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South Coast British Columbia
Transportation Authority

Board of Education
Vancouver School District 39
Carmen Cho, Board Chair
1580 West Broadway
Vancouver, B.C. V6J 5K8

July 15, 2021

Dear Chair Cho,

Re: Letter to TransLink Re Fare Increase Bus Stop Removal

I am writing in response to your email dated Wednesday, June 30, regarding TransLink's July fare increase and the implementation of the Bus Stop Balancing program. Thank you for writing us with your concerns. We value your comments and insights into the needs of the communities that we serve.

We understand your concerns with the affordability of transit in our region. Equitable access to our system is a priority for us at TransLink and to reflect that, this year's fare change was less than originally planned. For context, the Investment Plan had originally planned a fare increase of 4.1 per cent for 2021, along with a 4.6 per cent increase in 2020 that was cancelled last year.

Through an agreement with the Province, a reduced fare increase of 2.3 per cent was implemented on July 1, 2021, allowing TransLink to keep up with inflation and maintain the current transit system while continuing to work towards achieving long-term financial sustainability. The Province entered into similar agreements with BC Ferries and BC Transit to ensure rates remain low through the pandemic recovery period. These inflationary increases will also pay for more and better transit service that will directly benefit the students who rely on the transit system. Even with these changes, Metro Vancouver continues to have the lowest average multi-mode adult cash fares of all major Canadian cities.

Our Bus Stop Balancing program is another way we're working to improve the reliability of our transit system. We recognize that the removal of bus stops impacts our customers and we've consulted with customers and community groups throughout the program to minimize any potentially negative impacts. For the bus stop balancing on Route 17 and 25, we contacted over 100 schools and Parents Advisory Organizations along the routes to advise them of the changes and gather their input. We also met with schools and advisory associations at their request to understand the impacts to their community.

Gathering feedback from customers has led us to reinstate important bus stops along routes 17 and 25. We heard our customers and reinstated nine stops and relocated one stop across the road. Last fall, we completed bus stop balancing on Route 2 and reinstated two stops along this route after collecting customer feedback.

The Vancouver School Board is a valued partner and represents an important group of our customers. We appreciate the time you took to share your concerns regarding these programs and hope that this response has offered some clarity to the reasoning behind these decisions.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gigi Chen-Kuo', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gigi Chen-Kuo
Interim CEO, TransLink