

**TRANSPORTATION MEETING WITH PARENTS**  
**Held at: WOODLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL LRC**  
**Wednesday Sept 2, 2009**  
**6:30 p.m.**

The meeting began at 6:30 p.m. with Dr. Joy Swoboda introducing herself as the Superintendent of Schools and the purpose for the meeting. Approximately 150 parents were in attendance. In addition, officials from the Transportation Department were present.

The purpose for the meeting was to explain the reason behind the changes in bus stops, apologize for the errors made in not communicating the changes in advance to the community and the intent that the district wishes to resolve parent concerns. In the future, the district will have practices in place for communicating any future changes.

Dr. Swoboda informed the audience the district has heard concerns via phone calls, email, and at the annual Proof of Residency event regarding the bus stop changes. The district will continue to address concerns from parents and families.

Dr. Swoboda explained that the primary reason for the consolidation was to reduce the time the children were on the busses as well as the amount of time some of the children were waiting to load the busses at the end of the day. Some of the children were not loading the busses until 3:50-3:55 p.m. when they were dismissed at 3:25 p.m. Middle school children were being picked up in the morning at 6:30 a.m. in the morning. The \$30,000 cost savings mentioned in a previous flyer was an unintended benefit.

The floor was then opened up for parents to voice their concerns to allow Dr. Swoboda to address each of those concerns. The district prepared a handout for parents that listed the main concerns that had been brought to the Transportation Department's attention. The majority of the parents shared the same concerns listed in the handout titled "*Most Frequent Bus Stop Consolidation Concerns*". The main concerns included the distance children have to walk to their stop in the dark and cold, not having plowed/shoveled sidewalks for students to walk on during the winter, dangerous intersections, excessive number of children at the stop along with all age groups and high school students at some stops. Another concern shared was the manner in which the staff at the transportation department was speaking to the parents, and their lack of a timely response.

A majority of the concerns were verbally addressed. Dr. Swoboda informed families that she and other administrators would stay after the meeting to address those that had not been answered. She then summarized the main concerns and reviewed the proposed solutions. She asked there be a show of hands from the audience for feedback.

**Concern #1:** Excessive number of children at a given bus stop

Majority of the audience felt that 5-6 children at a given stop was an adequate number.

**Concern #2:** Bus stop at dangerous intersection

The audience felt that state defined stops may or may not be considered safe and that there needed to be a representative from each subdivision who is familiar with the traffic within the subdivision. Dr. Swoboda informed the audience that a representative from the school would visit each stop of concern.

**Concern #3:** Lack of adequate snow shoveling during winter months

Dr. Swoboda recommended that we ask our neighbors to please shovel their sidewalks during the winter months. The district will meet with Jerry Rudd of Warren Township and representatives from Gurnee Public Works as well as other municipalities to discuss where the bus stops will be and request these agencies not pile snow at these stops.

**Concern #4:** Pedophile living near a bus stop

Dr. Swoboda informed the audience that the sex offenders list put out by Lake County Sheriff's Office is checked weekly. There will be no child waiting for a bus near where there is a registered sex offender.

**Concern #5:** Distance to the bus stop

A majority of those in attendance felt that 3/10 of a mile was too far for both the Intermediate and Middle School children to walk. The majority of attendees felt that 2/10 a mile was reasonable for an Intermediate student and that the district should consider less than 2/10 of a mile for Primary students. Another concern was having students walk around curves, up hills, in close proximity of bushes, ponds, and trees that could impose dangers because the children were out of their parents' sight.

**Concern #6:** Difficulty seeing bus stop from home

Each concern is being analyzed on an individual basis and changes will be made accordingly if possible.

**Concern #7:** Bus driver is driving past the old stop

Each concern is being analyzed on an individual basis and changes will be made accordingly. The transportation department will separate stops for each school by either changing or adding stops.

**Concern #8:** High School Students at same stop

We will be meeting with the high school to identify their stops that correspond to our stops and they will be adjusted to separate groups if possible.

**Concern #9:** There are no sidewalks

Each concern is being analyzed on an individual basis and changes will be made accordingly when possible.

**Concern #10:** Same bus stop for students waiting for different buses

Each concern is being analyzed on an individual basis and changes will be made accordingly when possible.

**Concern #11:** Customer service/ response to concerns

Any parent whom calls no matter what the issue is to be treated with excellent customer service. All district employees are to be polite and courteous, and actively listen. If a parent feels this did not happen they are to talk to the individual first, then their supervisor, then Dr. Swoboda and if they feel they still have not been treated with excellent customer service, they were invited to speak with the Board of Education. Any concern made as of the meeting date will be addressed by 9/9/09 and any after Wednesday 9/2/09 will take approximately 10 business days to answer.

Dr. Swoboda then commented that we needed to close the meeting but would be available afterwards. She shared that 90% of the concerns to date were being evaluated and will most likely be changed. In closing, Dr Swoboda pledged that the district will look at each and every concern, that everyone will receive better customer service, and that there will be correspondence sent to all parents who have shared concerns.

Question and concerns that you wish to be addressed by transportation should be emailed to [trans@dist50.net](mailto:trans@dist50.net) If you have customer service or response issues that require further follow-up, please e-mail Jennifer Tempest Bova at [jbova@dist50.net](mailto:jbova@dist50.net)

Contact information for all administrators can be found at [www.dist50.net/administration.html](http://www.dist50.net/administration.html)

Meeting was dismissed at 8:10 p.m.