

Out-of Boundary Subcommittee of Tweak Recommendations

Recommendations concerning Out of Boundary transportation:

1. **No change:** No transportation changes are recommended for *any of the mandated programs* OR for any of the following *non-mandated programs*: ESOL, FECEP, Modified Calendar, Project Opportunity, Summit, Davis Vocational Center, and the Magnet Elementary Schools (Hunter's Woods and Bailey's Crossroads).
2. **Magnet ES:** The transportation models used for Bailey's and Hunter's Woods magnet programs are *highly efficient* for both routes and student travel time. These should be used as models for changes to transportation provided to and from other programs.
3. **Magnet HS - TJHSST:** Phyllis Payne has researched this and will present – see attachment.
4. **Gifted & Talented:** At both the Elementary School and the Middle School levels, all students eligible for self-contained GT services will be assigned to their *base school GT center* or the *geographically closest regional GT center*. In the event that the family chooses to pupil place at another GT center, transportation to and from the desired school will be provided *by the family*. This will permit program choice by individual families while reducing the burden on the transportation system.
5. **Grandfathering:** Students who wish to continue attending a school that was formerly, but is no longer, within their attendance boundary (i.e., "grandfathering") can request pupil placement at their original school. Because bus service is no longer available between their home and that school, however, *transportation will become the responsibility of the family*. This is consistent with other pupil placement requests and continues to allow families to choose continuity of specific schools or pyramids for their children. It reduces, however, the enormous burden on Facilities and Transportation Services of transporting students from one neighborhood to more than one elementary, middle, or high school.
6. **Administrative Placement:** Transportation will be an explicit consideration in decisions about school choice for Administratively Placed students. Facilities and Transportation Services will be notified *in advance* of an upcoming placement hearing so that they can provide information about existing out-of-boundary transportation routes available from the student's neighborhood or nearby school. Every effort will be made to place these students in another school for which transportation routes are *already established* from their neighborhood. To improve commitment, Administratively Placed students who require transportation will register for transportation and pay a *registration fee of \$150.00*. This fee will be waived for all students who qualify for Free and Reduced-Price Meals. A fleet of smaller buses will be used to transport these students.
7. **Technical Academies:** Transportation to and from Academies will only be provided if a *minimum of 5 students* will be riding each bus or shuttle by the final destination.
8. **Exception to Ride:** Students who are technically ineligible to ride buses can currently petition to ride on buses where space is available. The staff time dedicated to responding to approximately 1000 requests annually is enormous (80% of all such requests are granted). Most of this demand comes in September, when supervisors have their most intense work demands. This program should be *eliminated* for all (OR: for all but special education students, for whom 98% of such petitions are granted).
9. **Depots:** If bus transportation continues to be provided for non-mandated out-of-boundary programs, door-to-door transportation will be replaced by a *depot system* modeled on service to and from the elementary magnet schools. Depots can be located on FCPS or other County properties (e.g., public libraries or government buildings), with locations determined by actual student addresses. Each family will be responsible for providing transportation to a depot.
10. **Financial hardship:** If bus transportation continues to be provided for non-mandated out-of-boundary programs, *means testing* will be instituted, so that students whose families face true financial hardship can be

provided with transportation. As stated above for Administratively Placed students, those who have no means of transportation to specialized programs will register for transportation and pay a registration fee of \$150.00. This fee will be waived for all students who qualify for Free and Reduced-Price Meals.

11. **All available routes:** Whenever transportation is provided between a student's home or neighborhood and a site outside their base school attendance boundary, *all available nearby routes will be considered* as potential transportation options. Buses designated for special education, Academies, or magnet schools, for example, might also be used simultaneously to transport students in other programs.
12. **Restructuring of Areas:** Although not within the purview of this subcommittee, a consistent recommendation from prior evaluations has been that the current three Areas be *restructured to five or six Areas*, with bus compounds, dispatch points, and operations facilities at each Area site. Routes would then be developed strategically within each Area for all in-boundary and out-of-boundary programs. This subcommittee believes there are enormous benefits to restructuring these Areas.

