



Operations Department

Bell Time Task Force Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2022

Kessler Center – Tillicum Room

4:30pm to 6:00pm

FACILITATOR	Vincent Pecchia
ATTENDEES	List members alphabetically, no titles. Attendees present at a meeting are indicated in bold.

Next Meeting:

October 18, 2022

Kessler Center – Tillicum Room

4:30pm – 6:00pm

Meeting Handouts:

Electronic handouts are in Teams in the Bell Time Task Force Folder, sub-folder Meetings

- PSD Bell Time Task Force Meeting 091522 Final.docx.pdf
- Bell Time Task Force Charter.pdf
- PSD Bell Time Task Force Meeting #1 09.15.2022 – PowerPoint.pdf

1. Overview (Vince)

a. Welcome and Purpose

- General facilities information
- All attendees to sign in
- Common Agreement details and meeting expectations

b. Introductions

c. Establish Ground Rules

- Going over PSD agreement standards

d. Notes and Documentation of Progress

2. Bell Time Task Force Focus and Charter (Ryan)

a. Per Policy 6600, Transportation, create and recommend new efficient bus routes that improve on-time performance starting with the 2023-2024 school year.

- Specific language focus on “create and recommend”
 - The reason for this task force

b. Incorporate recent Safety Advisory Committee recommendations for safe walking routes.

- Big roles from Elizabeth and Brian in developing this and impact on this project

c. Assess future needs/facilities master planning to ensure students have equitable access to programs.

- Example, dual language program is not being serviced
 - There were requests to bus this program, but there are not the resources at this time to support the request

d. Present to stakeholder groups, district staff, and/or the board of directors, as needed.

- This is an expectation and members will be asked to attend
 - **Thomas (student) special thanks for attendance from students

3. Task Force Starting Point:

a. Understanding why this work is necessary (Ryan)

- Looking for efficiencies and equitable access
 - When the school bus arrives, what is it providing? Access and support of school district programs for children and parents

- We will be consulting with the bus drivers—they are the neighborhood watch
 - They are the eyes on the ground that know the routes and the neighborhoods/communities better than anyone else
- The transportation department is working to improve and become more efficient
 - Implementing new technologies

b. Transportation Program Sustainability

- Logistical Indicators (slide)
 - Explaining the differences between routes and runs (fleet utilization)
 - Review of number in fleet and the utilization of fleet (currently)
 - The item that is not listed and measured, but the children's experience
 - a. This can be done through balancing the buses appropriately
 - b. To make this equitable means that the areas are being serviced equally
- Puyallup is a narrow area with limited arterial
 - Will look at logistical routes
- Staffing this are difficult—finding people to work in multiple blocks of hours are not expected
 - Factors that have contributed to the need for this work:
 - a. Commercial driver shortages, general
 - b. People wanting to pursue a commercial license
 - c. There are a lot of barriers for commercial driver's license
 - i. Multiple screenings and testing prior to even taking the exam to receive license
 - d. School bus specific, the challenge of driving a bus is managing the vehicle and 70 children behind the bus driver
 - e. Not all transportation positions are not full-time positions making it difficult to find people
- Due to COVID, district had to pause runs due in addition to general absenteeism
 - This is a problem across the nation
- Industry average of absenteeism is 10% to 12%
 - This district is closer to 15%
 - We need to hire more people to make up for the difference through contract work
 - Most people do want to have guarantee of work
- Homeless student population has increased
 - The students need to make it to the school of origin and that is the school of origin's responsibility
 - This is being vetted through independent contractors, if they cannot be picked up with current bus routes
 - a. Independent contractors cost more than using school resources, as many attendees who participate in programs are aware
- Athletic and activity needs
 - If the school bus cannot come, then charter buses are brought in a much higher rate
- Trying to review this problem holistically
 - Many contributing and changing factors (as discussed previously) make this problem more dynamic
 - PSD serviced 1.5k students in 2021-2022 year, with the expectation that this project will service more students

c. Safe Walk Routes To School (Elizabeth)

- Following the direction of the Safety Advisory Committee to create better and safer accessibility for students
 - Elizabeth and Brian worked on these recommendations together

d. WTSD Grant (Elizabeth)

- SAC (Safety Advisory Committee) created the work with Safe Walk Routes, Brian and Elizabeth worked on this together
 - This is a grant funded program and assist with free and assisted lunches
 - Created 21 paths of safe routes to school

