

Yellow Bus Challenge Planning for 2022/23

JPA Meeting | March 3, 2022



Goals of this Session

- Level setting/provide an overview of this year's program
- Provide information to inform vendor selection for next year
 - Pros and cons, cost overview of each
- Review changes to, discuss, and approve routes for next school year
- Discuss timing of pass sales
- Set pricing of passes

Current Program

2021/22 school year highlights:

- 850 passes sold (fewer than in prior years by approximately 35%); likely attributable to substantial decline in enrollment (1,023 in 2021-22 vs. 1,300 in 2019-20 and 1,362 in 2018-19) and possibly COVID impacts.
- Routes reduced from 7 to 5 due to driver shortage at First Student (change happened after pass sales were complete).
- Consolidation has yielded some substantial efficiencies (delivering similar level of service with fewer buses than in prior years) but routes are longer.
- Program has experienced some issues with driver absences (limited supply of substitute drivers) and app rollout, but otherwise service from First Student has improved.
- JPA Program Manager assumed responsibility for day-to-day operations and monitoring from Marin Transit, in addition to customer service, in December 2021.



Yellow Bus Providers



Yellow Bus Vendors Interested in Providing Service

- First Student (current provider)
- Michael's (currently services the Ross Valley School District)

Key Differences Between Providers

First Student

- Less reliable driver/substitute pool
- Newer buses
- Does not require a minimum day
- Less expensive
- Tracking app
- Customer service provided by YBC program manager

Michael's

- Very stable driver pool
- Does not guarantee new fleet, more mechanical problems
- Requires a minimum 8-hour day/more expensive
- No tracking app
- Customer service reduced (parents can contact dispatch with complaints/questions but assistance not provided in real time)

Cost Difference of Providers

First Student

- Including costs for: buses, monitoring, tracking app, program manager time, real-time customer service, parking, and portable toilets (assuming 4 hour day per bus and 5 buses):

$$\$642 \times 5 \times 180 =$$

\$577,800 annually

Michael's

- Including costs for: buses, tracking and dispatch, 8-hour day, parking, portable toilets (assuming their minimum day @ 8 hours a bus and 5 buses):

$$\$895 \times 5 \times 180 =$$

\$805,500 annually

Bottom Line

- Michael's Transportation would cost 40% more and would not provide: app tracking, consistent and largely real-time customer support, or guaranteed newer buses.
 - Assuming a four-hour day, First Student costs \$227,700 less a year
 - Assuming a five-hour day, First Student costs \$167,400 less a year
- However, driver absences and lack of backup drivers at First Student has posed a problem (11 days of driver absence so far this year with cancellations and no back-up driver available).

2022/23 Route Planning

Efforts to Streamline Routes

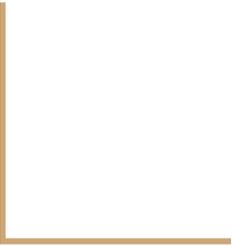
- Because of the driver shortage this year, buses were consolidated from 7 to 5.
- This has proven to be very efficient, particularly given declining enrollment.
- YBC Program Manager and Marin Transit have partnered to examine what other efficiencies might be realized for next year.

Methodology

- Goals:
 - Shortening long routes/keeping buses within a four-hour day per bus total
 - Reducing wait times after school
 - Eliminating stops with chronically low ridership and/or where a nearby stop can be used
 - Uncoupling mixed age bus
 - Reducing the need for buses to enter hilly/difficult to navigate neighborhoods when not necessary
- Applied lessons learned from this and prior school years
- Reviewed address data for current RUSD students (not incoming kindergartners as that information is not yet available) and developed GPS “heat maps”



PROPOSED CHANGES TO AM ROUTES



New AM Bus 1: Magenta (BA) followed by Green (Reed)

- MAGENTA
 - Subsumes Magenta, Pink, and Aqua
 - Route now operates counter-clockwise on San Rafael Ave
 - Eliminates Golden Gate Ave. stop
 - Eliminates Laurel Ave. stop
 - No longer serves the far east side of Mar West
 - The route will be 8 - 10 minutes longer if Hillary and Howard stops are retained (as opposed to those riders boarding at stops on Tiburon Blvd.)
- GREEN
 - Now serves only Reed/not combined with Orange/Del Mar as it is currently
 - Eliminates stops at Warren's Way and Indian Rock based on heat map
 - Eliminates Cecelia Way (riders can use Blackfield & Karen's Way or vice versa)

New AM Bus 2: Brown (BA) followed by Red (Reed)

- Largely the same as current routing (this route was optimized in early 2022)
- One underused stop to be eliminated

New AM Bus 3: Orange (Del Mar)

- Currently, Orange (DM) and Green (Reed) are combined in the morning; new routing would eliminate the need to do that.
- This single-route bus could be deployed to cover Blue AM if there were ever a need.

