

**Spokane Public Schools
Transportation Workgroup**

**February 7, 2022-Zoom
4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

WORKGROUP PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING

Shawn Jordan (facilitator), Phil Crocker (consultant), Ivan Corley, Richelle Hoenike, Chauncey Jones, Stephanie Splater, Dani Galvez, Corey Arkle, Sarah Miller, Riley Smith, Michael Warnecke, Karl Otterstrom,

WORKGROUP ACTIVITY

The Transportation Workgroup met to address a single agenda item – the finalization of recommendations from the Workgroup to the Superintendent culminating from the information presented, reviewed, discussed and analyzed throughout the previous meetings.

Over the course of multiple meetings the workgroup members had recognized that many options in student transportation are interrelated with others. This recognition led to a shift to recommend areas of focus for the district to pursue, rather than specific, discrete actions.

The workgroup members were asked to validate and/or edit the areas of focus they were recommending that had emerged from their work over the course of the meetings. These recommendations were:

- Integration with Spokane Transit - which students ride transit?
- Parent and school communications when issues arise
- Driver recruitment and retention, including pay and benefits.
- School start times - allowing for potentially more routes with less drivers.
- Alternative energy transportation options (electric buses, hydrogen buses, etc.)
- Who operates student transportation (district doing all, district doing part, district partnering with neighboring district, same/different contractor, etc.?)
- Special Needs transportation - separate buses or some students on regular buses (potentially with aides?)

The workgroup was polled with the question: *Please select items that district staff should focus on as they work to improve Transportation services for students and families.* The results from the poll are below:

5	Integration with Spokane Transit - which students ride transit?
4	Parent and school communications when issues arise.
2	Driver recruitment and retention, including pay and benefits.
4	School start times - allowing for potentially more routes with less drivers.
	Alternative energy transportation options (electric buses, hydrogen buses, etc.)
3	Who operates student transportation (district doing all, district doing part, district partnering with neighboring district, same/different contractor, etc.?)
3	Special Needs transportation - separate buses or some students on regular buses (potentially with aides?)

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The absence of any member selecting the alternative energy option was discussed, and the discussion centered on that it was important, just not as important as the other items and they didn't want a focus on that item to take away resources or time from addressing the other items. The workgroup did feel that in the long term, exploring alternative energy solutions for student transportation was important.

The workgroup was then polled with the prioritizing question: *Please select the areas of focus that district should undertake in preparation for next school year.* The results from the poll are below:

6	Integration with Spokane Transit - which students ride transit?
5	Parent and school communications when issues arise.
4	Driver recruitment and retention, including pay and benefits.
3	School start times - allowing for potentially more routes with less drivers.
2	Alternative energy transportation options (electric buses, hydrogen buses, etc.)
7	Who operates student transportation (district doing all, district doing part, district partnering with neighboring district, same/different contractor, etc.?)
3	Special Needs transportation - separate buses or some students on regular buses (potentially with aides?)

The inclusion of the alternative energy by in these results was reflective of the discussion between the polls, where there as a general consensus that it was not a top priority, but a realization that it should begin to be explored sooner rather than later.

In reflection on the discussion and polling, the workgroup's top two recommendation for the district's focus between now and the start of next school year should be:

- Who operate SPS transportation?
- Integration with Spokane Transit

The workgroup validated that all areas of focus are important, and there remain many unique elements of these areas of focus that should also be explored including smaller bus routes, increasing the use of vans with non-bus drivers, smaller buses, etc.

In addition, a recommendation was made by members of the workgroup to solicit feedback from a larger element of the district community as each of these focus areas is refined and can be acted upon.

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NEXT STEPS

1. The district should undertake further exploration of the prioritized areas of focus.
2. As actionable items emerge from this exploration, they district should update the workgroup and reach out to the broader community for information sharing and, if helpful, feedback.
3. Implement improvements in the areas of focus, as possible, for the 22-23 school year
4. Develop a five year transportation plan that will serve as a roadmap to continue to improve upon the areas of focus and realize action across them all in reasonable timeframes.