

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [Board of Education](#); [Board of Education](#)  
[Kevin Kaardal](#); [Secretary Treasurer](#)  
**Subject:** Please include in Board meeting package  
**Date:** Thursday, June 1, 2023 9:00:33 PM  
**Attachments:** [23.06.01 - CBE to reduce yellow school bus fees to \\$260 per rider next school year - Copy.pdf](#)  
[23.03.09 - Expanded busing, kindergarten homeschoolers to be funded in Alberta next school year.pdf](#)  
**Importance:** High

---

**WARNING:** This email originated from outside Central Okanagan Public Schools. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Please include this email and these articles in the package going to the Board at the next Board meeting which according to the schedule on the website will be held June 14, 2023. The articles are enclosed, and also found here: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/cbe-school-bus-fee-reduction-1.6861503> and here: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/expanded-busing-kindergarten-homeschoolers-to-be-funded-in-alberta-next-school-year-1.6774183>

It includes the following:

"The increase in transportation funding enables us to decrease transportation fees to all students, and to charge the same fees for families, whether their child attends their designated school or one of our programs of choice," said CBE trustee Marilyn Dennis at a board meeting on Tuesday, when they finalized the budget.

...

Starting in September 2024, the province is lowering walking distances to one kilometer for elementary school students and two kilometers for Grade 7 to 12 students, says CBE. The current provincial walking distance is 2.4 kilometers.

...

More schools and families will be eligible for bus transportation...

And:

Elementary school students who live more than one kilometre from school would now qualify for school busing. Grade 7 to 12 students who live more than two kilometres away would also qualify for subsidized transportation.

...

The province is also requiring schools to provide busing for alternative programs, such as French immersion.

An appeal at an Alberta school district may have very likely been a factor in the above changes.

But SD23? It refuses to hear appeals. It silences people instead of allowing them to be heard.

Why does SD23 continue to deny busing to students studying French immersion, who live 5 km or more from their catchment French immersion school? Would you please change this policy, extend

busing to everyone, and reduce walk distances for everyone and particularly for those in French immersion for whom the distances to their catchment schools are larger.

Susan Kootnekoff  
Parent



 **Search**

 **Sign In**

Edmonton

## Expanded busing, kindergarten homeschoolers to be funded in Alberta next school year

Updates to science, French elementary curriculum coming, education minister says

[Janet French](#) · CBC News · Posted: Mar 09, 2023 5:30 PM PST | Last Updated: March 9



Alberta Education Minister Adriana LaGrange says a new funding manual spells out changes to student transportation funding and a new pilot for families homeschooling kindergarteners. (Government of Alberta)

Thousands more Alberta students should be eligible for school busing within the next two years, as the province changes its requirements.

The province has proposed boosting next year's school transportation funding by 24 per cent from their expected expense this year, while requiring schools to offer busing to students who live closer to their buildings.

Education Minister Adriana LaGrange said school boards, parents, teachers and students have said the current limit of 2.4 kilometres was too far for children to walk — especially when they had to cross expressways or busy roads to get to class.

"Parents were concerned for safety, as were all of us," LaGrange said at a news conference in Calgary on Thursday.

The proposed education budget allots nearly \$421 million for student transportation in the 2023-24 school year. Elementary school students who live more than one kilometre from school would now qualify for school busing. Grade 7 to 12 students who live more than two kilometres away would also qualify for subsidized transportation.



Students who live closer to school in Alberta will be eligible for subsidized school busing by 2024. (CBC)

---

The province is also requiring schools to provide busing for alternative programs, such as French immersion. For the first time, private schools would receive funding for transportation — 70 cents for every dollar per student that public schools receive.

Alberta Education estimates about 47,000 students who already use buses will now have lower fees. Schools will need to recruit an estimated 250 more bus drivers, officials said.

That could be tricky, as school bus drivers are scarce. The budget proposes to give schools more funding to help train new drivers.

NDP education critic Sarah Hoffman said the proposed increases neglect to fully address the rising costs of moving students around. She said funding isn't keeping up with the rising costs of insurance, fuel, and staff recruitment, and that schools may be forced to pass those costs onto parents with higher fees.

## **New kindergarten homeschooling pilot**

The details of how Alberta schools will be funded, the distribution and how much, were made public Thursday in the government's [2023-24 school funding manual](#). It is based on a provincial budget that has yet to be approved by the legislature.

Next year, for the first time, the province will pilot funding for homeschooling parents and supervising schools who are educating kindergarten students. It will cost \$2 million.

Only students who are registered with and supervised by a public or private school would be eligible for the kindergarten funding. The school authority would get \$901 per student, half of which would be passed on to the family for instructional materials, such as books, software, or math tools.

Judy Arnall, president of the Alberta Homeschooling Association, said her organization has been asking for years for the province to fund kindergarten.

"We're quite thrilled with this development," she said Thursday. "It was a bit of a surprise to us."

The cost of supplies is often a barrier for people wanting to choose homeschooling, Arnall said. Although kindergarten is optional in Alberta, it's included in the curriculum, and the government should emphasize its importance, Arnall said.

