

From: [Christine Merriman](#)
To: [SchoolBus](#)
Subject: Re: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21
Date: Monday, February 24, 2020 10:40:28 AM

Dear Town Council,

I am a parent of a child at Fisher Middle School. We live in the mountain community.

I am strongly opposed to ending the school bus pilot project.

For those of us who live in the mountains, have households with either two working parents with no flexibility in our schedules, or a single parent who may work in Santa Cruz Co., having bus service has been a godsend. It has alleviated stress, saved jobs, allowed us to have consistency and stability in our schedules without having to scramble to find rides for our children, worry about sick days and the other children we're leaving stranded when we have to stay home, or imposing on friends whose homes at which we can drop our kids off, often an hour+ early so we can get to work on time.

The bus service has also allowed us to earn more so we can afford to pay for this vital service. For those of us that do not have the wherewithal to hire nannies or au pairs or chauffeurs, or hire Uber-type drivers on a daily basis having a community bus is affordable, vital and necessary. It's not just about traffic congestion downtown. It's about the parents who have to be at work before school even starts and don't work anywhere near the schools. It's about our lives, livelihoods, sanity, and safety, especially those of us that drive Hwy 17 on a daily basis.

Ending the school bus service which we are paying for creates an hardship for the most vulnerable families in our district. Some families recognize that and pay for the service, even though their children may not use it on a regular basis. Please don't end it and make matters worse for everyone.

Sincerely,

~Christine Merriman

Listening looks easy, but it is not simple. Every head is a world.

~Cuban Proverb

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 21, 2020, at 9:16 AM, SchoolBus <SchoolBus@losgatosca.gov> wrote:

February 21, 2020

Subject: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21

Dear School Bus Parents:

ATTACHMENT 2

As many of you know, the School Bus Pilot Program is funded through June 2020. The Town of Los Gatos is providing this service as one piece of a multi-faceted approach towards relieving congestion around schools. After running the Pilot for just over one year, the program's ridership has demonstrated that it has *not* achieved the congestion relief goal. Furthermore, the low ridership numbers and the high cost challenge the program's viability in the long term. You can find more information, including regular reports on the program status, on the Town's website: www.losgatosca.gov/schoolbus.

The Town is preparing its Fiscal Year 2020/21 Budget and will need to make a decision on the School Bus Pilot Program. The recommendation on whether to continue the Pilot next year is scheduled on the March 3 agenda for the Town Council's consideration. **Staff is recommending discontinuing the School Bus Pilot Program in Fiscal Year 2020/21.** Although staff understands the value of this service to many of you, we made the recommendation in the context of balancing many transportation and mobility priorities the Town is focusing on.

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We'd like to thank you for your support of the School Bus Pilot Program.

Sincerely,

School Bus Pilot Program

From: [Neepatel](#)
To: [SchoolBus](#)
Subject: Re: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21
Date: Saturday, February 22, 2020 2:45:33 PM

Dear council man and woman of Los Gatos,

I am writing this email in regards to bus pilot program.

My children take the bus to come home every day from Fisher middle school on Route A.

Since the bus service started they can come home where my elderly mother who otherwise can not drive provides care for them. Which allows me to be able to stay at work till 5.30 PM otherwise I will have to either leave work at 2.30 PM every day(which no employer will allow) or give up my job or higher someone to drive to the school to pick them up, which is additional cost to my family and also the reliability of the driver.

On route A atleast 30 kids ride home to north Los Gatos, that means in place of 30 cars, they are all coming in one bus.

Imagine what will happen when the housing at junction of LG blvd and Lark gets build. Right now during commute hour it takes such a long time to make left from Oka road to Lark Ave, it will be nightmare. If you can take off 30 cars from road, it is huge benefit to reduce congestion, decrease green house gases, provide peace of mind to working parents.

We would like you to reconsider stopping the bus.

Neela

Sent from my iPhone

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February 21, 2020

Subject: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21

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Sincerely,

School Bus Pilot Program

From: [Dorice Piraino-Sharp](#)
To: [SchoolBus](#)
Subject: Re: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21
Date: Saturday, February 22, 2020 12:28:40 PM

I respectfully ask the town to consider retaining Route B. If the town can provide an estimated cost to give the parents the option to offset their costs, that would be great. I'm not sure how much the town subsidized the program?

This service has extremely helped our quality of life. While I understand parents are responsible for transporting their child to school, I find that the traffic in Los Gatos causes extreme duress as it can take between 40 minutes to an hour to drive one way. And with full-time work, it was nice to have our children go home after school via the bus. I worry about what my daughter will do after school, as there are no activities that she can participate in- and the after school club house doesn't exist anymore. My husband and I know at 12 she can hang out at the public library until we get off of work, or she can take three buses to get to my work. There is no doubt that her quality of life will change. She has special needs (has an IEP), and I'm concerned about her ability to be responsible enough to be on her own for four hours in town or to ride three buses to get to San Jose where I work. I understand that this is not the town's issue, but I wanted to let you know the real-life ramifications that result in this change.

