

# Student Transportation Funding

**For Immediate Release**

**October 27, 2016**

Mission Public School District is pleased to announce the Ministry of Education approved the School District's transportation plan submitted in September. Accordingly, \$188,900 has been allocated to the School District to aid with busing. This funding is conditional on eliminating the busing fees for students.

The School District will be issuing refund cheques totaling \$82,000 to the approximate 350 families that prepaid the 2016 / 2017 busing costs. The additional funds after the fees are eliminated will be used to fund increased services on bus routes.

Media Contact:

Corien Becker, Secretary Treasurer 604.814.3700

**Background:**

On August 10, 2016, the Ministry of Education announced new funding totaling \$14.7 million under the new Student Transportation Fund to support improving the affordability and accessibility of transportation services for students. Of the \$14.7 million, \$188,900 is set for the Mission Public School District. The School District developed a funding plan to access this new funding. In anticipation of this funding, and with the understanding that current transportation fees charged to eligible riders for standard bus service to catchment schools had to be eliminated to qualify for the funding, the School District ceased collecting fees for the 2016/2017 year.

In response to this action, a significant number of parents have signed their children up for busing. Existing bus routes were altered and/or adjusted to accommodate new riders for the 2016/2017 school year. There have been over 400 registrations since August 22, 2016. Prior to the elimination of bus fees, there would have typically been a surcharge for late registrations. A common theme appears to be families who previously drove their children to/from school, have now opted for the bus service due to no cost.

The increased demand is expected to require that at least one additional bus be put in service for the 2016/2017 year. While the School District has a spare bus available to take on this increased demand, the operating cost of the increased demand is expected to be approximately \$60,000 a year. This increased demand exceeds the amount of additional funding available to the School District from the transportation grant after eliminating the transportation fees.

On October 25, 2016, the School District received confirmation of approval of the plan submission.