



WASHINGTON
TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

Transportation Planning

Part I - 2nd Semester Update

Part II - 2023-2024 School Hours

Presented by Transportation Leadership:

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February 8, 2023

Part I

January-May 2023

Transportation Update

Update on Second Semester Changes

What has improved?

- Initial improvement was observed in arrival times at all tiers, prior to loss of additional drivers this semester
- Condensed stops to improve efficiency
- Dissolved and combined bus stops & routes due to low ridership
- Created additional time needed for drivers to cover second tier routes
 - 18 buses unload students early at 7:15 AM instead of 7:30 AM

What are continued concerns?

- Late buses to NCHS (significantly smaller in number than last semester but some still occurring)
- Driver Turnover
 - Creates 1+1 and combos
 - Coverage challenges
- Driver absences
 - Creates last minute 1+1 and combos
 - Coverage challenges



Bus Driver Staffing Analysis

Analysis and Data on the Loss of 28 Drivers end of May 2022- February 7, 2023:

1 Resigned WT to move out of state

3 Retired

1 Resigned WT to take on a different career opportunity

3 Resigned WT due to illness or to caretake for a loved one

6 Resigned WT for unknown reasons

4 Resigned WT due to culture of department (i.e. stressful routes, management, treatment by other drivers)

2 Transfer from Bus Driver to Bus Assistant Position

8 Terminations due to violations of bus driver handbook (i.e. includes job abandonment)

15 New Drivers hired at various times throughout this school year

Current Transportation Staffing Analysis

<u>Position</u>	<u>Current (as of 2/7/23)</u>	<u>Unfilled/Needed</u>
Leadership	2	0
Office Staff	6	2
Mechanics	5	2
Bus Drivers	84	31
Bus Assistants	31 (4 in CDL training)	8
Bus Driver Substitutes	0	10

Bus Driver Recruitment and Retention

Compensation:

- Largest raises in the history of the District - (last three years)
- Third highest driver pay in Marion County
- Reduced cost of Health and Dental Insurance
- Semester attendance bonus stipend + Additional bonus in Fall
- Additional hourly pay during Fall complex routing
- Training stipend for New Applicants / non CDL holders - has permit
- Training stipend for New Applicants that already hold CDL
- Reimburse bus drivers for CDL testing fees
- Employee referral bonus doubled to \$1000 per referral (previously \$500)
- Annual Milestone bonus for 5, 10, 15+ yrs of service
- Accident Free rewards

Bus Driver Recruitment and Retention

Strategies and Work Environment:

- Broadly post job openings
- Attend job fairs
- Implementing Bus Driver Advisory Groups, Focus Groups, and Listening Sessions
- Implementing differentiated professional development plan that extends through the year with topics selected based on driver feedback
- Improved application of Bus Driver handbook protocols consistently
- Transportation Leadership provides treats, meals, appreciation gifts and social gatherings for staff
- Implemented bus driver appreciation efforts at each school
- Established open office hours for bus drivers to meet with Transportation Department leadership
- Implemented a process for driver feedback to improve areas of concern

Part II

Modifications to School Hours for the 2023-2024 School Year

Goals for 2023-2024 Routing

- Improve on-time bus arrival and dismissal for the school day
- Aim to eliminate 1+1 routes
 - 1+1 = driver picking up one route and dropping students off at school, then going back out again and picking up another route and dropping off at school
- Employ additional drivers
 - More routes = less time students are on a bus
 - Have a pool of sub drivers = coverage when regular drivers are absent
- Conduct routing with actual current number of drivers employed versus optimal number of drivers as used in the past



What is the required time between tiers for on-time busing, using our current drivers?

Current for 22-23

AM

40-55 min. ES to HS

35-55 min. HS to MS

PM

40 min. ES to HS

35 min. HS to MS

Needed for 23-24

(AM=Unload/UnLoad to PM=Load/Load Time)

AM

60 min. ES to HS

60 min. HS to MS

PM

60 min. ES to HS

60 min. HS to MS

Validation Sources for the Needed Time Between Tiers for 23-24:

On-site TransPar = Transportation Professional Services Consultants, WT Routers, WT Bus Driver Advisory Group, WT Dir. and Asst. Dir. of Transportation

Why is this time between tiers non-negotiable for 2023-2024 routing?

