

# Exchange Summary

Halifax Regional Centre for Education  
November 17, 2022

What important perspectives or ideas should we keep in mind as we consider the option to keep schools open, cancel morning buses and reinstate regular bus service for the end of the day?



## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



214  
Participants



240  
Thoughts



3,651  
Ratings

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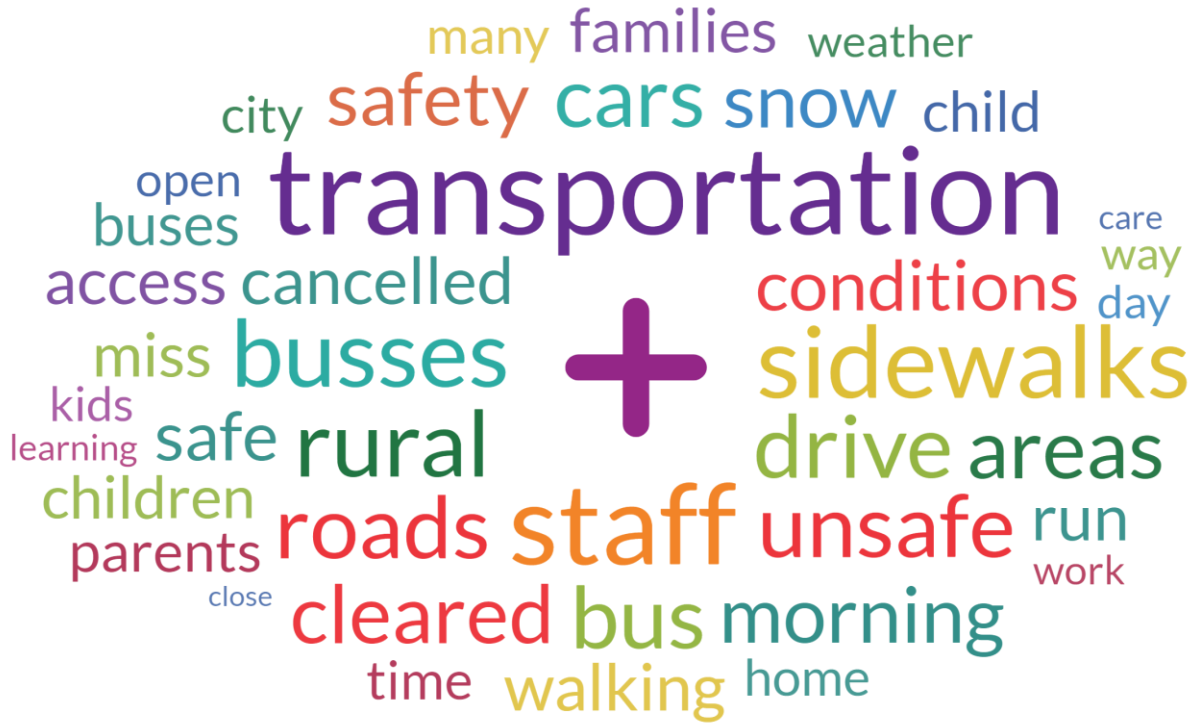
## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



What Family of Schools (FOS) are you connected with?

%		Answer
8%	(16)	Auburn Drive High FOS
3%	(7)	Bay View High FOS
1%	(2)	Bedford and Forsyth Education Centres FOS
3%	(6)	Charles P. Allen High FOS
15%	(31)	Citadel High FOS
10%	(20)	Cole Harbour District High FOS
11%	(23)	Dartmouth High FOS
4%	(9)	Eastern Shore High FOS
10%	(20)	Halifax West High FOS
0%	(0)	Island View High FOS
7%	(14)	J.L. Ilsley High FOS
15%	(30)	Lockview High FOS
1%	(1)	Marine Drive Academy FOS
4%	(8)	Millwood High FOS
2%	(5)	Musquodoboit Rural High FOS
3%	(6)	Sackville High FOS
3%	(6)	Woodlawn High FOS





## THOUGHTS

### Key Thoughts



**What if weather doesn't allow for bussing to occur in the afternoon** - families maybe relying on Bussing that in fact may not occur.

