

13 October 2021

Dear Panel

The School Board at Collie Senior High School would like to raise two major areas involving bus travel that impacts Collie Senior High School (CSHS) as follows:

- Bus Travel from Darken

- There is a growing number of families living outside the Darkan town site, who wish to send their children to Collie Senior High School. Parents are less likely to choose boarding if there is an option for a bus. There are a number of high school children wanting a bus from West Arthur to Collie Senior High School over the next ten years:

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Number	17	22	28	33	37	33	32	29	26	17

- The Shire of West Arthur does not see this as a parent/guardian issue only. The current policy structure disadvantages families, which in turn, has a flow on effect to the entire community. It impacts our social wellbeing, our small businesses, our agricultural industry, and the viability of our community into the future. Some siblings have been split, in that one child is eligible for the bus, and another has to be driven to the Bowelling bus stop. Some parents are being told they need to be sending their children to three different schools, (Primary, District High, and Senior High) – this means meeting three different bus stops twice daily, which is impractical.
- CSHS can accommodate these students in one location, for the entire six years of their high school career. It can accommodate ATAR, and VET pathways for students. We maximise students as part of Year 6 to 7 transition.

- Bus Travel to Bunbury

- The second area of concern, is students travelling down the hill to Bunbury, for so called “specialist” programs? For example, Harvey Agriculture College is a specialist program and school, and there is no issue supporting travel to this site. We work with Harvey Agriculture College, for the best for students who wish to attend this site.
- For the past three years, we have had students applying for Manea Senior College, (10 students each year), and this travel is approved, and is not discussed with the Principal of CSHS. An example of this is the Medical program, this is not a specialist program, despite marketing to be a Doctor, students still require an ATAR score, UMAT entry, which students can achieve at CSHS, as we offer the highest levels of Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry. We have many Doctors produced having attended CSHS. The one or two students that leave Collie for this, also impacts the entire cohort, and then, what we can offer at CSHS. This same impact happens across the entire South West Region, as one or two students from all schools impacts what each can offer.
- CSHS can also offer higher level Mathematics to VET students, no need to go to Manea, again, I have the specialist staff to deliver and if one or two students leave this impacts CSHS. The Board has no issue with a user pay system but a “specialist” program is a mere marketing tactic, and not necessarily the best outcome for students. CSHS often have students return from Manea, we are then not funded for these students, and students are often disadvantaged, with half complete courses that we work extremely hard to have graduate. We have an outstanding graduation rate, acknowledged by the Minister for Education in 2020.

- CSHS can also offer ATAR and certificate courses to accommodate student needs. This is looked at as part of the interview process, and we address and plan for as needed.

Thank you for your consideration of these matters in determining better bus travel for students and hence improved educational outcomes.

Yours Sincerely



Mr Paul Reuben
School Board Chair