

Good Morning Ms. Titterton,

I can address your questions/concerns. I will start by letting you know that a partial refund is available to you, and other parents, who chose to discontinue AM bus services. Partial refunds are available to any parent, on any route, who finds that our bus services aren't meeting their needs.

Now for the longer explanation. WJHS has 3 activity buses that run before/after school. These buses are for our optional/elective before/after school programs like sports, clubs, band etc.... These 3 WJHS buses cover the entire district and do take more time than a typical school bus run. These runs are optional and serve as a courtesy to parents. And I agree, they can take up to an hour, especially if you are a "first stop." This optional WJHS bus run has been extended to morning HMS band students. Hence, the need for a WJHS/HMS shuttle. And yes, that requires time.

To remove the shuttle, we would need to add 3 activity buses to HMS (as we have for WJHS). As you likely know, the cost of adding 3 buses is cost/fee prohibitive, especially since the majority of our demand is for WJHS students who have a large variety of after school program options (e.g. sports).

I hope my explanation helped, If you are officially requesting a partial refund, please reply and I will begin this process for you.

Thank you for reaching out,

Ray



**Dr. Ray Lechner**  
Superintendent  
Wilmette Public Schools District 39  
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On Thu, Sep 6, 2018 at 2:46 PM,  
sarahjane [titterton.net](http://titterton.net) <[sarahjane@titterton.net](mailto:sarahjane@titterton.net)> wrote:

First off, thank you all for serving Wilmette on the school board. It is a demanding job, and I appreciate your service to our community.

I wanted to bring up a concern I had with the Highcrest band bus.

My son Henry Titterton is involved in the 6th band program at Highcrest. He is also signed up to take the bus back and forth from school.

I just called to see what the options were for him to get to school 3 times a week for band. I was informed that the route that he would have to take starts at 6:50---for an 8 AM band practice. This is over an hour of transit time, and it would mean that he would have to be waiting on the sidewalk by 6:45 at the latest. This adds up to a lot of sleep lost over a week--something that would be particularly detrimental to my son.

I am lucky in that I do not work and could drive him three times a week. However, I feel strongly that taking the bus is the greenest way for him to get to school, and there have also been many times when I have been sick and so grateful that my child can get to school by himself. Additionally, I am paying for the bus 5 days a week (morning and afternoon), but will only get the benefit of a 2 morning (5 afternoon) a week service.

There are many parents that must be in a similar situation, and I'd be willing to pay more for a better bus service.

Please advise me how this problem is going to be addressed in the future as I have a current 4th grader who will be in this situation soon. In the meantime, perhaps giving a partial refund to parents in similar situations would be appropriate? This weekend I will be teaching Henry how to use the PACE bus service, and, starting next week, I will effectively be double charged for morning transportation-- something I'm not relishing.

Best,

Sarah Titterton

Hello Ms. Lapidus,

This is a good question, and I can offer an abbreviated summary. First, as you indicated, the Park District does an awesome job organizing recreational activities for kids. Their programs are pretty separate from our schools and, in my view, are excellent. So much so, three-four years ago we tried doing exactly what you suggest. An after school program was provided at Romona, coordinated by the PTA. This Romona-based program was run by the Park District. However, demand was low and the Romona program couldn't be sustained fiscally. The Park District program is so close to Romona, with bus service, most parents preferred that option.

The D39 5-8 program you reference is a very different type of program/supervision, which likely isn't developmentally appropriate for younger children. Children in grades 5-8 are much more independent and self-sufficient; the current D39 "drop in" model works well for students in grades 5-8. A "drop in" approach for older children allows students to direct most of their own activities (snacks, games, homework, "chilling" etc...) Additionally, the Park District offers later (in the evening) programming than D39 currently provides for our older children.

So your question is a good one, I hope this history helps.

Have a great school year!

Ray



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On Aug 30, 2018, at 11:48 AM, Sara Lapidus <[saralapidus@gmail.com](mailto:saralapidus@gmail.com)> wrote:

Hi,

I hope you all had a nice summer! I wanted to write to you because I noticed when I was adding money to my daughter's lunch account that after school care was an option for Highcrest and Wilmette Jr High Students. My daughter is in 3rd grade at Romona and we have used the Park District After Care program since she was in kindergarten. I am wondering why After Care is not an option for the Elementary Schools. We used the before care program at Romona in kindergarten and it was a great, reasonably priced program. I would assume that any aftercare program at the schools would be similarly run.

While the Park District program is well run, it is also highly competitive, filling up within 5 minutes of registration opening, indicating a clear need for After School Childcare within the district. To my knowledge, the before school care at the elementary schools does not fill up so I would assume that if After Care was offered at the schools, it would be less competitive as well. In addition, it would be nice for students to simply stay at their elementary school rather than taking a bus at the end of the day.

I'm just curious as to why After Care is not offered for the K-4 buildings and if this has ever been discussed. I'd love to see this discussed in the future and believe, from my discussions with other parents, that they would also love to see such a program offered.

Thank you for considering this option.  
Sara Lapidus