

Choice Busing to Continue for 2008-09, Fee-Based System Studied in Preparation for Public Input, Decision in Fall 2008

A School Choice Busing Committee comprised of Poudre School District staff, parents, community members, and local government representatives was formed in 2007 to review student transportation for choice education programs.

The committee was tasked with developing a policy recommendation for transportation services for choice education programs that is fair, equitable and financially sustainable.

Following are the recommendations of the committee:

(1) Current choice busing to continue for 2008-09

For the coming 2008-09 school year, the current transportation services provided for choice programs will continue:

- Current school choice program transportation for International Baccalaureate (IB) and Core Knowledge will continue.
- Students in one of the federally mandated programs (listed below) will continue to receive transportation for their programs.
- As before, students attending a school outside of their neighborhood boundaries can still apply for transportation on a space available basis within the actual bus stops for the choice school.

(2) Transportation staff to analyze, project costs

Based on the findings of the committee, PSD's Transportation Services staff will begin to analyze and project costs on a per student basis for continuing to provide transportation to students for choice programs. In addition, Transportation Services staff will expand the choice busing review to explore internal procedures and partnership opportunities with the City of Fort Collins *Transfort* public transportation system. PSD will present possible implementation strategies between PSD and *Transfort* to be implemented for the 2009-10 school year.

(3) Public input meetings tentatively scheduled for fall 2008

PSD tentatively plans to have per student cost information ready for internal review by late spring 2008. PSD will then hold public input meeting for parents and community members in fall 2008. At these meetings, PSD will share projected costs and options for alternative methods in order to continue to provide choice transportation services for students.

Background on the committee and its work

The School Choice Busing committee met over a four-month period in fall 2007 to develop a recommendation that was presented to the Superintendent's Cabinet in December. The recommendation supports the district's choice education programs and proposes transportation options to meet the criteria for being fair, equitable and financially sustainable. The recommendations will be reviewed in conjunction with other measures under consideration for the 2009-10 school year.

The committee met with PSD educational staff members who represent a broad spectrum of specialized educational programs. Those programs included International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), Core Knowledge, and 6th and 9th grade math and athletic programs.

The committee also reviewed federally mandated programs such as Special Education, English language acquisition (ELA), McKinney homeless program, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). After review, this group of programs was removed from the choice busing discussion because their transportation services are mandated by law.

More information is available by calling Transportation Services at 490-3155.