



NORTH CALDWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board of Education Connections

Update on Subscription Busing

Some of you may have recently read an article implying that bus ridership in North Caldwell will be up 30% next year. Unfortunately, that characterization (which was originally mistakenly attributed to the Board), could be somewhat misleading. We wanted to use this opportunity to correct any misconceptions and to update the community more generally on the status of our new subscription busing program.

We are pleased in the first year of the program that the number of subscriptions was at the high end of our expectations based on our research into the experience of other districts. There are 399 students who will be entitled to busing (consisting of 225 two-way subscribers, 43 one-way subscribers and 131 mandated). In comparison, this past year, 511 students were entitled to busing, although the actual utilization was far lower - the average ridership was only approximately 319 students.

We caution, however, that comparing the 399 to the 319 can be misleading. First, the 399 includes one-way riders. Second, and more significantly, while we expect that next year a higher percentage of those entitled to busing will take it, we know that not everyone will do so. So, it is possible that there will be an impact on the carline, depending on how the actual utilization plays out.

While it is theoretically possible that utilization would be very high and the carline will not be negatively impacted, the Board cannot assume that will be the case. We have been proactive and actively preparing for the possibility that the carline will be longer. Frankly, we think that most parents would agree that there is a need to improve safety on the carline even if the utilization does not change.

So what are we doing next? As promised, the Board and District administrators continue to meet with the Borough Council, Mayor's office and Police Department to discuss very specific steps that can be taken cooperatively to promote student safety and have an efficient carline process. The collaborative attitude of all parties has allowed us to make significant progress together. We expect that later next month, you will be hearing about improved procedures aimed principally at protecting our children.

No matter what these final procedures are, one thing is for certain - the safety of our children (and, secondarily, the efficiency of the carline) relies on the cooperation of

everyone in the community in adhering to the procedures that will be provided.

We take this opportunity to thank all who have provided input on these issues thus far. We encourage you to continue to do so. If you wish to stay informed and/or provide input into our process, please join us at our August 16th Board meeting (starting at 8:00pm in the Grandview cafeteria). If you cannot make that meeting, please contact any of the Board Members.

The Board of Education

Contact Us

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