

From: Amie Smid [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 October 2026 12:14
To: Valene Johnson <Valene.Johnson@sd23.bc.ca>; macklin.mccall.mla@leg.bc.ca
<macklin.mccall.mla@leg.bc.ca>; EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca <EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Concern Regarding Rising School Bus Fees in School District 23

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Dear Valene Johnson, Macklin McCall, and the BCMinister of Education and Child Care,
I am writing to express my concern regarding the continued increase in school bus fees for families in School District 23.

I understand that providing student transportation comes with significant costs, including fuel, maintenance, insurance, staffing, and other operating expenses. I also recognize that the district offers hardship assistance and payment plans for families who have difficulty paying the fees. However, these measures do not address my broader concern: **the underlying cost of school transportation has become unreasonably high for families.**

I am currently expected to pay approximately \$1,100 per year for my children to ride the school bus to and from school. While a payment plan can spread that cost throughout the year, it does not reduce the cost. For families with multiple children, the financial burden can become substantial. What concerns me particularly is how much these fees have increased since they were introduced in 2010. My understanding is that school bus fees have **nearly tripled over that period.** I appreciate that inflation, wages, fuel prices, insurance, and other operating costs have increased as well. However, I believe families deserve a clear explanation of why transportation fees have increased to their current level and whether the increases are proportionate to the actual cost of providing the service.

I also believe there is an important question about the purpose of public education. **Access to school should not become increasingly dependent on a family's ability to absorb substantial transportation costs, particularly for families who live in areas where driving children to school every day is not a practical alternative.**

I would therefore respectfully ask:

- What has been the year-by-year increase in school bus fees in SD23 since fees were introduced?
- What is the actual per-student cost of providing transportation, and how much of that cost is being recovered through bus fees?
- How are the current fees calculated?
- What portion of the transportation budget is funded by the provincial government versus fees paid directly by families?
- Has SD23 assessed the impact that these fees have on families with multiple children?
- What steps are being taken to prevent transportation fees from continuing to increase at this rate?
- Does the Ministry of Education and Child Care have any plans to review provincial funding for student transportation and the resulting financial burden on families?

I am not suggesting that school transportation has no cost, nor am I asking that the district ignore legitimate increases in operating expenses. Rather, I am asking that the district and provincial government recognize that **\$1,100 or more per year is a significant expense for a family simply to ensure that their children can get to school.**

Hardship programs are important for families who qualify, but **families should not have to be in financial hardship before the affordability of basic access to education becomes a legitimate concern.**

I would appreciate a meaningful response explaining how these fees are determined, why they have risen so substantially over time, and what consideration is being given to making student transportation more affordable for families—particularly those with multiple children.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my concerns. I hope this issue can be reviewed not only from the perspective of transportation costs, but also from the perspective of **accessibility, affordability, and the financial pressures being placed on families.**

Sincerely,
Amie Smid
West Kelowna, BC