



South Washington County Schools

Transportation Update

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Transportation Update



Our Transportation Department works hard to ensure that SoWashCo families do not feel the transportation challenges we continue to face.

- We have an aging driver workforce, thus the potential for a larger number of retirements in the coming years.
 - Currently have 8-10 routes not covered by permanent bus drivers.
- We have mechanics driving school buses. They serve as the cushion when absences or illnesses arise.
- Office staff members also drive buses when needed.



Transportation Update



We are considering several systemic updates **to create a more efficient and sustainable transportation system** to provide busing to those who need it. We are considering the changes to our transportation system so we don't have to cancel routes or use outside contractors for routes.

Phase 1:

- Continue to refine, improve and grow our Transportation Opt-in System

Phase 2:

- Review "hazardous" areas
- Remove "hazards" that our cities and/or Washington County have made modifications to infrastructure
- Implement ID tracking system
- Review radius model for measuring distances to schools

Phase 3:

- Consider larger non-busing zones
- Consider changing to a radius model
- Consider changes to school start times
- Continue reviewing "hazardous" areas

Transportation Update



Opt-in Transportation System

- This year, SoWashCo Schools moved to an opt-in transportation system to increase the efficiency of our Transportation Department.
 - Resulted in the reduction of 10 routes
 - Will launch the 2024-25 transportation opt-in campaign after Spring Break

Tracking system for bus ridership for load counts

- SoWashCo Schools will be implementing a tracking system for bus riders in the 2024-25 school year.
 - I.D. Badge system for students
 - More accurate load counts help routing

Transportation Update



Non-busing Zone Distances

School districts are required to transport students who live 2 miles or more from their school.

- Currently, we provide transportation to:
 - Elementary students who live outside of 1 mile from school
 - Middle school students who live outside of 1.5 miles from school
 - High school students who live outside of 2 miles from school

Evaluating how changing distances used in the current non-busing zones are impacting transportation routes. (For example: 1 mile, 1.5 miles and 2.0 miles)

- **Evaluating “hazardous” areas** and developing safe routes to school in partnership with:
 - City traffic engineers
 - Washington County traffic engineers
- Utilizing the Extraordinary Hazard Traffic Committee to determine criteria and review each school walking area, as needed.

