

## Transportation/ Energy/Technology Committee

### Recommendations

#### 1. Reduce Number of Buses Utilized to Transport Students (see attached analysis)

##### a. Option #1 (aka 2 loop) – combine bus runs for Grades 6-12.

Please note the impact of Option #1b below on Option #1a. Irrespective of the possible reduced number of buses obtained under Option 1a, the District still needs 27 buses to deliver the elementary age students to the respective schools. Rental of buses is on a per diem basis and not on a per loop basis. The daily contract rate is currently \$224.44/day

Nonetheless, Option #1a has been reviewed. Please note that First Student has established a reasonable ratio number for student ridership capacity at 57 students per bus.

Although seats are made available for 100% ridership at the high school level, approximately 60% of students actually ride the bus to school. Therefore, based on an approximate 60% high school ridership, the total student count for the middle (725) and high school (566) student would be 1,291 students.

Using First Student's seat capacity of 15 seats with two students per seat and 9 seats with 3 students per seat on a bus, the number of buses needed for grades 6-12 would be 22.6 or 23 buses ( $1,291/57 = 22.6$ ). This could reduce the fleet by 1 bus.

Please also note that transporting middle school students with high school students had been previously investigated and reaction from parents was unfavorable.

##### b. Option #2 (aka 3 loop) – Reduce number of buses for Grades 6 – 12 from 24 to 18.

Since the elementary (Loop 3) bus run requires all 27 buses for student transportation, there is no opportunity to reduce the number of overall buses for the District.

## **2. Reduce Energy Costs**

- a. Engage students (and staff) in conservation efforts by holding a contest to see which school can reduce their energy the most.**

Each Building has its own unique characteristics. Thus, playing each school off of each other with raw Cost Avoidance Numbers would not be a fair way to measure conservation performance. However, you could measure each school against itself for a percentage change. The best incentives are the ones that solicit conservation and energy efficiency ideas from the occupants and then measure their potential value. At the onset of the 2009/10 school year, an energy conservation suggestion box will be located in the main office area at each school. Suggestions will be reviewed, implemented, if possible, and measured for efficiencies. Contributors will be acknowledged for their suggestions.

- b. Reduce heat and light during school vacations.**

This is a major point of the current Board of Education's Energy Conservation Policy (in force since 2003) for anytime that the schools are not occupied. Occupied is defined as from the first student arrival to the last student departing, a typical 6 hour school day.

- c. Reduce the number of lights used for exterior lighting and the number of hours those lights are on.**

This concept is called Light Zoning and is hampered by the way in which all outside lights have been wired as well as the equipment that controls them. A method of immediately "overriding" a particular schedule would have to be found to preclude dangerous situations if an event schedule changes and trained personnel were not available to change the lighting schedule in response. In all schools this would require some additional equipment and/or equipment/controller reprogramming. It is worth further investigation and costing, if funding for implementation is available.

The current schedule for all outside lights is as follows:

During the school year; outside lights come on at dusk and go off 60 minutes after the custodians leave for the night.

During week-long school vacations and holidays; NO outside lights are turned on, with the exception of single nights where there is a sanctioned event.

During the summer vacation; NO outside lights are turned on, with the exception of nights where there is a sanctioned event, like the Community Play.

This schedule was put in place 6 years ago with the assistance and input of a State Trooper versed in Public Safety. It was considered at the time to be the minimum outdoor lighting schedule for safe public and staff use of our buildings.

**d. Parks and Rec to coordinate school use functions to minimize time between classes.**

This would certainly help with energy conservation. Larger impacts would be to limit the total number of days that these events take place in the schools during the week and during the total school year and eliminating all weekend activities. However, event scheduling is a Parks and Recreation Department function, and currently the Department is looking to expand its offerings to residents, not reduce them.

**e. Installation of Photovoltaic Panels on schools under a CL&P grant.**

CL&P does not have grants for Photovoltaic Panels. Additionally, all incentive and grant programs that they once had have been suspended due to the State Legislature using the Conservation Funds to balance the State Budget.

**f. Recommend that the Council fund an annual grant to the BOE equal to 1/3 of the Cost savings realized from the previous operating budget.**

We will be forwarding this recommendation to the members of the Town Council for consideration.

**3. Enhance Technology Initiatives**

**a. Hold an annual technology benefit where residents would donate their old computers, digital cameras, etc.**

There is already an open invitation to the community to donate useful technology equipment to the district. Assigning a single special day is a good idea. Several issues related to site, storage, and recycling would need to be considered. More importantly, the donated equipment would have to meet the District's specific needs and standards.

- b. Sponsor a monthly technology symposia featuring community experts open to staff and students.**

Although all the schools welcome presenters from the community, there have been few offers. The schools have made an effort to recruit presenters from the police and other outside sources to discuss Internet safety and parent awareness. Advertising to promote presentations from the community through the administrators and curriculum leaders would help this effort. However, we do not have enough administrative staff to schedule and support presentations on a monthly schedule.

- c. Recommend BOE visit the merits of a student: Personal Computer ratio of 2:1 for grades K thru 12.**

While we agree that this would help tech integration in the curriculum in many grades, given the district's financial inability to update the computers that are already owned, this recommendation is too costly to implement.

- d. We believe that every high school student should have a laptop and recommend that laptops should be leased through a THS negotiated program with Dell for approximately \$150/year for 4 years.**

Costs in money and time for acquisition and ongoing support are prohibitive for this option. Actual cost for a 4-year lease purchase on the least expensive laptop available under state contract today is actually \$1,125.00 across four years. There are approximately 900 students at THS for a total potential cost of over \$1,000,000.00. Similar initiatives undertaken in Connecticut and other states have indicated a severe increase in demand for technical support and management.