- Needed to improve on-time busing
- Needed based on feedback from data, Professional Consultants, WT Transportation Leadership, office staff, and drivers
- Needed based on experience with traffic patterns
- Needed to meet routing deadlines for driver bidding, dry runs, and route adjustments that begins in early second semester of preceding school year
- **Needed due to Driver Shortage: Less drivers = longer routes needed**
 - **22-23 Routing was based on 115 Drivers (optimal number of drivers)**
 - **23-24 Routing to be Based on Current Drivers during Routing Time (currently we have 84 drivers)**

Additional Non-Negotiable Transportation Criteria Needed for 2023-2024

AM Bus Arrival = 5 min. - Prior to Unloading

AM Bus Unloading = 20 min. ES, 15 min. HS, 10 min. MS - Prior to Start Bell

AM Bus Departure = 5 min. - After Unloading

PM Bus Arrival = 5 min. - Prior to End Bell

PM Bus Loading = 10 min. - Beginning at End Bell

PM Bus Departure = 10 min. - After End Bell

MS must be in last tier (requires less drivers than ES and HS)

2023-2024 Routing Timeline Summary

February 2023 - Begin re-routing for the 2023-2024 school year

April 2023 - First round of new 2023-2024 routes - Driver Dry Runs & Feedback

May 2023 - Transfer student information for 2023-2024 to routing software

June 2023 - Route package viewing and feedback for drivers

July 2023 - Route package bid selections for drivers by areas w/ back-ups assigned

July 2023 - Final Dry Runs for drivers

Continue to work with on-site professional consultant through first month of 2023-2024 school year.



Feedback Forums on 2023-2024 Modifications to School Hours

- Transportation Leadership
- Transportation Office Staff
- Bus Driver Advisory Group (feedback on time between tiers)
- School Board Members Individually
- WTEA (main feedback on teacher hours)
- Principals
- Cabinet & District Leadership
- Professional Routing Consultants

2023-2024 SY Changes to Elementary School Hours

	2022-2023 (Current)	2023-2024
School Hours	7:50 AM - 2:35 PM (6 hr 45 min.)	7:40 AM - 2:25 PM (6 hr. 45 min.)
<i>AM Bus Arrival</i>	7:10 AM-7:25 AM	7:15 AM
<i>AM Bus Unloading</i>	7:15 AM-7:30 AM	7:20 AM
<i>AM Bus Departure</i>	7:20 AM-7:35 AM	7:25 AM
AM Time Between ES & HS Tier	40-55 minutes	60 minutes
PM Bus Arrival	2:25 PM	2:20 PM
PM Bus Loading	2:35 PM	2:25 PM
PM Bus Departure	2:45 PM	2:35 PM
PM Time Between ES & HS Tier	40-55 minutes	60 minutes

Implications and Rationale for Elementary School

- Currently, school bus arrival and parent drop-off is scheduled to begin at 7:30 AM. In many buildings, multiple school buses are releasing students as early as 7:15 AM, so they can run an additional elementary route or to begin their high school route. This means students released by these buses are in the buildings by 7:20-7:25 AM and the majority of their peers are in the school by 7:35-7:40 AM.
- This 10 minute start time change represents a minor adjustment to what morning bus riders are currently experiencing, and the car drop-off shifts just ten minutes earlier.
- Elementary schools breakfast & lunch procedures and schedules will need to be balanced due to Child Nutrition staffing hour limitations.

