

## FOR DISCUSSION

### Lisle Community Unit School District 202 Finance Committee Meeting June 23, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Pre-kindergarten Transportation for SY2025-2026

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Administration is recommending that the mid-day Pre-K transportation routes be discontinued beginning with the 2025–2026 school year to reduce transportation-related expenditures and reduce the ongoing logistical strain placed on building-level staff. Pre-K students will continue to be permitted to ride the regular morning and afternoon K-5 bus routes, using existing neighborhood stops. We are sharing this recommendation with the Finance Committee of the Whole to make sure the Board is comfortable with this course of action prior to implementation.

**BACKGROUND DATA:** The School District currently provides free transportation to all Pre-K students residing 1 ½ miles or more from Lisle Elementary, or that must cross a serious safety hazard. Pre-K students ride the School District’s regular K-5 bus routes in the morning and afternoon. Because Pre-K is a half-day program, the School District also operates mid-day routes to transport students’ home after the morning session and to school for the afternoon session. The total cost for the Pre-K mid-day transportation in the 2024-2025 school year is outlined in the following table:

Route	Annual Cost	ISBE Reimbursed	Students	Cost Per Student
Mid-Day Pre-K Inbound	\$17,037	\$0	12	\$1,420
Mid-Day Pre-K Outbound	\$17,037	\$0	6	\$2,839
Total	\$34,074	\$0	18	\$1,893

Since transportation for Pre-K regular education students is not required by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), exclusive Pre-K routes are not eligible for state reimbursement. These mid-day routes are anticipated to cost approximately \$20,000 each for the 2025-2026 school year, for a total of \$40,000. It should be noted that Pre-K transportation must be provided for a student with disabilities if required per the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) and the School District receives reimbursement from the state for these students who ride the Sunrise routes.

In addition to the financial considerations, there are also operational challenges associated with running mid-day Pre-K routes. Unlike the morning and afternoon routes, which follow standardized stops used by all K-5 students, the mid-day routes must be adjusted frequently throughout the school year due to rolling Pre-K enrollment. As new students are added, stops must be created or removed, requiring updates to route sequences and pick-up/drop-off times for all students on the route. This creates a continual cycle of changes that must be communicated to families and coordinated with the transportation provider. These ongoing adjustments place an

additional burden on building-level staff, who are already managing the day-to-day needs of the school.

The Administration also surveyed several neighboring school districts to understand how they approach transportation for preschool students. The table below summarizes the responses collected and shows that most districts limit transportation to students with an IEP or those enrolled in state-funded “Preschool for All” programs. Very few provide transportation for general education Pre-K students, and when they do, it is typically on a fee-based model.

District	Who Receives Transportation?	General Education Pre-K Bused?
Wheaton	IEP students only	No
Naperville 203	IEP and Preschool for All students only	No
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Downers Grove	Busing available for all preschool; families are charged a fee	Yes (Fee-Based)
Woodridge	IEP students only	No
Westmont	IEP students only	No

This comparison further supports the need to re-evaluate the School District’s current approach considering the fiscal impact and operational challenges.