



Meegan Fitzharris MLA

Minister for Health and Wellbeing
Minister for Higher Education
Minister for Medical and Health Research
Minister for Transport
Minister for Vocational Education and Skills
Member for Yerrabi

Mr Tom Duncan
Clerk
ACT Legislative Assembly
London Circuit
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Duncan *Tom,*

Thank you for your letter of 23 October 2018 regarding petition No 17-18 lodged by Miss Candice Burch MLA requesting further public consultation on proposed school bus changes.

The ACT Government has designed a new bus network that will provide more buses, more often across the ACT. The new integrated public transport network will transform the way Canberrans move around the city and provide significant benefits for the community, including school students. Frequency, reliability and accessibility are the cornerstones of Canberra's redesigned public transport system.

In order to deliver this higher frequency network, dedicated school services have been redesigned or integrated to complement the general public transport network, particularly during the morning peak travel to school and work period.

In designing this network, the government undertook extensive consultation with parents, schools and students. The government received around 13,000 pieces of feedback, which included surveys completed by Canberrans online and on paper forms, Canberrans attending community council meetings, formal written submissions and individual meetings with key stakeholders such as schools or parent peak bodies. This included 2,832 surveys completed by parents of school students, as well as a further 432 surveys completed by primary and secondary school students.

As a result of community consultation, the government made significant changes to the draft network released for consultation in June 2018, including adding 78 more dedicated school services as well as changes to Rapid and local services that will reduce the need for students to change buses to travel to school.

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The government has no plans to consult further on the design of the new public transport network, which is expected to commence on 27 April 2019. The new network will provide students across the city with more options to get to school by public transport.

While school buses play an important role in school travel, only a small minority of students use existing school buses. Around 80 per cent of primary school students are currently driven to school, and more than half of high school and college students also travel by car. The new network will give these students and their families more options to get to school by bus or light rail.

Further, almost 60 per cent of students who travel by bus to school today in the ACT are using regular bus services shared with the general public. The new network will provide many benefits for these students as well as those who currently use school bus services with services that are more frequent, more reliable and simpler.

I would encourage parents and schools who continue to have concerns about the coming changes to the public transport network to find out more about the services for each school online at:
<https://www.transport.act.gov.au/getting-around/new-network/schools>.

Thank you for raising this matter. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Meegan Fitzharris MLA
Minister for Transport

2/1/2019