



January 15, 2024

Dear Chad and Monique Atherton,

The Board of Education directed staff to respond to your concerns regarding the bus service provided to Ladysmith Secondary. I would like to acknowledge your concerns. I understand that NLPS service provision may differ somewhat from the Cowichan School District.

Regular transportation at NLPS is provided by school bus to students that live outside the district's designated distance range from the school:

K – Grade 3: more than 4 kms from the school

Grade 4 – 12: more than 4.8 kms from the school

Students enrolled in district special education programs are also considered.

Bus stops are established in areas where students live outside the designated distance, and students may have to walk up to 3.2 kms to the nearest stop. Students that do not qualify for busing can use these bus stops as a courtesy rider when space is available on the bus. This does mean that our buses often do pass students on their way to school that are within the designated distances, however we do not add additional bus stops within this area for courtesy riders.

Based on your home address of 432 Davis Road, you live 3.2 kms from the school and do not qualify for busing in this district but are welcome to use the stop at 529 Douglas Pl if this is more convenient than going directly to the school.

Further, we do consider concerns where there are no sidewalks available. We have reviewed the walk from your home to the school and observe that there are sidewalks provided. I would also like to clarify that the District does not charge for busing.

Please feel free to review the administrative procedures for transportation in the district's AP 512. It can be located on the district website at <https://www.sd68.bc.ca/document/ap-512-transportation/>

Kind Regards,

Tracy Mowat, Transportation Manager

>> -----Original Message-----

>> From: Chad Atherton >

>> Sent: November 20, 2023 6:16 PM

>> To: Naomi Bailey

>> Cc: Greg Keller Charlene Mckay

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>> Subject: Bus route Ladysmith

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>> To whom it may concern

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>> My name is Chad Atherton and my wife Monique and I have a [REDACTED] who attends Ladysmith [REDACTED] School. She attended private school in Duncan thru the end of grade [REDACTED] which is why this hasn't been an issue for us until now.

>> It has come to our attention that the bus provided for the community's kids to get to school doesn't actually stop anywhere that allows the community's kids to get on and get to school..?? I find this very absurd!

>> Looking at route 11 the bus that could safely get our daughter as well as many other kids/teens to school stops only at the far South end of Davis road at the highway!! Not to mention this is the first stop at 7:28am which again makes no sense...from this point it jumps back onto the highway South bound makes its way towards Peerless rd ends up North bound on highway and stops at Platt rd. Then to Chemainus rd where it has 5 pick up points on way to Mt Brenton school. it turns around and heads back up Chemainus rd stopping 2 more times for pick ups on way back thru where it just drove thru picking up...!?!?!?

>> Sounding a little bizarre yet???

>> From here it heads on highway and up to the schools. Being a home owner and member of the Ladysmith community I am floored as to how there are no stops for any Ladysmith kids on top side of highway and can't believe that this has never been a cause for concern until now. The community is expanding south and is getting further and further away as well as the families with kids that are filling these newer areas requiring buses.

>> Many families are in our situation where both are working and don't have ability to drive kids to school and we do pay for bus service.

>> Looking further into this I spoke to the gentleman who coordinates the buses and routes. He informed me that the trustees passed regulation that no buses are to pick up any kids within a 3 mile radius of school!!!

>> This is the most ridiculous and dangerous thing I have ever heard. Myself let alone my daughter are not comfortable with the walk on these dark sometimes very windy/rainy and soon snowy and icy mornings and/or afternoons.

>> I request a review to this rule ASAP.

>> There's a very simple solution to our problem here in Ladysmith as the current scheduled route is the most inefficient as it revolves around avoiding going thru areas that kids live.

>> Rather than the bus coming to South Davis stop first it shoots down Chemainus rd makes all required stops, stops at Mt Brenton school then heads up Henry rd to highway. Stops at Platt then L onto S Davis and can make 4-5 stops on way thru Davis and Dogwood then up to school. A simple solution!!

>> And for future the radius set for children having to walk to school should be narrowed down significantly.

>> In this case it is no more time or miles for the bus or the driver..by the time we eliminate driving past the turn off to Chemainus rd and the 2 stops then back track to turn onto Chemainus rd I believe it will be less.

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>> Look forward to your prompt response and appreciate you taking the time to read and look into.

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Chad and Monique Atherton

>> Sent from my iPhone