2023-2024 SY Changes to High School Hours

	2022-2023 (Current)	2023-2024
School Hours	8:30 AM - 3:30 PM (7 hr. 0 min.)	8:35 AM - 3:25 PM (6 hr. 50 min.)
<i>AM Bus Arrival</i>	8:05 AM	8:15 AM
<i>AM Bus Unloading</i>	8:10 AM	8:20 AM
<i>AM Bus Departure</i>	8:20 AM	8:25 AM
AM Time Between HS & MS Tier	35 minutes	60 minutes
PM Bus Arrival	3:25 PM	3:20 PM
PM Bus Loading	3:30 PM	3:25 PM
PM Bus Departure	3:40 PM	3:35 PM
PM Time Between HS & MS Tier	35 minutes	60 minutes

Implications and Rationale for High School

- Length of instructional day will decrease by 10 minutes resulting in a one-minute reduction to the length of an instructional period
- Moves the start time back 5 minutes and the end time up 5 minutes
- Still maintains the initial recommendations based on sleep patterns of adolescents
- Should significantly reduce time staff is spending supervising students for extended periods of time after school
- Will allow us to maintain momentum with Professional Learning Communities (PLC) work



2023-2024 SY Changes to Middle School Hours

	2022-2023 (Current)	2023-2024
School Hours	9:20 AM - 4:20 PM (7 hr. 0 min.)	9:30 AM - 4:25 PM (6 hr. 55 min.)
<i>AM Bus Arrival</i>	9:05 AM	9:15 AM
<i>AM Bus Unloading</i>	9:10 AM	9:20 AM
<i>AM Bus Departure</i>	9:15 AM	9:25 AM
PM Bus Arrival	4:15 PM	4:20 PM
PM Bus Loading	4:20 PM	4:25 PM
PM Bus Departure	4:30 PM	4:35 PM

Implications and Rationale for Middle School

- Moves the start time back ten minutes and the end time back five minutes, resulting in a school day that is five minutes shorter, but due to the change in the middle school schedule, instructional time should not be adversely impacted
- Still maintains the initial recommendations based on sleep patterns of adolescents
- Should significantly reduce time staff is spending supervising students for extended periods of time after school

Why is Board approval not needed to modify the school hours within the current tiers?

On March 23, 2022 the School Board approved the following:

Approval of District Leadership flexibility to consider slight modifications, within the current tiers, to school hours only beyond the 2022-2023 school year as we continue our routing efficiency analysis work into this upcoming school year without requiring Board approval for the changes.

Staff/Family Communications Plan & Educational Webinar for the 23-24 School Hours

February - Communicate changes for 2023-2024 and conduct a webinar on Wednesday, February 15th at 6:00 PM to share information and field questions for WT Staff and Families

April - Reminders to WT Staff and Families

April/May - Announce approximate bus stop pick-up time ranges

July - Update staff and families on 2023-2024 school year bus routing and when bus information will be available for viewing

July - Communicate with families to access VersaTrans schedules beginning mid-July

Implications if we are able to hire and retain more Bus Drivers:

- Shorter bus routes for students
- Elimination of 1+1 routes unless due to driver absence and no sub available
- More support to after school bus needs (late bus, activity bus, athletic bus, etc.)
 - *Reminder: these are voluntary “extra” routes-not part of driver’s regular day*
- Grow a pool of bus driver substitutes to lessen driver absence impact on routes
- Possible less time between tiers needed for school hours planning in the future (add time back to the instructional day)
- Additional time prior to instructional day at secondary (for breakfast, etc.)
- Significant reduction in bus route changes experienced by families



2023-2024 School Hours

School Level	School Day	Approximate Bus Stop Time Ranges	AM Parent Drop Off	Late Bus <small>*Possible additional strategies developed this Spring to support</small>
Elementary School	7:40 AM - 2:25 PM	Announced in April/May (after pre-routing is conducted)	7:20 AM - 7:40 AM	Not able to provide
High School	8:35 AM - 3:25 PM	Announced in April/May (after pre-routing is conducted)	8:15 AM - 8:35 AM	1 Pick-up Time 5:15 - 5:30 PM (final time tba late spring after pre-routing)
Middle School	9:30 AM - 4:25 PM	Announced in April/May (after pre-routing is conducted)	9:10 AM - 9:30 AM	1 Pick-up Time 5:15 - 5:30 PM (final time tba late spring after pre-routing)
Preschool	8:35 AM - 11:35 AM & 12:25 PM - 3:25 PM	Announced in April/May (after pre-routing is conducted)	8:30 AM & 12:30 PM	n/a