A new \$42-million fund planned to help with increasingly complex classrooms must be used at least 80 per cent on staff working with students, the government says.

Should the budget pass, schools will also have access to \$47 million next year for ongoing adoption of a new elementary school curriculum.

- [Alberta Education seeking volunteers to test new French, science curriculum](#)
- [Alberta's draft K-6 curriculum to be delayed in 4 subjects, LaGrange announces](#)

The proposed curriculum changes have been controversial. In response to pushback from educators, academics, and parents, the province is revamping its proposed social studies and fine arts curriculum.

The new K-3 math and English language arts and K-6 physical education and wellness programs were mandatory in Alberta schools this year, and some schools were piloting new science, French immersion and francophone programs.

In an interview, LaGrange said the new math and English programs for grades 4 to 6 will also become mandatory next year.

Finalized curriculum in science, fine arts and French are supposed to be released in April. LaGrange said an announcement about that, the next steps for social studies, and when these new subjects would become mandatory, are coming soon.

With Alberta school enrolment expected to rise by 2.5 per cent next year, and inflation driving up costs, the government is promising to increase the value of several school grants. It comes after the province froze education funding for three years to rein in costs.

- [Alberta's education budget features new schools and replacements, first charter school hub](#)

Hoffman said she suspects the increases will not keep pace with how much school division costs have escalated during the past four years.

Funding enrolment growth is the bare minimum a government should be doing when more students enrol, she said.

[CBC's Journalistic Standards and Practices](#) | [About CBC News](#)

[Corrections and clarifications](#) | [Submit a news tip](#) | [Report error](#) ▼

## Popular Now in News

- 1 Poilievre compares major B.C. city to a 3rd world country. People living there say that's not right**

530 reading now

- 2 Suncor to slash 1,500 jobs amid cost-cutting plan**

124 reading now

- 3 Multiple calls keep crews busy as Halifax-area wildfire continues to burn**

107 reading now

- 4 RCMP says it has shut down 'illegal police activity' connected to alleged Chinese 'police stations'**



103 reading now

# RECOMMENDED FOR YOU



## 5 Man arrested after threatening to shoot Toronto mayoral candidates, police say



**Poillievre compares major B.C. city to a 3rd world country. People living there say that's not right**

Winston Szeto

News - Canada - British Columbia



**Missing Alberta woman, 78, rescued by helicopter after 4 days in the woods**

Jade Markus

News - Canada - Calgary



**Suncor to slash 1,500 jobs amid cost-cutting plan**

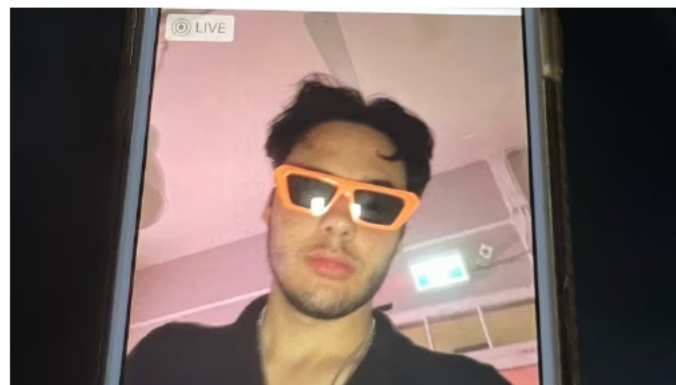
Kyle Bakx

News - Canada - Calgary



**Man arrested after threatening to shoot Toronto mayoral candidates, police say**

News - Canada - Toronto



**Vancouver cupcake thief 'profusely' apologizes to bakery, offers to pay for repairs**

Michelle Gomez

News - Canada - British Columbia

©2023 CBC/Radio-Canada. All rights reserved.

Visitez Radio-Canada.ca



 Search

 Sign In

Calgary

## CBE to reduce yellow school bus fees to \$260 per rider next school year

Big changes are coming to transportation in September 2024, says the board

[Karina Zapata](#) · CBC News · Posted: Jun 01, 2023 4:00 AM PDT | Last Updated: June 1



Some families will see savings of up to \$205 with CBE's school bus fee reduction for the 2023-24 school year. (David Bell/CBC)

[comments](#)



Parents of students at Calgary public schools will see a decrease in busing fees for the 2023-24 school year. as the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) submitted its

The CBE's board of trustees, as the Calgary Board of Education (CBE), submitted its finalized budget to the province on Wednesday.

The board is also stepping away from its "mandated and "non-mandated" transportation fee structure, which was introduced in 2020.

"Non-mandated" riders, those who live within walking distance or don't attend their designated school, currently pay more.

Next year, all families will pay \$260 per rider for school bus services, except for kindergarten riders, who will pay half the price for one-way service.

For some families, that will mean savings of up to \$205 dollars per student.

"The increase in transportation funding enables us to decrease transportation fees to all students, and to charge the same fees for families, whether their child attends their designated school or one of our programs of choice," said CBE trustee Marilyn Dennis at a board meeting on Tuesday, when they finalized the budget.

