



February 8, 2019

Dear Pingry Families,

As I shared in [my December 13, 2017 letter](#), Pingry has been engaged in a careful study of our bussing program, our relationships with vendors, and the industry's competitive landscape. New Jersey, like many states, is facing a driver shortage due to a changed regulatory landscape, and bussing companies report rising fuel, insurance, and employment costs. These factors, combined with decreased ridership, continue to push the cost of bussing dramatically upward and the viability of yellow school bus companies downward. The natural consequence is that door-to-door routes have become increasingly inefficient.

Kensington Bus Company—the private provider that has, for over a decade, run door-to-door routes for the majority of Pingry bus riders—advised us that they may not be willing to offer door-to-door routes next year based on the aforementioned factors, coupled with the administrative challenge. Even if they do, we were told to expect the cost, per student rider, to rise above \$5,000 for the 2019-20 school year, a nearly 20% increase from only two years ago. For all these reasons, we continue to believe that a promising solution—however imperfect or unwelcome it may be to some families—is a reimagining of school-sponsored transportation based on a model that adopts central or group-stop routes. Similar to what we have successfully implemented with our intercampus shuttle, this is a more financially and operationally efficient model, and allows more students to benefit from bus transportation.

Our plan is to provide group stops in compass directions from both campuses, and we will build stops based on the interest expressed during this year's re-enrollment process. We ask that you express your interest in group-stop bussing by answering "yes" to the bus transportation interest question during re-enrollment. It is important to note that each family will have the opportunity to make a firm commitment—or rescind your interest—after the details of the group stops, including locations and costs, are decided and communicated, which will occur by the end of the 2018-19 school year.

While group stops are a promising transportation option for the next school year, the two remaining options available to you are (1) free district-run bussing (if your home district offers it) or the possibility of an aid-in-lieu subsidy of \$1,000 if they don't, or (2) you may arrange your own transportation to and from School. These last two options highlight the critical importance of [filing a B6T](#)<sup>1</sup>. If enough B6Ts are filed in a district that doesn't already offer free bussing, the sheer volume may obligate your district to provide it. If not, again, you may be eligible for an aid-in-lieu subsidy, if you meet certain criteria. Neither of these two options will be available to you if a B6T is not filed.

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<sup>1</sup> To verify if you have submitted a B6T for the 2019-20 school year, search your email account for a message from the sender "Google Forms <forms-receipts-noreply@google.com>" with the subject line "Pingry School B6T Submission Form" after December 20, 2018.



I look forward to communicating further details about our new group stop model once families have indicated their interest through the 2019-20 enrollment contract.

Go Big Blue,

David M. Fahey '99

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