

September 16th, 2016

West Vancouver School District No.45 Correspondence List – September 16th, 2016

Letter Date	From	To	Type	Description	Reply by	Copied To	Action
August 29 th , 2016	Melanie Mason, Municipal Councillor Bowen Island Municipality	Board Chair Carolyn Broady	Recd.	<p>Ms. Mason writes in regard to the provincial announcement of increased funding for school transportation.</p> <p>She outlines some of the transportation needs of Bowen Island students and asks that the re-instatement of the Bowen Friday school bus service be considered.</p>	CB	WV Board of Education WV District Leadership Team	
August 29 th , 2016	Carolyn Broady, Chair West Vancouver Board of Education	Melanie Mason, Municipal Councillor Bowen Island Municipality	Sent	<p>Ms. Broady writes to advise that the provincial grant has been applied for and the Board will be advised in early October as to whether funds will be forthcoming.</p>		WV Board of Education WV District Leadership Team	
September 16 th , 2016	Shawn Cole BICS PAC Co-Chair Caroline Parker BICS PAC Co-Chair	Board Chair Carolyn Broady	Recd	<p>Mr. Cole and Ms. Parker write on behalf of the BICS Parent Advisory Council in response to the Ministry of Education's Student Transportation Fund announcement.</p> <p>They ask that the Board consider the transportation challenges faced on Bowen Island and request that Friday bus service be re-instated.</p>		WV Board of Education WV District Leadership Team	
September 16 th , 2016	Board Chair Carolyn Broady	Shawn Cole BICS PAC Co-Chair Caroline Parker BICS PAC Co-Chair	Sent	<p>Chair Broady writes to express thanks for the letter and the hard work that the PAC does to support BICS.</p> <p>She advises that we hope to hear this fall as to whether we are successful in securing funds.</p>		WV Board of Education WV District Leadership Team	

On Aug 29, 2016, at 3:24 PM, Melanie Mason <MMason@bimbc.ca> wrote:

Dear Carolyn,

I am writing in regards to the recent provincial announcement of increased funding for school transportation in rural areas within the province and wanted to reach out to find whether the West Vancouver School Board will be considering submitting a plan to the province that would include the re-instatement of Friday school bus service on Bowen Island.

One of our Council strategic priorities for 2014-2016 is the completion of an Integrated Transportation Master Plan for the island and as part of that process we have undertaken a comprehensive public consultation process with the community. This has involved several public information sessions, one of which was held at Bowen Island Community School, as well as a Stakeholder workshop where parents and the principal of BICS participated.

The lack of Friday school bus service has been identified as a significant gap in the transportation needs of the island considering our rural nature of our island, the fact we have limited public transit and the lack of safe walking and biking routes linking our neighborhoods to the BICS and Snug Cove.

I have also received feedback from parents concerned about child safety during the busy Friday drop off and pick up at BICS not just in the small parking lot but the surrounding area and equally concerns from high school parents with the same concerns in regards to traffic safety at ferry dock on Fridays. We have also received traffic safety concerns from the RCMP when Friday drop off coincides with ferry overloads causing traffic safety issues up by the intersection by the school.

As with the rest of Metro Vancouver, we have seen the impacts of the soaring house prices in Vancouver and as a result have seen an influx of many new young families on the island as a result of the more affordable housing prices found on Bowen Island. However, one thing that we have noticed is that many of these families are increasingly relying on only one family vehicle which adds to the Friday morning complications of getting school children to either the ferry or BICS.

Another important impact of the lack of Friday school bus service is the impact on the teachers, class dynamics and the shortening of the teaching day. As a result of parents waiting to miss the school drop off rush many children are dropped off late and speaking with one teacher children drift as late as 10 am meaning that any core curriculum must be avoided until all students have eventually arrived for the day.

Scott Slater does an incredible job raising the above safety issues and attendance issues with parents and is assisted by dedicated parent volunteers to help things run as smoothly as possible and does encourage parents to both car pool and drop off early. However, the fact remains that we still have significant increase in cars on the road on Friday mornings/afternoons and the environmental impact of those cars also needs to be factored in.

I hope the above points highlight the importance of why consideration for the re-instatement of the Bowen Friday school bus service should be considered. I would be very interested to find out more on how the West Vancouver school board will be considering this issue and if there is any further assistance that I could provide on behalf of Bowen Island families on this matter.

