



June 4, 2020
Jennifer Hillgoth

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

VIA EMAIL – [REDACTED]

Re: FOIA Request Dated May 20, 2020 and received May 20, 2020

Subject: A request for any/all studies and/or surveys performed at the direction of Oswego School Dist. 308, and its transportation division, at the intersection of Morgan Valley Dr. and Grove Rd. beginning 1/1/11 thru 5/20/20, to include the date/time a study was performed. From 1/1/11-5/20/20, any/all written communication, documents, records, correspondence, electronic mail, etc. with Oswego School Dist. 308, and its transportation division and BOE regarding said studies, hazards identified, busing and a pupils ability or inability to safely use this crosswalk.

Dear Ms. Hillgoth:

This letter will serve as Oswego Community Unit School District 308's response to your May 20, 2020 request under the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.), in which you asked for the above referenced information. The information responsive to your request is attached.

To promote district transparency and assist others who may have a similar question, this responsive document will be posted online on the district's website. To access it, go to www.sd308.org and select *Our District > Freedom of Information Act Request > FOIA Request Responses*, then select *FOIA ID #20-20*.

Please be advised that to comply with your FOIA request, the district incurred an expense that comprised of the cost of labor and resources used to search for records responsive to your request

Please let me know if you have additional questions. Thank you.

Mary Anne Buckley

Mary Anne Buckley
Freedom of Information Officer

May 19, 2020

Dear Dr. Sparlin, the Members of the Oswego Board of Education, and the Administration of District 308 Transportation,

We understand that Oswego Community School District #308 is facing a budget shortfall which is the direct result of a failed referendum and a broken education funding model in Illinois. That being said, we know that it is never an easy decision to make budget cuts that ultimately impact the quality of education our students experience, decrease opportunities for arts/extracurricular activities, reduce the capacity of our school district to provide supports for families, and make it incredibly difficult to retain and attract qualified staff in our schools.

At a recent Board of Education Meeting, a decision regarding bus transportation was made that poses a safety hazard for students walking from Morgan Crossing Subdivision (and likely other areas, as well) due to heavy vehicular traffic and the required crossing of a busy, two lane highway with two turning lanes and a speed limit of 45 miles per hour at the intersection of Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road. As concerned parents, we are appealing to your collective group to review and overturn this decision which could end in a needless tragedy and does not ensure safe passage of our children to and from Prairie Point Elementary School.

At the Board of Education Meeting on April 27, 2020, a budget cut related to the discontinuation of bus transportation to and from school for any student residing within a 1.5 mile radius was brought forward for discussion and a vote in May led to formal bus cuts. According to the Board of Education Meeting Minutes for Item 7.3, related to the Bus Route Study for Southbury and Prairie Point Schools (Retrieved from

<https://www.sd308.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=9932&dataid=60787&FileName=4.27.20%20Board%20Meeting%20Minutes.doc.pdf> on May 19, 2020):

Dr. Sparlin stated that administration received the directive from the Board of Education to conduct studies on bus routes that might no longer qualify for busing service. Prairie Point and Southbury Elementary School were identified as schools with areas where students could potentially walk. Mrs. Simosky presented a map for Prairie Point, outlining the school boundary as well as the walking boundary. On the proposed new walking map, including some of the southeast and western area of Prairie Point. All students in that area live less than 1.5 miles away from the school. There is already a crossing guard at Grove Road and there is a small area that would still receive busing, due to construction in that area. This change would eliminate three routes and impact approximately 150 students. Yearly cost savings would be approximately \$28,575. Next, Mrs. Simosky presented a map for Southbury, that currently has nine bus routes, transporting 464 students. Part of the area was bused due to construction in that neighborhood, but at this time, there are sidewalks in place everywhere. We are recommending to eliminate three routes at Southbury as well. A Crossing Guard would be required at Southbury Blvd. at Bower Lane. The estimated yearly savings after adding the cost of a Crossing Guard would be \$24,800. Mrs. Kroner voiced concern about only having one Crossing Guard. Mrs. Simosky shared that based on the engineering study, we would not need an additional guard, but the Board could add an additional one at their discretion. Mrs. Swanson brought up a concern that

studies were not done during drop off and pick up times when there would be a lot of traffic in the area. Also, studies are done when the weather is nice, not after a snowfall when some sidewalks are not shoveled. Mrs. Swanson was asked to find out what date/times the study was conducted. The complete presentation for the Bus Route Study, including audio recording, can be found at the following link: <https://go.boarddocs.com/il/oswego308/Board.nsf/Public>

We are formally requesting that a new traffic study is completed to verify the safety of the crossing at Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road and that NO changes are made to bus transportation during the 2020-21 school year for students who reside in the Morgan Crossing Subdivision until such time when an accurate depiction of peak traffic can be assessed. At this time, it would be impossible to do an updated traffic study given our extraordinary circumstances with the impact of the Covid-19 Stay At Home Executive Order in place in Illinois. Therefore, we believe it is in the best interest and safety of the student population at Prairie Point Elementary School, that no changes are made to bus transportation until the cessation of the Illinois Stay At Home Executive Order and the Illinois School Closure that was ordered.

