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## Extra buses to help ease transit woes

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October 25, 2007

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School District 15 transportation officials spent most of the day Tuesday shaking the kinks out of the new bus routes.

The Board of Education voted unanimously Oct. 18 in an emergency session to authorize up to 10 additional buses to get students to school on time.

"This is not a permanent solution," Superintendent Robert McKanna said Oct. 18. "This is intended primarily to take care of the youngsters (sleeping) in the hall, which I witnessed at the (Conyers Learning Academy) today."

McKanna said Tuesday that six additional buses rolled Tuesday morning to the Conyers Learning Academy in Rolling Meadows.

State of emergency

The Board of Education declared an emergency at its Sept. 12 meeting after weeks of complaints inundated the district's transportation department.

At that time, Palatine parent Dianne Novosad said her son was sleeping in the halls of Conyers Learning Academy along with many other students. As a result, Novosad said at that time, she started picking him up from school.

"We're all taking a wait-and-see attitude," Novosad said in a telephone interview Tuesday. "If the buses start showing up on time, I'll put him back on the bus."

Novosad said it was ridiculous that she had to take her son out of school early to get him picked up and to pick up her daughter.

"All I really want is what was promised on paper -- saying what our pickup and drop-off times would be," she said. "If they can do that and get my son to me by a quarter to four, I'd be thrilled."

Parent Lisa Traina said she saw buses at the Conyers Learning Academy at 3:20 p.m.

"When I left, the buses were lining up to pick up the kids," she said. "So it's looking pretty good."

Traina said she would be happy with her son getting home by about 5 p.m.

"If the buses do the trick, as long as he's home within an hour of the last bell, that would make me happy," she said.

Assistant Superintendent Jim Garwood said the first run hasn't settled in enough to see the full effect.

"It can't not have a positive effect," he said Tuesday, "just adding more buses. And there may be more buses on the way, so it won't be the last change."

It will take about a week to shakedown what all the routes will look like, Garwood said. "But most of the buses rolled out earlier. It's just the first day. We expect it will get better as it goes on."

McKanna said by Tuesday of next week, four more bus routes should be added for a total of 10.

District officials expect to pay about \$300 per day for each additional bus.

School Board President Tim Millar said the emergency move will "definitely put a cramp in our budget."

### Parochial concerns

Several parents of students from Palatine parochial schools St. Theresa and Immanuel Lutheran spoke at the Board of Education meeting and said they were against changing their school start times to accommodate the district's busing schedule. The district offers bus transportation for the parochial schools' local students.

"I met with people from St. Theresa and Immanuel (Lutheran) today, and they have said they do not wish to change their start times," McKanna said Tuesday. "There might be a change in (busing tier schedule), but that depends on the board's decision."

McKanna said changes to the busing tier system, which would affect school start and end times, won't be discussed until the next district board meeting on Nov. 14.



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