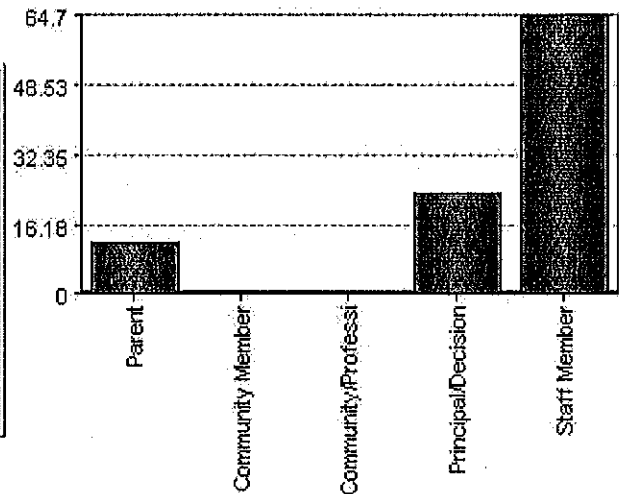
School Act Section 51

Alberta Regulation 250/98, Student Transportation Regulation, School Act

**WEB SURVEY
EEA-BP - STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**

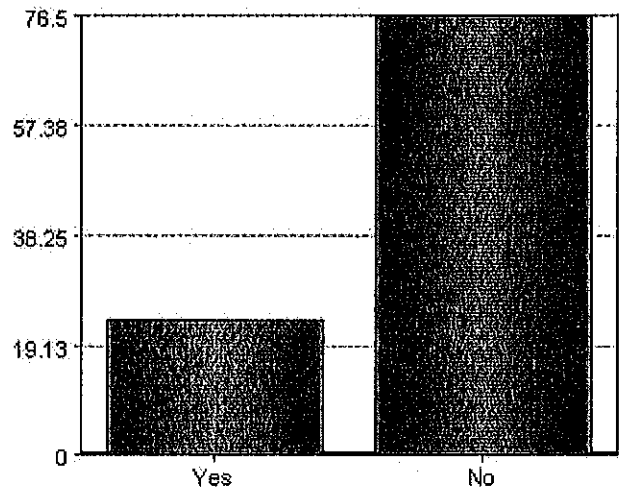
Question 1: Please select the one identifier that best describes the perspective from which you are providing feedback: (N=17)

Choices	Count	Percent
Parent	2	11.8
Community Member	0	0.0
Community/Professional Organization	0	0.0
Principal/Decision Unit Administrator	4	23.5
Staff Member	11	64.7



Question 2: Are there any aspects of the policy which require clarification? (N=17)

Choices	Count	Percent
Yes	4	23.5
No	13	76.5



Show "If yes, please list below."

Parent: This doesn't actually say what the policy is.

Principal/D.U. Administrator: What advantages come to us by a contract as long as 7 years? Doesn't this limit flexibility?

Staff Member: School Act-Why are you encouraging students in alternative language programs to look at other school systems who provide better service?

Staff Member: Reverse the order of the two sentences in the last paragraph -- refer to the call for proposals first.

Question 3: Are there elements which should be added in this policy? (N=15)

Choices	Count	Percent
Yes	5	33.3
No	10	66.7

Show "If yes, please list below."

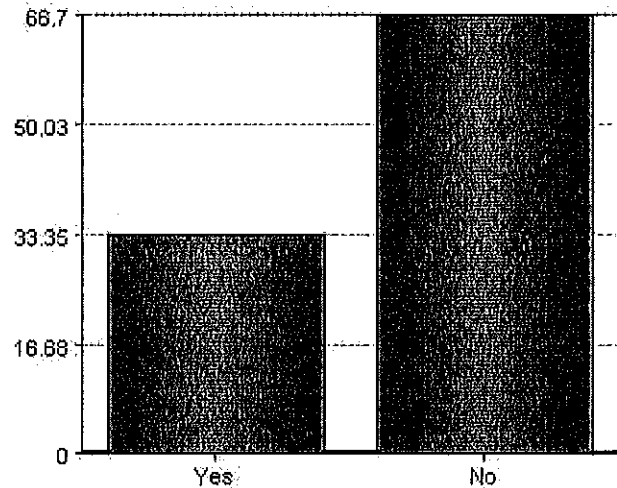
Parent: The policy should provide some overall guidance as to what level of transportation the school district is prepared to provide or facilitate for students. It seems the current practices (neighbourhood schools, designated neighbourhood, recently closed schools, junior high and senior high age students) are a complicated set of conflicting conditions that have evolved over many years. There doesn't seem to be a board policy that governs or specifies overall transportation service that parents should expect. Yellow bus service vs. ETS service is an example where the district seems to absolve responsibility once students use ETS services.

