

## **District partnered with transportation experts to create bus runs for 2019-20**

Before finalizing transportation routes for the 2019-20 school year—which will be the first year of an [elementary grade reconfiguration](#)—General Brown School District officials worked with School Bus Consultants (SBC) to make sure they have the most efficient bus routes mapped out.

“We want to make this transition as smooth as possible for our students and their families,” Superintendent Barbara Case said. “We know busing is a concern for many of our families, and so we felt it was critical to have an outside group with expertise in this area scrutinize our transportation plan, poke holes in it and help us come up with the best possible options for our students.”

The Dexter Elementary routing scheme for the current year includes six runs with an average run time of 37 minutes. Brownville-Glen Park Elementary has 10 runs with an average run time of 43 minutes. Both schools currently enroll students in preK-grade 6. Under the grade reconfiguration, all students in preK-grade 2 will attend Dexter, and grades 3-6 will go to Brownville-Glen Park.

The district had planned to keep the same run schedule but add an additional stop to each run to transfer grades 3-6 students on a Dexter run to Brownville-Glen Park, and preK-grade 2 students on a Brownville-Glen Park run to Dexter. The schools are about three miles apart.

The district began working in March with SBC, which offers services related to the design, management and operations of school transportation programs. SBC reviewed such factors as school bell times, existing bus run times, asset utilization and capacity utilization with a goal of understanding the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the district’s current routing plan.

For 2019-20, the district will have 19 buses performing 35 runs for 1,623 planned students. Buses will be deployed in two tiers, as they are now: Junior/Senior High School students ride together on the first set of runs and elementary students comprise the second set.

SBC utilized TransFinder routing software to improve the efficiency of the routing scheme for the elementary runs. The reworked routing scheme reduced overall student ride time to the point that the adjusted plan nearly negates the increased time that will result by adding the additional stop to transfer students to their grade-level appropriate building.

Run times are longer than the actual student ride times. Average ride time under the reworked route schedule is expected to be 38 minutes, and the longest ride time is expected to be 75 minutes for those students attending school out of district.

“We’re still fine-tuning the logistics, but we feel transportation will be well-positioned to kick off the next school year in a favorable manner,” Case said. “We will continue to evaluate busing

after the school year starts and adjust as necessary, but we feel School Bus Consultants has helped us devise a solid plan for the next school year.”

### **More information**

On the last day of school, the district sent home with students a short transportation survey for families to complete that will help the district’s transportation department finalize pick-up and drop-off times. Those schedules will be communicated directly to families in August.

The district is also planning an informational night for families at each school later this summer. Once details are secured, the district will share the information on its website and Facebook.

### **Resulting Student Ride Time**

- Average ride time: 38 mins
- Shortest ride time: 4 mins
- Longest ride time: 75 mins