I very much appreciate your consideration on this matter,

Sincerely,

Melanie

Melanie Mason
Municipal Councillor
Bowen Island Municipality
981 Artisan Lane
Bowen Island, BC V0N 1G2

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<image003.png>

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August 29th, 2016

Dear Melanie,

Thank you for your email and for sharing your thoughts and concerns.

I am away on vacation at the moment but will be discussing the potential funding with my fellow trustees and our District Leadership Team when I return to Vancouver.

We have applied for the provincial grant and will know in early October if we will receive any funds. If we are successful we will then assess how best to move forward, using the parameters set out by the ministry and ensuring that we consider the needs throughout the district.

I have copied Superintendent Kennedy on this email to ensure that it becomes part of our public correspondence and is flagged for when we begin our discussions.

Thank you again.

Carolyn Broady
Chair,
West Vancouver Board of Education

BICS PAC
Bowen Island Community School
1041 Mount Gardner Road
Bowen Island, BC V0N 1G2

September 16, 2016

VIA EMAIL

Carolyn Broady
Chair
Board of Trustees
West Vancouver Schools
1075 21st Street
West Vancouver, BC V7V4A9
cbroad@wvschools.ca

Re: School Transportation Fund

Dear Ms. Broady,

We are writing on behalf of the Bowen Island Community School Parent Advisory Council (BICS PAC) in response to a recent news release that we received through DPAC about the Ministry of Education's Student Transportation Fund. The news release states that:

Students and families throughout B.C. will soon have access to expanded and more affordable transportation options thanks to \$14.7 million, under the new Student Transportation Fund . . .

School districts can apply for the funding to help parents with transportation costs and services, whether they use the usual yellow bus program or work with local transit operators . . .

The amount of funding a district is eligible for is based on a formula tied to the Ministry of Education's student location factor, which is used to determine the rural makeup of a school district. Districts will also be required to report back on the outcomes and the benefits they achieved as a result of the funding . . .

All school districts are encouraged to apply for the funding. To be eligible for funding, districts must submit a plan to the Ministry of Education by Sept. 30, 2016, outlining how they will use the funding to boost transportation services for students and families.

Districts are eligible for up to the following amounts: . . . 45 West Vancouver – \$84,722.

(The full text of the news release is available at: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/11715>.)

In light of this encouraging news, we wish to bring to your attention a need that is of significant concern to parents and that is unmet by current funding: students of Bowen Island Community School have no bus service on Fridays. The BICS PAC appreciates that for many years the Board has recognized the unique transportation challenges on Bowen Island. Bowen is a truly rural community where most students live a considerable distance from the school and are without alternatives to car or bus transportation due to distance and the absence of bike paths. Car transportation to school is made difficult because many families are single-car families and that single car is often used to commute into West Vancouver and beyond on the 7:30 AM ferry sailing leaving other family members at home reliant on busing.

Our principal Scott Slater (and before him his predecessor, Jennifer Pardee), together with a dedicated group of parent volunteers, have done everything humanly possible to make the heavy stream of cars into the small school parking lot on Fridays as safe and streamlined as possible, but the stress to working families and the disruption to the classrooms from the late arrivals on Fridays is undeniable. We feel very fortunate to have the outstanding teachers and administrators that we do at our school, and we would very much like to eliminate the challenges to both the home and the school that the absence of Friday bus service causes.

In light of these concerns, if the district is fortunate enough to receive the \$84,722 for which it is eligible, we respectfully request that the Board continues to consider the unique challenges of transportation on Bowen Island. Restoration of Friday bus service would have a direct and immediate positive impact on the educational experience of BICS students, and would be gratefully appreciated by BICS families who struggle to juggle commuting and school transportation obligations on Friday mornings.

Thank you for your consideration. If you would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Shawn Cole
BICS PAC Co-Chair
shawncole@gmail.com

Caroline Parker
BICS PAC Co-Chair
cgoodsonparker@gmail.com

cc: Chris Kennedy, Superintendent (ckennedy@wvschools.ca)
Scott Slater, Principal (sslater@wvschools.ca)



September 16th, 2016

Dear Caroline,

Thank you for your letter, and for sharing your thoughts about the proposed transportation funding and the need for Friday service for BICS. We will be applying for funding, and at our upcoming board meeting we will be briefed on the proposal for Friday service for BICS.

Our submission needs to be into the Ministry by the end of September, and we hope to know later this fall if we are successful in securing funds.

Thank you again for writing and also for the hard work you and your PAC do to support BICS.

Thank you again.

Carolyn Broady, Chair,
West Vancouver Board of Education