Staff Member: Students on school buses should have an I.D. card on their backpack with their name, address and phone numbers so that in cases of late drop offs, or lost substitute drivers, parents can be notified so as not to worry unnecessarily.

Staff Member: Why not door to door at this age (K-1)?

Staff Member: What about expectations for behaviour and conduct on a bus or could this be covered by a cross reference to the student behaviour policy. Transportation is a privilege which can be suspended -- subject to the same expectations of behaviour and conduct as in a classroom --

Staff Member: Does the district require the flexibility to cancel a contract for non-performance issues. Would that then require another round of tenders by all carriers?

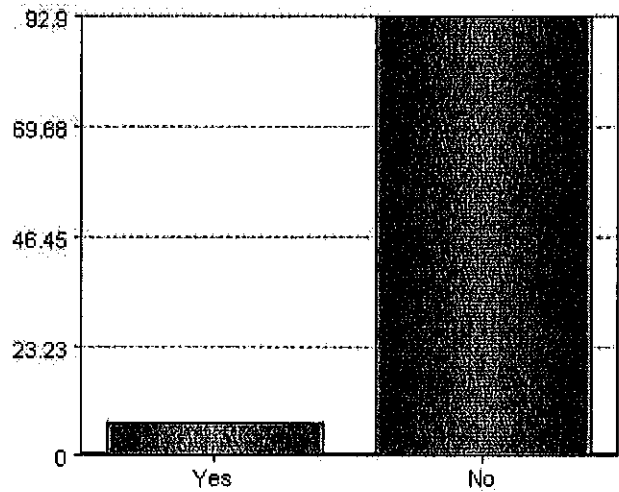


Question 4: Are there elements which should be deleted from this policy? (N=14)

Choices	Count	Percent
Yes	1	7.1
No	13	92.9

Show "If yes, please list below."

Staff Member: Different pick up and delivery sites should not be such an issue.



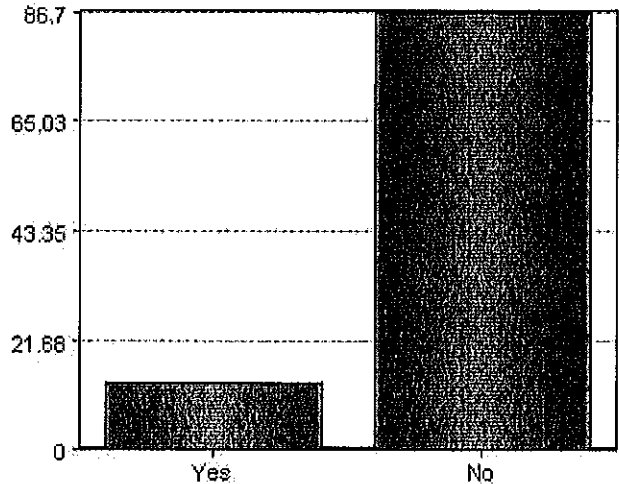
Question 5: Are there elements of the policy you think should be changed or altered? (N=15)

Choices	Count	Percent
Yes	2	13.3
No	13	86.7

Show "If yes, please list below."

Staff Member: Kindergarten children should not be on a bus for 60 minutes.

Staff Member: I think it would be beneficial for a staff person to ride on the bus, this would allow the driver to deal with driving and the staff person to support children



Question 6: Other points for consideration:

Principal/Decision Unit Administrator: When we set fees for transportation for students we need to be aware that many families cannot afford or will not pay this cost. An inner city school is left picking up the cost. Raising fees does take education dollars from schools. Also many of our families can not meet housing costs or food. This is very much an unfair tax on the poor as many of our families have no other way to get their children to school.

Staff Member: Delete FOIP for busing students.

Staff Member: How can we make parents feel welcome with this process?

SCHOOL ACT SECTION 51

Transportation

51(1) Subject to the regulations, a board shall provide for the transportation of a student to and from the site of the school in which the board has enrolled the student if the student resides

- (a) at a distance from the site of that school to be determined by the regulations,
- (b) within the attendance area established by the board under section 13, and
- (c) within the boundaries of the district or division.

(2) The board is deemed to have complied with subsection (1) when transportation is provided on a route that is not more than 2.4 kilometres from the residence of the student.

(3) Subject to the regulations, a board may charge the parent of a student receiving transportation provided by the board any fee determined by the board whether or not the transportation is provided under subsection (1).

