

INTERNAL BOARD OPERATIONS

Bell Times

To provide a uniform procedure for establishing new school bell times and adjusting existing school bell times to ensure maximum transportation efficiency, to reduce transportation costs while maximizing overall services to all students.

As there is finite transportation funding available, the most efficient use of busses needs to be determined and managed. Factors such as an increase in overall traffic congestion place additional pressure on existing service levels.

1.0 Criteria:

1.1 Bell Times – New Schools

If bussing is required for any pupils who live within the approved boundary of a new school, overall transportation efficiency will be maintained in establishing bell times. Discussion will take place between the Superintendent of Education responsible for Transportation, the Area Superintendent, and the Principal.

1.2 Bell Times – Adjustments to Existing School Times

Where DSTS believes it is prudent and cost effective to change bell times of an existing school(s), an analysis confirming the savings of such a change will be prepared and presented to Administrative Council for their review, and to the Governance Committee of DSTS for consideration.

1.2.1 Bell time adjustments that are 10 minutes or less in any school year (earlier or later than the existing bell time) will not require a Public Consultation process, but will follow the communication process outlined in Section 2.0 and does not require Board approval.

1.2.2 Bell time adjustments that are greater than 10 minutes phased in over one or more years (earlier or later than the existing bell time) will require a Public Consultation process, as outlined in Section 3 of this procedure and communication of this process is outlined in Section 2.0 and does require Board approval.

1.3 Bell Times-Adjustments to Existing School Times Experiencing Program and/or Boundary Changes

1.3.1 Bell time adjustments that are 10 minutes or less in any school year (earlier or later than the existing bell time) will not require a Public Consultation process, but will follow the communication process outlined in Section 2.0 and does not require Board approval.

1.3.2 Bell time adjustments that are greater than 10 minutes (earlier or later than existing bell time) will require a Public Consultation process, which may be combined with an ongoing ARC or School Boundary process and does require Board approval.

2.0 Communication:

By January 15th each year, it will be determined by DDSB and DSTS staff which schools require adjustments to bell time for the following school year to manage transportation efficiency. Board report informing of school bell time changes will be provided to Trustees at the January Board Meeting.

The criteria outlined in Section 1.0 determines if a Public Consultation process is required.

2.1 No Public Consultation Required

If a Public Consultation process is not required based on criteria outlined in Section 1.2.1, the school community will be notified of the bell time adjustment by end of January via the school's newsletter, individual school Websites, letters home with students, and through automated calls to each student. Communication regarding the bell time adjustment will continue through to the end of the school year, as facilitated by Durham Student Transportation Services, school Principal, Superintendent responsible for Transportation and the Area Superintendent

2.2 Public Consultation Required

If a Public Consultation process is required based on criteria outlined in Section 1.2.2, the school community will be notified of the bell time adjustment and need for a Public Consultation process, as outlined in Section 3.0, by the end of January via the school's newsletter, individual school Websites, and through automated calls to each student. Information will include the proposed bell time adjustment along with the date, time and location of an Open House to be held in February to gather feedback on the bell time adjustment.

3.0 Consultative Process:

3.1 Decisions regarding bell time adjustments greater than 10 minutes will ultimately rest with the Board. The consultative process is as follows:

- (a) By the end of each November, DSTS staff will prepare a report outlining potential changes in bell times for bussing efficiency. As part of this annual transportation review and assessment, bell time adjustments will be considered to enhance route efficiency.
- (b) Where bell time adjustments are being considered, an analysis confirming the savings of such a change will be prepared and presented to Administrative Council by the end of December. This information will be developed by DSTS and shared with the Governance Committee of DSTS jointly.
- (c) An Open Session report to Trustees will be presented as information at the January Board meeting regarding the bell time adjustments that are required to improve and maintain transportation efficiency. The schools where a public consultation process is required will be outlined within the report.
- (d) DSTS staff and the Superintendent of Education responsible for Transportation will meet with the Principal(s) and School Community Council chair(s) or Executive(s) of the schools where a public consultation process is required, and/or, unless it is a regional or major review, then 3.1(e) will provide the public consultation opportunity.

- (e) The Superintendent of Education responsible for Transportation and the appropriate trustee(s) will initiate a public consultation process, involving an Open House, with parents/guardians of students to be affected and involve the appropriate Principal(s), the School Community Council chair(s) or executive(s), Durham Student Transportation staff and Planning Department staff. Information on the bell time adjustments will be outlined by DSTS staff at the Open House and input from parents/guardians will be received. The Open House will occur prior to the end of February.
- (f) A dedicated email address and phone line will be set up to gather input, from the time the community are informed of the consultation process, to when an approval has occurred.
- (g) An administrative report will be prepared by the Superintendent of Education responsible for Transportation in consultation with Durham Student Transportation Services and presented to Administrative Council. This report will be presented to the Board for final approval in March.
- (h) Details of the adjusted bell times will be communicated via the school's newsletter and Website and through automated calls to each student.

Appendix:

None

Effective Date

2015-09-22

Amended/Reviewed

2017-01-17

2020-04-21