4.5  (22 )

Ranked #1 of 240

**There needs to be certainty that bus services will resume.** For guardians to rearrange morning to get kids to school but then find out kids at school and need to be picked up is disruptive if they need PM bus

4.4  (20 )

Ranked #2 of 240

**Cancelling buses but not schools is the worst** If there are no buses running schools can't be open. It sends mixed messages about safety. It creates a gap between students who's parents can drive &

4.4  (19 )

Ranked #3 of 240



## THOUGHTS Staff



**safety for school staff** Staff don't always live within the school catchment area and also need to get home safely.

4.2  ( 22  )

**If busses are unsafe to travel the roads, will there be adequate staff that can travel safely to monitor students?** Many staff do not live within their school district and have to travel quite a way. How will meaningful learning happen in this instance?

4.2  ( 21  )

**Keeping students and staff safe** Keeping everyone safe is the most important goal.



4.2  ( 16  )







## THOUGHTS

### Walking



**Busses are not the only consideration. In walking school areas, sidewalks are plowed well after roads and this, children are walking in roads- no ok.** Safety is for everyone- not just a bus consideration. We should not be sending kids to school in weather or staff/families trying to travel. 4.4  ( 17  )

**Safety of students and staff in transportation** Tricky weather makes driving challenging for all. And impacts students who are walking on streets with no sidewalks 4.3  ( 20  )

**Transportation as many of our students/families walk to school.** During snow storms visibility may be low and sidewalks may not be cleared off making it dangerous for students to be walking to school 4.3  ( 18  )



## THOUGHTS

### Bus



**My first thought is that this is inequitable. Bus students would still be missing school if their parents do not have another way to get them there.** Some families disadvantaged with no way to get their child to school in the am. If the buses are cancelled we shouldn't encourage parents to drive.

4.3  (17 )

**That children arrive at school in many different ways: bus, drive, walk, etc.** So that your planning considers everyone

4.3  (17 )

**This also leaves children who need to take the bus with no way to school. They are left to miss out on what could be important work during the class.**

4.1  (18 )





## THOUGHTS Families



**Some families don't have access to transportation, so their kids may not be able to go to school these days, meaning they miss school time.** This perpetuates inequity and is inherently rooted in privilege, as it creates the question of whether a family has access to transportation or not.

4.4  ( 15  )

**Last minute transportation needs will create challenges for families** Equity of student access.

4.3  ( 18  )

**Having a consistent approach allows families to anticipate and prepare. Once a decision is made in the morning changes after that only add confusion.** Having families feel like they have a predictable plan- with appropriate notice- allows them to navigate other impacting factors with less stress.

4.3  ( 17  )



## THOUGHTS

### Roads Clear



**If the roads are deemed unsafe for buses, they may be considered as unsafe for families trying to get children to school.** Families will have less time to safely transport each person to all of the necessary school and work locations, and with poor conditions to do so.

4.3  (20 )

**If roads are unsafe for buses, they are unsafe for all** We shouldn't expect students and parents to be on the road if they are not safe to transport students

4.3  (19 )



**The further you go out from the urban core the the slower the road clearing occurs.**  
Road conditions/driving remains riskier for longer in more rural communities.



4.2  (21 )





## THOUGHTS Areas



**HRCE is a very large geographically and climate diverse School Board - with a very large rural component.** A one size fits all decision doesn't work - especially when it is made from an urban lens. Road conditions are very different in rural areas. 4.1  (20 )

**Check the local forecast for the various areas and not rely only the forecast for the city of Halifax** In the rural areas we tend to get more snow accumulation and the weather varies especially in the known snowbelt area. 4.0  (22 )

**Years ago schools were closed as families of schools, and decisions were not made for early closures and late starts. Road conditions vary in city vs. rural areas.** Instead of risking accidents, go back to making decisions based on family of schools or just close everyone. 4.0  (21 )







## THOUGHTS

### Safety



**Safety of Students getting too and from school** Student Safety should be a #1 priority. 4.2  (12 )

**My first and most important thought is safety.** We currently have less experienced bus drivers on the road in addition Nova Scotia drivers are facing more ice with climate changes. Kids lives first! 4.1  (17 )

**Keep the safety of the children and drivers in your thoughts.** It's important for everyone's safety. 3.9  (11 )



## THOUGHTS Day



**How would families know that the bus will be reinstated later in the day as a certainty?**  
**This would be dependent on conditions throughout the day.** It leaves families and school staff in a wait and see situation which creates high chance for issues at dismissal.

4.3  ( 22  )

**5 Extra days in school year to accomdate for snow days** There's no need to keep schools open when it is unsafe for busses as there are 5 extra days built into school year. This is never mentioned to public.