I understand there is a concern about ridership numbers, but as any program, I feel it takes time and good marketing to build up. We also may consider alternate options, like smaller buses, if that's cheaper? Perhaps you have exhausted all avenues, and I apologize if I sound demeaning. I just am feeling disappointed.

I will try and attend the March 3rd meeting. I hope the town can consider keeping route B.

Thank you,
Dorice Piraino
408-821-6478

On Fri, Feb 21, 2020 at 9:16 AM SchoolBus <SchoolBus@losgatosca.gov> wrote:

February 21, 2020

Subject: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21

Dear School Bus Parents:

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Sincerely,

School Bus Pilot Program

From: [Tiffany Stickle](#)
To: [SchoolBus](#)
Subject: Re: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21
Date: Friday, February 21, 2020 10:21:56 PM

Please do not discontinue the bus service!

My PM kindergartener can only take the bus on early Wed. but is looking forward to an everyday schedule next year. My 2nd grader has loved riding the bus everyday this year. We the parents plead that at least the AM Route A continue service!

What do you need to keep this morning route going?

Thank you!
Tiffany

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Sincerely,

School Bus Pilot Program

From: [Carl Lumma](#)
To: [SchoolBus](#)
Subject: Re: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21
Date: Friday, February 21, 2020 10:25:24 AM

Have you considered the value of the independence a school bus offers our young men and women, apart from its potential to decrease traffic congestion?

-Carl

On Fri, Feb 21, 2020 at 9:16 AM SchoolBus <SchoolBus@losgatosca.gov> wrote:

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> February 21, 2020

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> Subject: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21

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> School Bus Pilot Program

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From: [Carl Lumma](#)
To: [SchoolBus](#)
Subject: Re: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21
Date: Friday, February 21, 2020 10:20:48 AM

Hav you considered the possibility that ridership may have been higher had the service been provided for free, as in every other town in America?

-Carl

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> February 21, 2020

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From: [Heather Lattimer](#)
To: [SchoolBus](#)
Cc: [Joe Secondine](#)
Subject: Re: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21
Date: Monday, February 24, 2020 5:41:09 PM

Dear Town Council -

We are very disappointed to learn that the School Bus service may not be continued in the coming year. We have a middle school age son and both of us work full time in jobs that require frequent out-of-town travel. We live too far from school for our son to walk and biking is not a consistently safe option. When considering home buying options two years ago, the possibility of a bus service was a significant factor in choosing to come to Los Gatos.

We understand that funds are limited and would request that alternative considerations be explored — Is there the possibility of asking parents to pay more for the service (we would be happy to do so)? Could the service have a progressive cost structure that allows some parents to pay more based on ability to contribute? Could we look at an afternoon only option when the busses tend to have more riders? Could the town use vans instead of busses to save money and better reflect demand?

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Heather Lattimer & Joe Secondine

On Feb 24, 2020, at 5:01 PM, Joseph W Secondine Jr
<josephsecondine@gmail.com> wrote:

Begin forwarded message:

From: SchoolBus <SchoolBus@losgatosca.gov>
Subject: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21
Date: February 21, 2020 at 9:16:30 AM PST

February 21, 2020

Subject: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21

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Sincerely,

School Bus Pilot Program

From: [Edward Morimoto](#)
To: [Ying Smith](#)
Subject: School Bus pilot discontinuation
Date: Friday, February 28, 2020 10:20:48 AM

Hi Ying,

I just noticed discontinuation of the school bus pilot is on the agenda for the 3/3 TC meeting. This note isn't intended as a comment for those proceedings (although one may be forthcoming), but I did have some questions about the pilot:

1. It seems that 50%+/- ridership is deemed unsuccessful. I was just wondering if there is any standard by which this assessment was made? Part of me feels like this number is pretty high all things considered.
2. Do you have ridership data split between the morning & afternoon routes? I see the subscription breakouts, but not ridership. It would seem logical morning ridership could be higher (fewer alternate plan conflicts) and the morning bus would be more impactful on congestion given the conflict with work commutes.
3. Do the buses make accommodation for bikes, scooters, etc. (for one-way usage if the student has a conflict at the other end of the day)
4. Has either a subscription cost increase been considered instead of cancellation? It would seem logical to try to balance the program costs and cancel the program if we are unsuccessful rather than assume we cannot. In that same vein I don't recall solicitation of community financial support being attempted as well. I, for one, would be willing to support such a program (like we support the school districts, SRTS, etc even though we don't have a child in the schools yet) and as the head of our private foundation, I would be willing to commit it to support as well.

Thanks,

EM

sugiman@stanfordalumni.org

From: [Tiffany Stickle](#)
To: [SchoolBus](#)
Subject: School Bus Service in Year 2020/21
Date: Wednesday, February 26, 2020 5:36:33 PM

Hi,

I'm a parent and have 2 kids currently subscribed to the morning Route A bus service to Blossom Hill Elementary School. Many parents with whom I've spoken to are unaware of the current bus services. They are interested in being future subscribers. We suggest advertising and bringing about more awareness throughout all the LG schools before fully cancelling the programs. Please give the Bus Pilot program a fighting chance to help traffic congestion in the mornings.

Thank you!

The Stickle Family

(We are one of many families who feel this way. Feel free to contact me with any questions/comments.)