

West Vancouver School District No.45 Correspondence List – June 30th, 2017

Letter Date	From	To	Type	Description	Reply by	Copied To	Action
June 14 th , 2017	Board Chair Carolyn Broady	Cynthia Lukaitis Vice President and Corporate Secretary. BC Ferries Corp.	Sent	<p>On behalf of the West Vancouver Board of Education, Ms. Broady writes to express concerns regarding the proposed schedule changes to the Bowen Island Ferry route.</p> <p>Ms. Broady outlines the reasons for the School District's concerns and how the proposed changes would have potentially negative consequences for students, families, staff and the public and charter bus companies that service school sites and residences.</p> <p>The Chair asks that measures be taken to reconsider the proposed schedule changes for the Bowen Island Ferry service.</p>		WV Board of Education C. Kennedy, Superintendent of Schools Bowen Island Municipality Ferry Advisory Committee Chair Jordan Sturdy, WV – Sea to Sky MLA Murray Skeels, Bowen Island Mayor Councillor Gary Ander Councillor Sue Ellen Fast Councillor Michael Kaile Councillor Melanie Mason Councillor Alison Morse Councillor Maureen Nicholson BC Ferries Consultation Committee	



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Cynthia Lukaitis, Vice President & Corporate Secretary

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June 14, 2017

Dear Ms. Lukaitis,

I am writing on behalf of the West Vancouver Board of Education (School District #45), to address concerns around proposed schedule changes to the Bowen Island Ferry route, which is currently being reviewed under a public consultation process. We understand that the process is well underway, with plans to revise the Bowen Ferry schedule to arrive earlier, and that implementation is scheduled to take place in early 2018.

As you know, many students and staff in our school district use the ferry service to access schools and school-related events, and though a majority of those affected reside on Bowen Island, traffic flows in both directions. The changes that the Corporation is proposing therefore affect travel to and from several school sites here in West Vancouver. Schools that could be affected by the proposed earlier arrival times of the ferry include Bowen Island Community School, Lions Bay Primary, Gleneagles Elementary, Rockridge Secondary and West Vancouver Secondary. This includes schools serviced by the ferry directly, and schools which are linked to these schools via bus schedules.

It has come to our attention that these proposed schedule changes would have a number of potentially negative consequences for school district stakeholders, including students, families, staff, as well as the public and charter bus companies that facilitate travel to and from school sites and residences, both on the island and in West Vancouver.

The earlier arrival times at Horseshoe Bay will mean:

1. Longer days for students travelling to Rockridge or West Vancouver Secondary School and in particular far earlier mornings;
2. Changes to School bus schedules, which operate to and from Horseshoe Bay;
3. Issues affecting student supervision at Horseshoe Bay and the two secondary schools early in the morning as students would now arrive well before bell schedule times. All of our secondary schools have similar time schedules to accommodate our academies and other unique programs. Ferry schedule changes may also result in the need to alter our contracts with various community organizations which host our students for academy training programs;
4. Increased costs to compensate Educational Assistants, when these staff members must be assigned to meet a student at the bus for pick-up/drop off;

5. Commuting times for staff at Bowen Island Community School that are not coordinated with instructional hours. We would not wish to have an opening bell any earlier than 8:35 AM.

We understand that the Corporation has pointed to on-time performance, related to congestion at the Horseshoe Bay terminal, as the reason for the planned changes to the schedule, which we also value. However, as staff members have expressed to the consultant overseeing the consultation process and at the workshop held in May, we believe that the inconvenience and increased cost of these changes places an undue burden on the school district and its many stakeholders.

We would also like to note that given our September – June school calendar, it would be appreciated that changes are not made at the beginning of the calendar year, as we would have to revise our school schedules mid-year.

BC Ferries provides an important link for our staff and families to attend school and school-related events, and it is the only affordable service available to dependent communities. While we are open to creative suggestions that may help the BC Ferries Corporation maintain on-time performance, we hope that options other than the proposed earlier start times for the Bowen Ferry are under consideration.

Please take measures to reconsider the proposed schedule changes for the Bowen Island ferry service and begin exploring or seeking other short-term solutions to address traffic congestion at Horseshoe Bay while long-term infrastructure changes are underway. We fully support managed growth of the region, but any steps taken must ensure that services offered do not impose an unreasonable burden on those using the service to get to work or school.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Broady, Chair
West Vancouver Board of Education (School District #45)

CC:

Bowen Island Municipality Ferry Advisory Committee Chair: susanna.braund@ubc.ca

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