4.2  ( 18  )

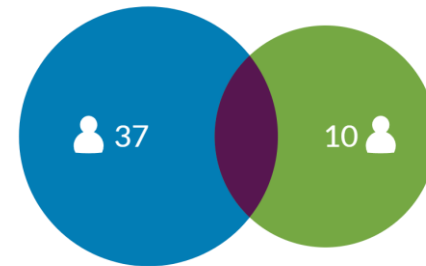
**The HRCE has 5 extra school days built into the annual calendar for cancellations. We rarely reach 5 snow days.** HRCE staff already work more days annually than any other regional Centre in the province.

4.2  ( 18  )



## DIFFERENCES

Families and Learning | Safe For Buses [37 | 10]



### Side A

When some students can't get to school and some can it makes it so that the teachers have to teach the lesson twice or only do a review of material,

No new learning can occur unless all students have equal opportunity to be there and receive it

★ 4.8 ★ 1.0

**I feel cancelled school for the day.** If we go later in the day it can be very slow for staff to be available to come in. . Just safer to stay home

★ 4.5 ★ 1.0

### Side A/B Common (high)

That children arrive at school in many different ways: bus, drive, walk, etc. So that your planning considers everyone

★ 4.6 ★ 5.0

**Please consider not only school buses but metro transit and walking conditions. Not all students travel by school bus** Many students walk to school or are dependent on metro transit so not just school bus safety should be considered

★ 4.5 ★ 5.0

### Side B

Just because school is closed for students due to weather that does not mean that teachers should not go to work. Civil servants are expected to work in all weather conditions and teachers should not be an exception.

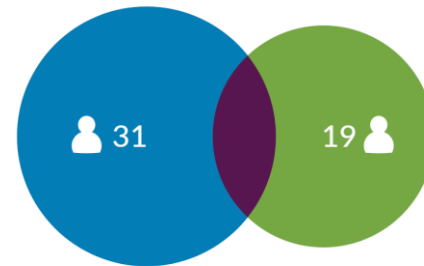
★ 1.8 ★ 5.0

**Schools with little or no busing should NOT be closed just because it is not safe for buses to run - such schools should remain open.** If walking to school isn't safe for some students due to sidewalk conditions, parents should make the decision to keep students at



## DIFFERENCES

Kids Home | Online Learning [31 | 19]



### Side A

**Snow days are a rite of passage for Canadian children. Teachers don't live next door to the schools they teach in.** will be putting teachers at risk to travel from where they live to where they teach. parents will keep their kids home. Real learning won't take place

★ 4.8 ★ 1.0

### Side A/B Common (high)

**That children arrive at school in many different ways: bus, drive, walk, etc.** So that your planning considers everyone

★ 4.8 ★ 4.8

**Transportation as many of our students/families walk to school.**

During snow storms visibility may be low and sidewalks may not be cleared off making it dangerous for students to be walking to school

★ 4.9 ★ 4.8

### Side B

**Can virtual learning be considered on days when schools have to be closed?** To help kids get up to speed

★ 1.3 ★ 4.9

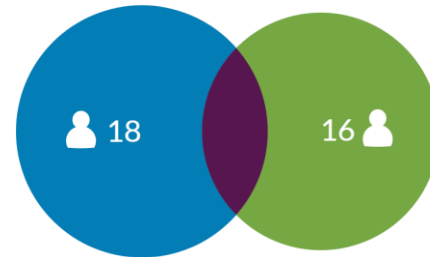
**If conditions mean students can't get to school, why can't they learn on-line for that day** on-line learning can work and could be used so schoolwork isn't interrupted by weather conditions

★ 1.4 ★ 4.8



## DIFFERENCES

Buses | Safe For Families [18 | 16]



### Side A

Is foolish to reinstate regular buses in the afternoon when there will be hardly any students in the school.

Waste of money- tax payers money

Saves tax \$

★ 4.8   ★ 2.0

### Side A/B Common (high)

What if weather doesn't allow for bussing to occur in the afternoon - families maybe relying on Bussing that in fact may not occur.

★ 5.0   ★ 4.7

**Conditions of the sidewalks for the many students who walk to school.** Often our students must resort to walking on the road to get to school as sidewalks have not been cleared.

★ 4.7   ★ 4.3

### Side B

Many families already struggle to organize childcare for the many PD DAYS. Its important to keep schools open as much as possible Many families are two income households with limited time off, and pd days and extra unexpected days off can become a financial burden for families

★ 1.4   ★ 4.4

**Education is important and kids should be in school as often as possible. If people can get into work, kids should be in school regardless of buses.** It feels like Nova Scotia closes schools with





WRAP UP  
Next Steps

**Thanks for participating**