(4) In computing distances for the purposes of this section,

- (a) the official survey made under any Act of Canada or the Legislature relating to surveys shall be accepted as final and conclusive and all sections are deemed to be 1.6 kilometres square and no more,
- (b) the width of road allowances shall be excluded from the computation, and
- (c) the distance of a residence from a school or from a bus route is the shortest distance measured along a travelled road or public right of way between the school site or the bus route, as the case may be, and the nearest roadway access at the boundary of the quarter section or lot on which the student's parent resides.

(5) The Minister may make regulations respecting the transportation of students.

1988 cS-3.1 s34;1990 c36 s17;1994 c29 s16;1995 c27 s6;
1997 c25 s10;1999 c28 s10

Transport by parent

52(1) A board may, instead of providing transportation under section 51, enter into an agreement with the parent of the student under which the parent will

- (a) convey the student to and from school or the bus route, and

(b) receive, in accordance with the rules of the board, payment for providing that service.

(2) A board is not under any liability to the parent of a student or to a student for negligence arising out of the student's being conveyed to and from a school or bus route pursuant to an agreement made under this section.

1988 cS-3.1 s35

(Consolidated up to 125/2005)

ALBERTA REGULATION 250/98

School Act

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION REGULATION

Table of Contents

- 1** Definitions
- 2** Minimum distance from school
- 3** Student in need of special education program
- 4** Student residing outside areas
- 5** Limit on fee for transportation
- 6** Repeal
- 7** Expiry

Definitions

1 In this Regulation,

(a) "Act" means the *School Act*;

(b) "attendance area" means an attendance area established under section 13 of the Act;

(c) "transportation service area" means the area surrounding a school in which a board establishes school bus routes by which students may be transported to and from the site of the school.

AR 250/98 s1;251/2001

Minimum distance from school

2 For the purposes of section 51(1)(a) of the Act, a board shall provide for the transportation of a student to and from the site of the school in which the board has enrolled the student if the student resides 2.4 kilometres or more from the school.

AR 250/98 s2;251/2001

Student in need of special education program

3 If a student is entitled to a special education program under section 47 of the Act but does not reside in the attendance area for a school that provides a special education program that is suitable for the student, the board of which the student is a resident student shall provide for the transportation of the student to and from the site of the school that provides the special education program in which the board enrolls the student.

AR 250/98 s3;251/2001

Student residing outside areas

4**(1)** If a student is enrolled in a school pursuant to section 45(3) of the Act but does not reside in the attendance area or the transportation service area for that school, the student or the parent of the student shall provide for the transportation of the student

(a) to and from the site of the school, or

(b) to and from a designated stop on a school bus route in the transportation service area for that school.

(2) If a student or the parent of a student chooses to provide transportation in accordance with subsection (1)(b), the board that enrolled the student in the school shall provide for the transportation of the student between the site of the school and a point nearest to the student's residence on a school bus route in the transportation service area for that school.

(3) Subsection (2) does not apply unless there is a seat available for that student on the school bus after the students referred to in section 51(1) of the Act are accommodated on that school bus.

AR 250/98 s4;197/2000;251/2001

Limit on fee for transportation

5**(1)** A fee charged under section 51(3) of the Act respecting the transportation of students in accordance with section 51(1) of the Act and this Regulation must not exceed the average difference per student between

(a) the estimated cost to the board of transporting those students, and

(b) the funding received by the board under the *School Grants Regulation* (AR 72/95) in respect of the transportation of those students.

(2) A fee charged under section 51(3) of the Act respecting the transportation of students other than students referred to in subsection (1)

(a) who are eligible for funding under the *School Grants Regulation* (AR 72/95) must not exceed the average difference per student between

(i) the estimated costs to the board of transporting those students, and

(ii) the funding received by the board under the *School Grants Regulation* (AR 72/95) in respect of the transportation of those students,

and

(b) who are not eligible for funding under the *School Grants Regulation* (AR 72/95) must not exceed the estimated average cost per student to the board for transporting those students.

(3) The basis for a fee referred to in this section must be in accordance with a policy established by the board.

(4) Any surplus from fees charged under subsection (1) or (2) must be used to subsidize the cost of transportation of students referred to in that subsection in the 2 school years following the school year in which the surplus was collected.

AR 250/98 s5;197/2000;251/2001

Repeal

6 The *Student Transportation Regulation* (AR 218/95) is repealed.

Expiry

7 For the purpose of ensuring that this Regulation is reviewed for ongoing relevancy and necessity, with the option that it may be repassed in its present or an amended form following a review, this Regulation expires on August 31, 2010.

AR 250/98 s7;197/2000;125/2005