Recommendations concerning Facilities and Transportation Services:

13. Facilities and Transportation Services will identify what specific *changes to the MapNet* program would facilitate using MapNet to optimize bus routes. Trapeze Group or an independent contractor could then be contracted to make these changes so that the use of MapNet is optimized.
14. Facilities and Transportation Services will develop a written rolling time *schedule to re-evaluate each bus route at least twice yearly* to assure maximum use of buses (Virginia State Law 8 VAC 20-70-160). Bus routes will be reviewed to optimize routes, trip couplings, placement of bus stops, distances between bus stops, load counts, and fleet deployment with a focus on student service, streamlining, efficiency, and cost effectiveness. Drivers and Supervisors will be tasked with making changes to routes that are excessively long or short, over-crowded, or under-utilized (e.g., fewer than 10 students).
15. Several school districts require students to *register online for transportation at the outset of the academic year*, which allows their Transportation Departments to establish specific load counts for each bus run. It is recommended that FCPS adopt this practice, which would serve to reduce both the uncertainty of ridership in September and the subsequent adjustments during the first weeks of the school year.

Recommendations concerning Transportation Task Force:

16. To help School Board members make informed decisions, the final TTF report should include:
 - a. Options that were *discussed and rejected*, with the *reasoning* behind those decisions
 - b. Recognition of the known positive and negative *trade-offs* for each recommendation
 - c. The specific *reasoning* for each recommendation made
 - d. Recognition that Facilities and Transportation Services will only face *increasingly unmanageable demands* from increased population density and student enrollment, the diversity of the student population, traffic congestion, and the range of educational programming provided by FCPS. *Restructuring and resource re-allocation are essential* if service demands are to be met.
 - e. Recommendations concerning respect for *input from Facilities and Transportation Services*. The evaluation of problems and priorities identified by Transportation staff should be solicited by the School Board and be considered for inclusion in any final recommendations.
 - f. Recommendations concerning time and manpower for *tool development and review*. Though clearly dedicated and responsive to numerous incompatible pressures, the Transportation staff did not have the tools to provide some information at all (e.g., student data without names, number of late arrival buses), and other information was in formats that made it relatively unusable (e.g., individual Word documents). Separate listings of schools, programs, buses, load counts, and the like are not currently available as a master data base that allows manipulation of variables in developing hypothetical scenarios. Detailed information about the transportation needs of specific students and their programs (without student identifying information), the number of Administratively Placed students who do not arrive to meet transportation, locations of specific geographic outlier students, accurate counts of numbers of buses by location, and the like all need to be reviewed in tandem. To the degree that information is not available and/or unusable in its current form, external review is, by definition, speculative at best and irrelevant at worst.

Ideas for transportation to and from TJ

Compiled by Phyllis Payne:

1. Self-select student bus stop (from a list of choices) before school starts. Eliminate the practice of assigning students to bus depots by their base school location.
2. Choose depot locations based on ease of parent drop-off and pick-up access (based on time of departure and arrival, pick places that are NOT crowded with other school traffic, e.g., if the high school has other car traffic at time of arrival or departure, choose another location--elementary school, a church, a library, etc).
3. De-couple the TJ start time from the start time of the other high schools. Stop using the neighborhood high school buses to transport TJ students to the bus depot.
 - a. It is okay to place TJ students on elementary school buses if necessary. They would actually prevent bullying of Kindergarten kids by older elementary school kids.
 - b. Sometimes TJ students are bullied by the base school high school students now.
 - c. TJ students would not harm elementary students – if they did, they would endanger their placement at TJ.
4. Provide parents with a list of all bus stops, so they could pick their student up from an earlier stop.
5. Have students register for transportation if needed, so FTS can plan the routes according to actual riders—eliminate stops that are not used.
6. Eliminate the neighborhood-to-base school routes in favor of additional bus depots closer to student locations. Only provide additional transport if student can show hardship—either means tested or otherwise.
7. Provide information to parents about public bus transportation that is available close to TJ, bus depot locations, and home. Students might be able to find a faster way home (or to school in the morning).
8. Alternate the order of stops in the afternoon, so students can take turns having an earlier stop or a later stop—make the plans consistent from week-to-week for planning purposes.
9. Use TJ buses coming through Fairfax County from other jurisdictions. eg, Arlington. Have it stop ONCE at a point along the same route it takes now (so we're not disadvantaging Arlington kids or making them get on the bus earlier) and pick up a load of Fax kids to express to TJ. Fax would have to pay Arlington for seats, but makes the Arlington bus fuller, uses driver time wisely, etc. Win-win for both jurisdictions.
10. Overcrowding is a problem—3 to a seat on some buses—align buses with riders.