- Safe Walk Routes works hand-in-hand with Policy 6600 and has been considered in the process
 - Initiative: Radius vs. Walk miles from school
 - a. Emerald Ridge area is impacted greatly by the walking radius issue
 - b. Students would have to walk at least 45 minutes to the school—which is a long route for young kids to walk early in the morning and bad weather
 - c. Working on proposing a walk mile standard than radius to shorten the recommended distance
 - i. This recommendation will increase ridership for the school transportation in areas where students had long walks
 - ii. The increase in ridership will assist in reducing the number of parents driving their children to school in these areas
- e. Inclement Weather and or Emergency Routes (Elizabeth)**
 - In January 2022, the roads froze over and created issues
 - Working with Dr. Polm to create safer routes during inclement weather situations
 - “The district used to have them and the district closed them”
 - a. Districts use the rationale that there are people not paying attention to their contribution for safety for the children and decided to close school or delay
 - Emergency routes: The volume of traffic in Puyallup fluctuates greatly based on time of day or circumstance
 - Access through Puyallup alternate routes from I5
 - Flow of traffic on Meridian and other arterial roads are impacted by those commuting to and from work in other cities
- f. What are your hopes for the Bell Time Task Force? (Ryan)**
 - Reviewing Current Bell Model (slide)
 - Average bus run for junior high is 45 minutes
 - Average bus run for elementary is 36 minutes
 - Average bus run for high school 39 minutes
 - If anything interferes with the elementary school
 - a. High school interferes with the elementary school, 55 buses are needed
 - Analysis of the chart shows that during the elementary school times that all buses are being utilized
 - a. Leaves no room for delays or other issues related to staffing the bus
 - Recent Bell Model (slide)
 - Pre-COVID model from 2014
 - a. Compared to current there are 100 less drivers to support this model
 - There is a stagger in the morning for junior highs, which then leaves the afternoons to service the elementary schools
 - Scenario 1 (slide)
 - Elementary is broken into three groups, middle is first in the morning, then reutilize for high school and second elementary before the final elementary group
 - Allows for better shuttling capacity
 - The start times are based on average time and reduces the times to allow the buses to be reused
 - Scenario 2 (slide)
 - Continued to be staggers and having the elementary schools serviced lastly
 - Requires streamlining the start of school times across the district
 - This model requires group consensus on all decisions regarding start times of schools and programs, so one decision to move a program cannot be made by one person
 - Condensed Proposal (slide)
 - This is favorite model of most school districts
 - The mornings are staggers on three tiers with only two tiers at the end of the day is more difficult to balance

- a. This model will be challenging to balance for the afternoon for this district, with the current resources
 - What needs to be determined:
 - a. What is the earliest we can start in consideration of weather and children?
 - b. No school district wants to have a school get out at 4pm
- Why are we asking “the tail to wag the dog”?
 - To make this project successful, we need recommendations from other people in the district to better support the school district holistically

g. What other things can we address for consideration?

- California has laws saying that high school cannot start before a specific time
 - Puyallup’s change is not in response to legislation
- Things to consider:
 - What resources do we have available?
 - What resources do we need?

h. Project guardrails

- Reviewing school regions
 - Are familiar with these regions?

i. Decision-making process

j. Soliciting feedback process

4. Next Steps and Meeting:

a. Review Project Timeline for Next Session and Region #1

- Reviewing Tentative Timeline
- Our job is to compile feedback and data and then take into consideration of other departments
 - Food services, staff being shared between departments
- Homework: Learn about everything you can about Region 1
 - We want data vetted by people in this room, but we want to get information from the people in this room
 - The power of having people who know what went into this process, and you will be one more voice to share this data
- Making a recommendation in March 2023
- The impact of change on the parents will be added to this
 - The impact of this is also the community that is affect by school traffic
 - a. The buses are also affected by this impact
 - The goal is to have the students using the bus and creating a system that they want to use

b. Current Status- District Bell Time Chart

c. Communications Plan for Next Meeting’s Region

5. Closing and Review:

a. What is my homework, if any?

- QR code will be accessible for everyone

b. Do we have the right people in the room?

c. Next Meeting Reminder, Next Meeting is October 18, 2022

- Will have more group engagement at the next meeting

d. Communication that stays here and is shared

- Sarah: Monitor district communication when thinking about how to present this work to other people outside of the task force
- **Devices are required, but accommodations will be made for people who do not have access
 - Microsoft Teams will be our primary area of communication and sharing meeting documents
- All information that is being disseminated from these meetings go through Vince

- No decisions have been made at this time
 - Yes, this information from this meeting can be shared and engaged with others
- e. Adjourn**