

Bell Time Transformation

Virtual Information Session
March 26, 2020
Toronto District School Board





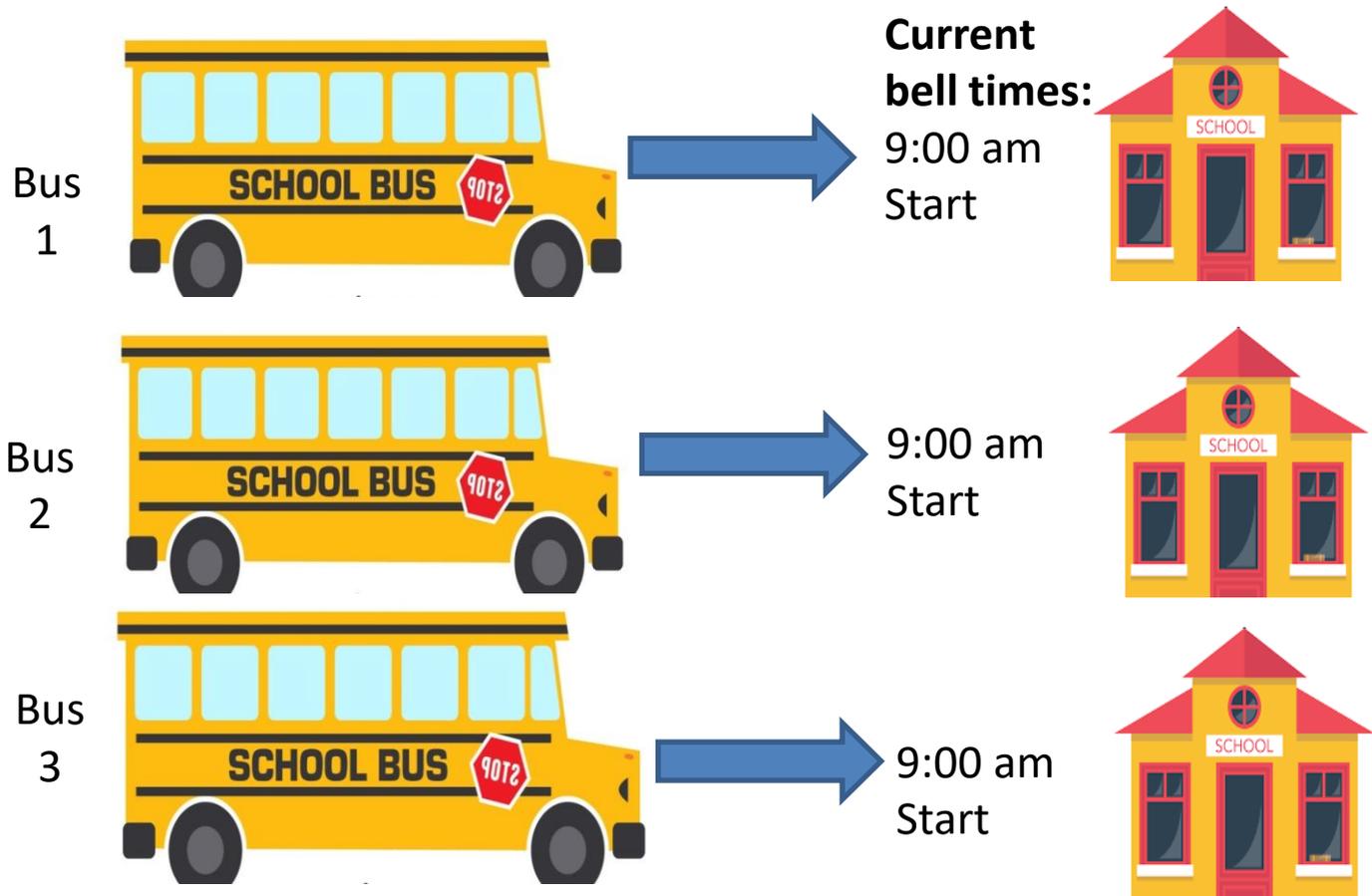
BACKGROUND

- To manage provincial government funding cuts and address the Board's structural deficit, the TDSB approved changing school start and end times ("bell times") at 129 schools to provide more efficient transportation services for students to get to school
- Budget reductions were approved in the June, 2019 budget process to be phased in over 2 years
- TDSB is one of several School Boards that have adjusted bell times to address budget and driver shortage issues
- The consortium between TDSB and TCDSB transports nearly 50,000 students daily

