

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 17, 2000

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Carrier Contracts 2000-2001

ORIGINATOR: G. Reynolds, Department Head

RESOURCE

STAFF: Brian Barclay, Irene Billey, Richard Craig, Mark Gratton, Denise Kay

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the transportation contracts for fixed routes for the 2000-2001 school year with the following carriers, be approved:

Briggs Bros. Student Transportation Ltd.:
approximately 15 a.m./p.m. routes and 4 noon routes

Golden Arrow School and Charter Buses Ltd.:
approximately 30 a.m./p.m. routes and 9 noon routes

Laidlaw Transit Ltd.:
approximately 20 a.m./p.m. routes and 6 noon routes

Red Arrow Express Ltd.:
approximately 50 a.m./p.m. routes and 15 noon routes

2. That the transportation contracts for special needs curb service transportation for the 2000-2001 school year with the following carriers, be approved.

Briggs Bros. Student Transportation Ltd.:
Transportation Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

Red Arrow Express Ltd.:
The Academy at King Edward,
L.Y. Cairns, Early Education District Sites,
Glenrose, Tevie Miller Heritage School,
Alberta School For the Deaf, Autistic,
Trainable Handicapped, Woodside and
Special Circumstance transportation

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Background

Board policy, EEA.BP Student Transportation Services, states that public proposals for the provision of charter bus service for district students are to be called at least every three years with provision for the extension of contracts for two additional one-year terms, subject to successful negotiations. The last call for proposals was in May 1997. The administration issued a call for proposals on March 15, 2000 for the provision of charter bus services for the 2000-2001 school year. The closing date for receipt of the proposals was 2:00 p.m. on March 29, 2000.

A pre-qualification for new school bus carriers interested in providing charter bus services for the district was advertised on MERX (electronic bidding system) and the Edmonton Journal newspaper prior to calling for proposals. The purpose was to invite new carriers not presently serving the district to the process and to ensure that they met the mandatory requirements in order to pre-qualify for the opportunity to submit a bid. One carrier submitted pre-qualification documents for student transportation, however, the carrier did not demonstrate sufficient details to qualify. The carrier was given the opportunity to address the areas that were not sufficient, however, the carrier failed to respond within the specified time period. School bus carriers currently under contract to the district were requested to provide an overview of their preventative maintenance program, their staff and safety training programs and their technology plan, along with their proposal, which was taken into consideration when proposals were evaluated and recommendations made to award contracts

The guiding principle throughout the call for proposals was to achieve competitive prices based on volume discounts while ensuring that district students continue to be provided with safe, efficient and reliable transportation. The criteria and weighting used for evaluating proposals are as follows:

- A weighting 70 per cent was used for tender price which reflected price discounts based on volume.
- A weighting of 15 per cent was used to evaluate the vendor's ability to effectively manage and perform the volume of work.
- A weighting of 15 per cent was used to evaluate the continuity of service to students and to ensure the district's best interest in the long-term to maintain a healthy competitive market.

Results of the Call for Proposals

The total expenditure for charter bus service for 2000-2001 based on the administration's recommendation is estimated to be \$9,434,571 including GST (Appendix I). This represents a \$774,416 increase or 9 per cent (or 7.73 per cent for fixed route and 9.97 for special needs) over the total projected expenditure of \$8,660,155 for 1999-2000. The increase is attributed to five additional morning and afternoon fixed routes, three additional noon fixed routes, 123 additional students on special needs curb service, and higher overall carrier rates. The number of instructional days in 2000-2001 decreases by four days in comparison to 1999-2000. If costs are compared only on carrier rates, the increase for 2000-01 is \$464,634 or 5.4 per cent over 1999-2000 carrier rates.

Four proposals were received from carriers currently under contract to the district for the provision of charter bus service in 2000-2001. Two of the carriers submitted proposals for fixed route service only, and the other two carriers submitted proposals for both fixed route service and special needs curb service transportation.

1. Fixed Route Service

Each of the proposals for fixed route service was evaluated against the established criteria. Based on the cost savings to the district and the ability of the carrier to effectively manage and perform the volume of work, the administration is recommending that Red Arrow Express Ltd. be awarded 50 morning and afternoon routes and 15 noon routes, Golden Arrow School and Charter Buses Ltd. be awarded 30 morning and afternoon routes and 9 noon routes, Laidlaw Transit Ltd. be awarded 20 morning and afternoon routes and 6 noon routes, and Briggs Bros. Student Transportation Ltd. be awarded 15 morning and afternoon routes and 4 noon routes.

Although further cost savings could have been achieved by awarding a larger number of fixed routes to only two carriers with the lowest price, the recommended mix of carriers provides a competitive and healthy environment which will maximize the district's flexibility to respond to changing circumstances in the future. It is also advantageous to maintain a competitive market rather than take advantage of short-term savings and possibly create a monopoly situation in the long term.

2. Special Needs Curb Service

Each of the proposals for special needs curb service was evaluated against the established criteria. Based on the cost savings to the district and the importance of continuity of service to students with special needs, the administration is recommending that Briggs Bros. Student Transportation Ltd. and Red Arrow Express Ltd. be awarded the same portions of the special needs contract that they are currently serving. The administration is recommending that Briggs Bros. Student Transportation Ltd. be awarded transportation zones 1, 2, and 3, and transportation zones 4, 5, 6 combined. In the case of Red Arrow Express Ltd., it is recommended that the company be awarded The Academy at King Edward and L.Y. Cairns, Early Education and Glenrose, Tevie Miller Heritage and Alberta School for the Deaf, Autistic and Trainable Handicapped, Woodside and Special Circumstance transportation.

RC:rec

Appendix I - 2000-2001 Charter Bus Service Expenditures