

School district will continue bus fee discussion in future

Contributed by Elizabeth Larson
Tuesday, 08 July 2008
Last Updated Tuesday, 08 July 2008

MIDDLETOWN – A discussion about implementing a busing fee in the Middletown Unified School District will continue in the future, but district officials want more input from the community before further considering the proposal.

Late last month, the district's board of trustees held a meeting in which they began discussing a proposal to charge fees for school bus ridership in order to help meet the district's skyrocketing fuel and transportation costs, as Lake County News has reported.

District Superintendent Korby Olson said the district is anticipating a 50-percent increase in its transportation budget in the coming year due to higher fuel costs.

That gave rise to a discussion about charging between \$.50 and \$2 a day for district bus service, which Olson said is seeing higher levels of use.

However, no parents came to share their views on the proposal at the board's June 25 meeting, Olson said, which could be attributed to the fact that summer meetings aren't as well attended due, in part, to vacations.

“We have to have parent input on this before we move forward,” Olson said.

He said the district board felt they couldn't take action until they have a better sense of what the district's parents want. So they'll plan on conducting surveys and continuing the discussion later in the year.

At the same meeting, the board held a discussion on raising developers fees, which are based on the square footage of a new home or commercial building. The district can only use fees for school building and construction.

No developers showed up at the meeting to dispute the proposal, which the board accepted, said Olson.

The district had last adjusted their rates two years ago to \$2.63 for residential development and \$0.42 for commercial development, said Olson.

In January the state adjusted the fees that a district can charge to \$2.97 for residential development and \$0.47 for commercial development, Olson added.

E-mail Elizabeth Larson at el Larson@lakeconews.com.

{mos_sb_discuss:2}