New AM Bus 4: Lime (DM) and Blue (Reed)

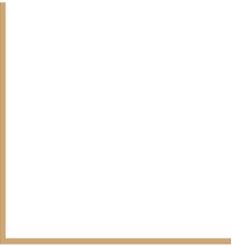
- LIME:
 - Eliminate underutilized stops in ECM, change stop location in Paradise Cay (these changes have already been made to Brown and Red this year).
 - Eliminate Belveron stops because of proximity to Del Mar, because only 1 rider on average a year purchases a pass and riders do not often ride, and because of the time it adds to make that stop unnecessarily.
- BLUE:
 - Adjusted times for accuracy
 - Removed one stop (Marin Ave.) based on heat map
 - Eliminated Windward Ave. stop (serves 1 student)

New AM Bus 5: Purple (DM) and Gold (Cove)

- **PURPLE:**
 - Moves Lyford Drive stops to Tiburon Blvd. for efficiency (downhill walk)
 - Removes stop at Beach Rd. btwn Tiburon Blvd. & Main St. (Transit Stop)
 - Removes stop at Golden Gate Ave. and San Rafael Ave.
- **GOLD:**
 - If the JPA decides to continue service to the Cove, this route replicates this year's model (one stop at San Clemente before arriving at the Cove)



PROPOSED CHANGES TO PM ROUTES



New PM Bus 1: Pink (BA) and Indigo (DM)

- PINK:

- Eliminates Golden Gate Ave. stop
- Eliminates Beach Rd. at Post Office stop
- Eliminates Lagoon Dr. but adds Windward Dr. stop

- INDIGO:

- Eliminates Lagoon Ave. stop but adds Windward Dr. stop
- Eliminates Marin Ave. stop
- Can consider eliminating Lyford Dr. stop (uphill walk from Tiburon Blvd.) to save 6-7 minutes

New PM Bus 2: Aqua (BA) and Gray (DM)

- AQUA:
 - No changes.

- GRAY:
 - Removes Belveron stops because of proximity to DM.
 - Eliminates Paradise and Taylor stop based on heat map.
 - Eliminates stop at 5 Westward Drive based on heat map and proximity to another stop.

New PM Bus 3: Brown (BA) and Gold (Cove)

- BROWN:
 - Eliminates underutilized stop @ Windward at Enterprise (ECM)
 - Eliminates stops at El Camino and Mountain School (for consistency with other routes and low ridership)
- GOLD:
 - No changes, JPA to decide if we will serve the Cove school next year.

New PM Bus 4: Blue (Reed) and Orange (DM)

- BLUE:
 - Eliminates Beach Rd. at Tiburon Blvd. and Main St. based on heatmap
 - Eliminates Marin and Laurel Avenues based on heatmap
 - Eliminates Warren's Way and Indian Rock based on heatmap
 - Eliminates Karen Way stop for consistency with AM route
 - Eliminates Via Capistrano stop
- ORANGE:
 - Eliminates Bel Aire and Cecelia @ Leland stops
 - Added Karen's Way stop

New PM Bus 5: Red (Reed)

- Stop @ Virginia and Stewart will now be on Tiburon Blvd. Parents of K and 1st already required to meet bus; 2nd grade parents should do the same if uncomfortable with stop location.
- Eliminates stops at El Camino and Mountain School (ECM) stops for consistency and low ridership in order to shorten the route.

Total Run Time for New Proposed Routes (AM & PM)

Bus 1: **3:46**

Bus 2: **4:00**

Bus 3: **3:06**

Bus 4: **3:39**

Bus 5: **3:31**



PASS SALE TIMING AND PRICING



Timing and Pricing

- In previous years, passes have been sold in April/May. If routes and maps are completed early (based on today's meeting), and the pass price is set, could target somewhere in the last two weeks of April for pass sales.
- Pass price has not increased since 2018 (\$315 one way).
 - If Michael's is selected as provider, pass prices will need to increase significantly to help defray the increased cost (e.g., Ross Valley's pass price is \$505 each way).
 - If First Student is selected, the increase could be more modest.