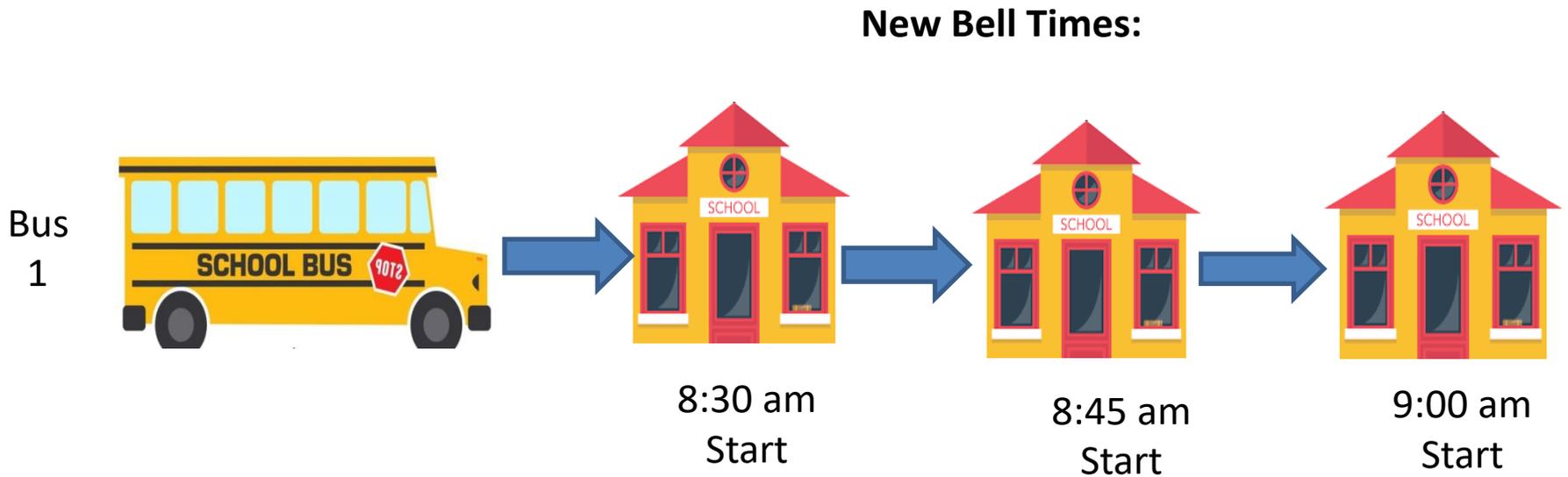
Bell Time Changes

- Changes to bell times can range from **5 minutes to 30 minutes** from current times
- Bell times in the morning will be between **8:15 am and 9:15 am**
- Bell times in the afternoon will be between **2:45 pm and 3:45 pm**
- We are meeting with you today to provide a background of these changes, hear from you how this may impact you and provide you with contacts where you can direct any questions

Current Bell Times – Three buses needed



New Bell Times – One bus needed



Why Are Bell Times Changing?

- In addition to the required cost savings, bell time changes will also have the following benefits:
 - Ensuring that other areas that impact teaching and learning aren't cut instead
 - Improving service to remaining bus transportation routes because fewer bus drivers will be needed, which will help us to address bus driver shortages
 - Ensuring that all students who are currently eligible for busing will continue to be eligible, meaning no transportation cuts
 - Will ensure that The Auditor General's recommendation is implemented from the report on Ontario consortia: (VFM.17.15.03.13.12.05.1)

"In order to increase the efficiency of school transportation services and in turn decrease costs, transportation consortia should stagger school start and end times where possible to reduce the number of buses needed, by allowing them to be used on more than one run".
 - Removing approximately 55 buses from transportation routes, thus reducing our carbon footprint by approximately 2,750 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide per year

How Have Parents/Guardians Been Informed?

These changes can be very difficult for some parents/guardians and we will work with principals to reduce the impact, where possible. Efforts have been made to keep parents/guardians informed, including:

- Announced budget changes that included changes to bell times in June, 2019. Bell times were part of the budget discussion/consultation in the Spring of 2019
- Parent/guardian letter was sent to all families on February 26, 2020
- Posted details to the TDSB public website and affected school websites, including Q and As and a list of schools and their changes
- Provided an email address for parents/guardians to send questions that will be responded to through the Q and As and/or through direct response



How Have Parents/Guardians Been Informed?

- Scheduled two web chat sessions for those parents/guardians who can't attend an info session so they are able to access the information they require; March 26 from 10-11 am and 7-8 pm
- Scheduled information sessions for parents/guardians on March 9 (Earl Haig at 7 pm), March 12 (David and Mary Thomson at 7 pm)
- Communicated via TDSB Connects with those parents who have signed up, to inform them of the changes



FAQ's

- Childcare and EDP

Q: What will be the impact on Before & After Programs and Childcare?

A: Licenced childcare programs serving infants, toddlers and preschool children are not expected to be impacted by the Bell Time Changes

Before and After school programs and authorized Recreation before and after school programs will be informed of the changes and they will align to the new bell times

Extended day programs will not be impacted by bell times as they start at 7:15 and dismiss at 6 pm.



FAQ's

- Employment

Q: If this may impact my employment, is there anything that can be done to assist?

A: 6 months' notice was provided to allow maximum opportunity for parents to plan and to make arrangements

TDSB to offer letters to employers to outline the changes to bell times and to request consideration

By law, employers must consider changes to meet their employees' child care needs as part of their duty to accommodate

Parents are encouraged to speak with their employer to find ways to accommodate child care needs such as flexible scheduling or alternative work arrangements

Will work with the principal and community to look at other options to collaboratively get children to school such as Active School Transportation and other opportunities

Other jurisdictions have gone through this with greater differences in bell times and were able to adjust with some assistance



FAQ's

- Bell time impact

Q: Why are you changing the whole school's bell time when only a small number of students take the bus

A: Busing is an integrated system of delivery between schools and these changes ensure the most efficient use of the vehicles

Schools where there was the greatest potential for routing efficiencies were included

While there may not currently be a large number of students bused at a particular school, these numbers change from year to year and as program modifications take place at a school



Additional Information?

If you have questions or input:

- Email: belltimes@tdsb.on.ca
- Attend the in person and/or web information sessions
- Please review the bell time website for updates to Q and A's and additional helpful information at:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/EarlyYears/Kindergarten/Transportation/School-Start-and-End-Times>



Questions?