Transportation Update

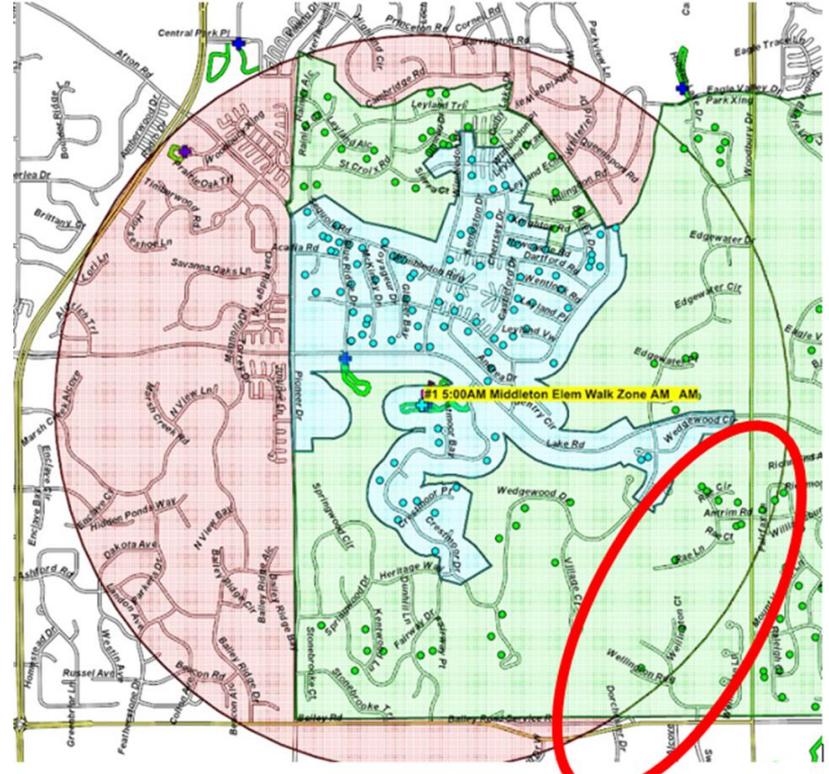
Radius Model

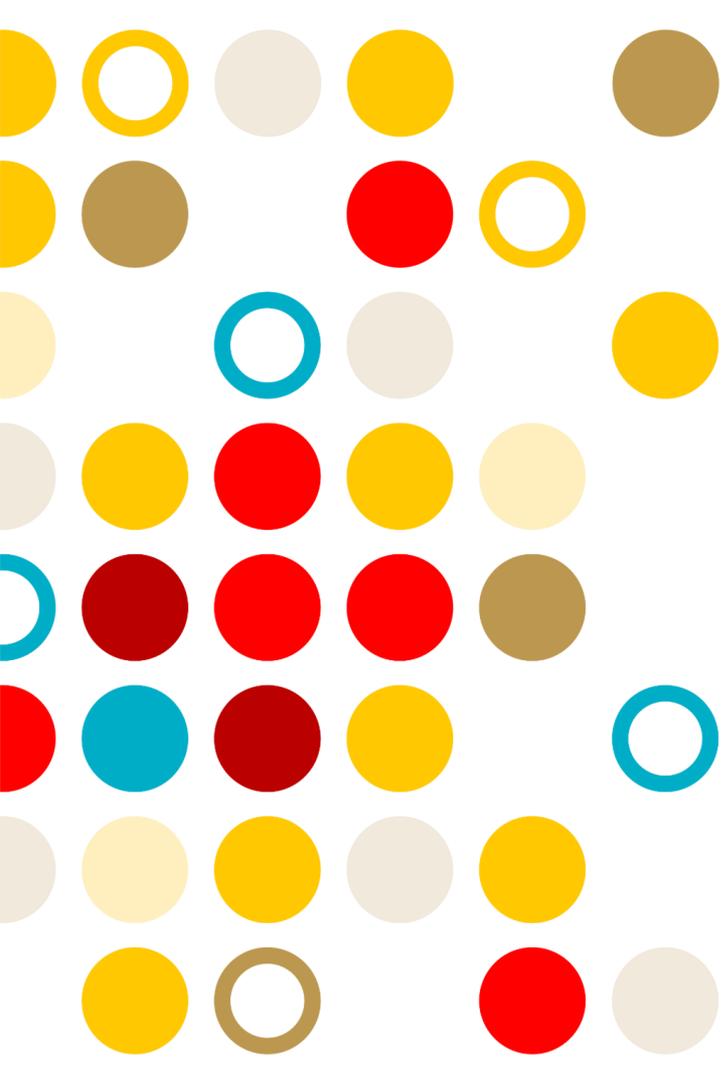
- Considering implementing a radius model to determine transportation distances (this requires a change to existing district policy). If implemented, moving to the radius model would impact about:
 - 430 elementary school students
 - 175 middle school students
 - 215 high school students

Radius Model (straight line)

Considerations

- Simple straight-line measurement
- The walking path can greatly increase.
 - One example is a group of homes within a 1-mile radius, may be a 2.5 mile walk on a path.
- If we consider the radius model, do we need to create a maximum walkout distance as a hazard?
- See an increase in parent traffic in school drop offs and pickups.
- Board policy change





Other Considerations

Tiered routing considerations

- Third tier runs are light
 - 15 fewer 3rd tier runs
- Second tier runs have flexibility for additional ridership efficiencies
 - High school runs have low ridership and can be consolidated.
- First tier runs are heavy for ridership and challenging to reduce further



Questions?