"I continue to appreciate our waiver process to assist families who might be experiencing financial difficulty. We are public education, and we welcome everyone and serve everyone."

The change comes after years of changes to fees, and is a big decrease from the 2020-21 school year, when parents of non-mandated riders were paying \$800 for busing.

The CBE received an additional \$130 million from the provincial government from the previous year, totaling its budget to \$1.5 billion.

## Ongoing bus driver shortage

Jeff Park, executive director of the Alberta Parents' Union which represents

around 20,000 Alberta parents, says he's happy about the fee reduction.

"Affordability has been a big concern for parents more broadly, so for parents to see some savings there is a big deal and is going to help a lot of people plan for the next school year," said Park.

Jessy Roos currently pays \$930 a year for her two elementary-aged kids to get to and from their non-mandated school.

She welcomes the cost savings in September, but says it doesn't solve [ongoing transportation issues](#).

"The bus system is absolutely chaotic. They don't have enough drivers."



CBE says big changes are coming to transportation for the 2024-25 school year. More families and schools will be eligible for school transportation as the province lowers the walking distance, starting in September 2024. (Mark Bugnask/Associated Press)

Her kids' school bus often arrives up to an hour late, and the bus tracking app either doesn't work or tracks the wrong bus, she says.



EITHER DOESN'T WORK OR TAKES THE WRONG BUS, SHE SAYS.

"[These students] are being placed at the bottom of the priority list here with buses that are not running on time, buses that are breaking down all the time. And then the insult on the injury is parents are paying up to \$465, or in the new case, \$260 a year for service that's absolutely inadequate."

As school populations continue to grow, Roos says she's worried about what that means for safety — especially since the province [removed MELT certification](#) for bus drivers to alleviate the shortage.

CBE spokesperson Joanne Anderson says the board will continue to work with the province and school bus providers to navigate the shortage.

"We anticipate the ongoing driver shortage will continue to be a challenge," said Anderson in a statement.

## Changes coming to 2024-25 school year

While busing fee reductions are set for September, CBE warns that big changes are coming to transportation for the 2024-25 school year.

Starting in September 2024, the province is lowering walking distances to one kilometre for elementary school students and two kilometres for Grade 7 to 12 students, says CBE. The current provincial walking distance is 2.4 kilometres.

"This will have a number of implications for CBE Transportation," said CBE spokesperson Joanne Anderson.

- [Bus driver shortage leaves Calgary kids on routes without dedicated drivers waiting hours for a ride](#)
- [Expanded busing, kindergarten homeschoolers to be funded in Alberta next school year](#)

More schools and families will be eligible for bus transportation, and as more bus routes are added, "a number of schools" will need to change bell times, she says.

Anderson says CBE is anticipating additional provincial funding for that, but doesn't know yet if fees will increase again that year.

[CBC's Journalistic Standards and Practices](#) | [About CBC News](#)

[Corrections and clarifications](#) | [Submit a news tip](#) | [Report error](#) ▼

## Popular Now in News

- 1 Poilievre compares major B.C. city to a 3rd world country. People living there say that's not right**  
543 reading now
  - 2 Suncor to slash 1,500 jobs amid cost-cutting plan**  
134 reading now
  - 3 Multiple calls keep crews busy as Halifax-area wildfire continues to burn**  
116 reading now
  - 4 RCMP says it has shut down 'illegal police activity' connected to alleged Chinese 'police stations'**  
100 reading now
  - 5 Man arrested after threatening to shoot Toronto mayoral candidates, police say**  
83 reading now
-

## RECOMMENDED FOR YOU



**Poillievre compares major B.C. city to a 3rd world country. People living there say that's not right**

Winston Szeto

News - Canada - British Columbia



**Suncor to slash 1,500 jobs amid cost-cutting plan**

Kyle Bakx

News - Canada - Calgary



**Missing Alberta woman, 78, rescued by helicopter after 4 days in the woods**

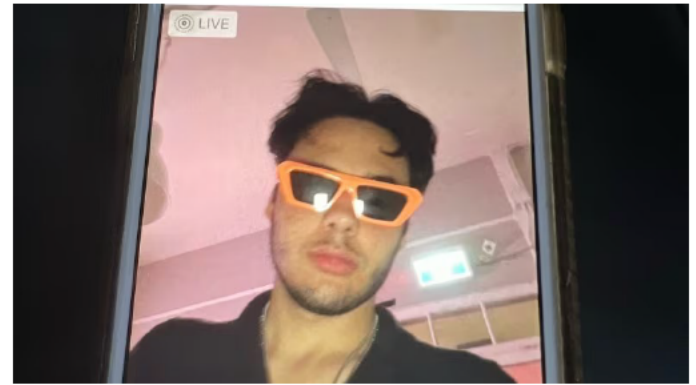
Jade Markus

News - Canada - Calgary



**Man arrested after threatening to shoot Toronto mayoral candidates, police say**

News - Canada - Toronto



**Vancouver cupcake thief 'profusely' apologizes to bakery, offers to pay for repairs**

Michelle Gomez

News - Canada - British Columbia



visitez [radio-canada.ca](http://radio-canada.ca)