

Routes for shuttle bus system covering Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills School Districts. Access is provided to any school from any

school. Promotes frugal use of fuel by parents, students and school buses.

Liberty Schools

Plan offers more schools

A transportation plan effectively permitting the widest possible choice of schools is the key to a local Liberty School program.

Although free choice of schools is the purpose, the plan we have developed, with the help of administrators and others, saves fuel and reduces costs.

First, let's consider how fuel is consumed in transporting Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills children to schools, other than the operation of public school buses. Look at our high school parking lots. They are jammed with cars driven to school by students.

SCHOOLS AT all levels have after-hours programs which require parents to make special trips to pick up pupils, when they live beyond walking distance. These include athletic practice, drama and enrichment programs. Junior and senior high schools have athletic practice starting before the school day which requires parent or student-operated auto transportation. Additionally, we have buses operated by Detroit Country Day, by Cranbrook, by Roper and other nonpublic schools which can be

supplanted with a good system.

SO, A GAS-SAVING plan must permit the reduction of this gas while saving school bus fuel and accomplishing the basic objective of freedom of choice. All this must be done with the safety of children uppermost in mind. Looks like an impossible task!

Here's the plan:

1. Elementary students will be transported much as they are now. Secondary students will walk to the nearest school, public or private, whether they attend that school or not. If there is no school within one and one-half miles of their home, then they will ride the elementary "feeder" buses to their local elementary school.

These feeder buses will make three or four trips in the morning and evening, to accommodate varied starting times. Thus, all schools become assembly and transfer points.

2. Shuttle buses will begin operation shortly after the first feeder run along six routes. These routes will touch every school in the two districts, with sufficient buses to provide a frequency of 15 or 20



By BOB LYTLE

minutes, both ways.

Where these routes intersect at a school, students can transfer to a different direction. Students will enter and leave buses only at public and nonpublic schools. Shuttle buses are efficient because in most cases they carry a load both ways.

Shuttle bus routes can be given priority for snow removal. 3. Bus service will be continuous in the morning till about 9 a.m., resuming in the afternoon and continuing till 6:30 p.m. Some consideration should be given to charging for bus transportation after 4:30 p.m. as permitted by a recent change in state law.

Examples:

1. Your child lives in the Quanton School area. He attends Cranbrook Schools. He boards the Maple westbound bus, changes at Bloomfield to the northbound Lahser bus, exits at Cranbrook.

2. Franklin School is your nearest elementary school. Your high school son or daughter wants to attend Andover High School in the Bloomfield Hills District. Assuming that both districts have agreed to permit open enrollment between districts, the student boards the shuttle bus at Franklin and gets off at Andover.

3. Greenfield School area to Berkshire Junior High. Board the westbound Beverly-13 Mile bus to Detroit Country Day, transfer to the northbound Lahser bus, exit at Berkshire.

ANOTHER POSSIBILITY is to arrange with the adjoining crowded school districts of West Bloomfield and Troy for interchange points at the ends of east-west routes, permitting their students to take advantage of the surplus capacity in Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills School Districts.

Some serious negotiation here can benefit parents in all four districts. Management could be provided by one district operating all buses for both districts, or the shuttle routes could be divided between them with each continuing to operate the feeder buses in their areas. With a little planning, this system, or one like it, could be in operation next September. Why not?

THE OBJECTION is raised that we may have difficulty qualifying this type of transportation system for state reimbursement. But it's hard to believe that any Lansing bureaucrat can block a system that promotes the frugal use of fuel.

The results: This is not a finished plan, but the general idea is workable, with some determination on the part of administrators to make it work in the two districts involved. Back-of-the-envelope figuring would indicate that the total number of school buses can be reduced by one-third or more.

THE NEED for student and parent-driven transportation is nearly eliminated. Private and parochial schools are served much more effectively as required by state law. Payments in lieu of transportation as now made by both districts to some nonpublic parents can be virtually eliminated.

Above all, parents' choice of schools is made an effective choice. The views expressed herein are of guest columnist Bob Lytle.

100 homes requested

Oakland County families are needed to provide living accommodations for 100 French students studying in the Detroit area from mid-July to mid-August.

Others are needed to provide year-long home living experience for South American and European students arriving in August.

The accommodations are being arranged through the International Cultural Exchange which has developed a number of programs along this line.

"We are hoping for a better relationship between the United States and France and we believe in working for it with young people in a better living experience," commented area representative Irene J. Reynolds, 6155 Waterford Hill Terrace, Waterford, Michigan.

The International Cultural Exchange office is looking for families in which at least one parent does not work so that the students can learn more about America.

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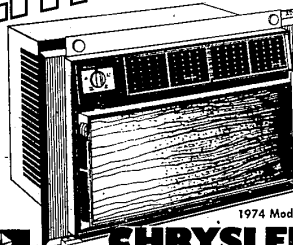
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