



## CONTEXT AND REALITY

- APS contracts transportation services with Palmer bus for all PK-12 transportation needs.
- The current Palmer contract runs through June 30, 2022, with the option of running 1 additional year
- There are some cases where the District or other providers serve smaller populations.
- Historically, Palmer has run a 1 ½ to 2-tiered bus system.
- Palmer is limited to 24 drivers
- The current labor market has impacted the transportation workforce
- APS has contracted with CESO to provide transportation management
- The bus contract is based on number of eligible riders.
- There are currently 3605 eligible riders; 70% of eligible riders currently ride in the morning; 67% of eligible riders currently ride in the afternoon
- 170 students have an over 1-hour ride time in the morning; 112 students have an over 1-hour ride time in the afternoon
- Multiple age levels ride the same bus
- Multiple transfer locations currently exist
- The District is 133 square miles
- Bell times changed during the 2020-2021 school which resulted in decreased instructional time at secondary schools
- Currently, there are different bell times at IJ and Ellis
- High levels of traffic congestion occur around schools due to the low ridership and parent transportation
- Student supervision is necessary in the morning and afternoon due to the varied arrival and departure times
- 6 of the district buildings and Pacelli have the entire District as their zones of attendance
- Instructional staff are preparing students for dismissal prior to the final bell.
- Current eligible ridership is all of Woodson, and students who reside 1 mile from their school

## DESIRED RESULTS

### The options created will...

- Result in all routes, general education, and special education, being in the routing software
- Route for all eligible students
- Preserve length of the day at all district buildings extend it to match secondary schools at IJ Holton Intermediate
- Limit ride time for all students
- Eliminate/Reduce transfers as much as possible
- Limit elementary bell time difference as much as possible
- Limit grade level spread per bus as much as possible
- Limit the spread between bell times as much as possible
- Limit number of buses needed to transport all eligible students to 24
- Preserve a balance of use for vehicles (by age) for in-town and out of town routes
- Shorten rides to reduce student conduct issues
- Reduce traffic congestion in school areas at arrival & dismissal times
- Put IJ and Ellis at the same bell times; keep elementary buildings on the same bell times
- Have a bell time that can support increases in student enrollments
- Provide a clear number of routes needed
- Communicates clearly to parents and caregivers bus routes and times
- Clearly communicate ridership eligibility
- The result will minimize the amount of time students arrive before school and depart after school

## UNACCEPTABLE MEANS

### In creating options, we will not...

- Violate any statutes, district policy, or labor agreements
- Have students with a ride time of over 1 hour
- Have a bell schedule with IJ and Ellis at different times
- Have a bell schedule that is different for elementary buildings
- Have busses arriving after the start of the school bell or leaving over 20 minutes after the end bell
- Have instructional staff prepare students for dismissal prior to the final bell due to the transportation schedule
- Adversely impact any student group over another

Ultimately, the work will be guided by the question:  
What is the best bell time option for Austin Public Schools?