Years ago (2012), a traffic study was completed for the intersection of Morgan Crossing Drive and Grove Road and it was deemed that the crossing was unsafe for student walkers. We respectfully request that the Board of Education compare the traffic study from 2012 with the 2020 traffic study publicly. The most recent traffic study was dated January 6, 2020, and it was not completed during peak times/hours *during inclement weather* and resulted in a determination that this crossing was safe for students (even if the study was completed in October, this would not access conditions when inclement weather occurs). The traffic study lists this intersection as a two lane roadway, when in fact, it is a two lane roadway with two turning lanes. Additionally, the intersection is so busy that our families must often stop and wait in the middle of the roadway within the painted median in order to cross the second half of the road. For comparison, the Lake View crossing has a crossing length of 50 feet, whereas the Morgan Valley Drive crossing has a crossing length of 75 feet.

According to the 2020 traffic study, the Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road intersection was rated as an "11", and a rating of "12" would have made it unsafe for crossing—remember, this was during times when there was no inclement weather. There is no doubt that the safety rating would have been reduced even further if assessed during peak days/times *during inclement weather*. With the threshold of "12" being deemed unsafe, and given the potential addition of up to 150 more families driving children to school as a result of these bus cuts, we might expect a dramatic increase in vehicular traffic at the Morgan Valley Drive Crossing, as well.

Lakeview Drive Crossing has a safety rating of "8.5" and yet a crossing guard is stationed there to assist students' safe crossing of that intersection. There is no mention of adding a crossing guard to the Grove Road and Morgan Valley Drive intersection, even though it has an even less safe rating ("11") than Lake View Crossing ("8.5"). **Seeing that Board Members have discretion for making decisions in a 2 point range, it is within the scope of your influence**

to determine that this crossing does not meet the safety standards outlined by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), even without a new traffic study.

There are dozens of children, many that range between 5-6 years old, that reside within our subdivision. Our youngest children, with tiny legs and feet, cannot cross the Morgan Valley crossing quickly enough to avoid oncoming traffic. The speed limit is 45 mph at the crossing, but it is 55 mph approximately 100 yards past the intersection. Grove Road is a remote, country road and the Morgan Valley Crossing is the first point at which there is housing. Our children will be the first thing drivers encounter as they try to slow their vehicles from 55 mph to 45 mph. That fact alone is a terrifying one—it's just one of the many reasons why we are pleading for reconsideration of the bus cuts to Morgan Crossing Subdivision.

According to IDOT, *"A vehicular serious safety hazard exists when a pupil is required to walk along normally traveled roads or streets where walking is alleged to constitute a serious safety hazard due to vehicular traffic or rail crossings as determined by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), or is required to walk between their home and assigned school or between their home or assigned school and a pickup point or bus stop along roads or streets where walking is alleged to constitute a serious safety hazard due to vehicular traffic or rail crossings as determined by IDOT".* [Statutory Citation: 105 ILCS 5/29-3]. **It is our belief that the Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road intersection meets the definition of constituting a serious safety hazard as outlined here in the IDOT statutes that were enacted to ensure students' safe passage to and from school.**

Furthermore, IDOT statutes delineate that: *"The determination as to what constitutes a serious vehicular safety hazard is determined by the school board, in accordance with guidelines established by IDOT and in consultation with the State Superintendent of Education. IDOT will review the findings of the school board and approve or disapprove the school board's determination that a serious safety hazard exists within 30 days after the school board submits its findings to the department. If a hazard is determined to exist, the school board shall annually review the conditions and determine whether the hazardous conditions remain unchanged. The State Superintendent of Education may request that IDOT verify that the conditions have not changed."* **It is our formal request that this case is referred to IDOT and the State Superintendent of Education for review to determine the hazardousness of the Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road crossing, that is, IF the Board of Education does not act to reinstate bus service for the children in Morgan Crossing so that they have a safe way to arrive at school.**

Last, IDOT states: *"A parent or guardian can submit a petition in writing on behalf of a pupil for whom adequate transportation for the public is alleged not to exist because the pupil is required to walk along normally traveled roads or streets where walking is alleged to constitute a serious safety hazard due to vehicular traffic rail crossings or criminal gang activity, or the pupil is required to walk between their home and assigned school or between their home or assigned school and a pickup point or bus stop along roads or streets where walking is alleged to constitute a serious safety hazard due to vehicular traffic, rail crossings, or criminal gang*

activity. A school board shall conduct a study and make findings, which IDOT shall review and approve or disapprove.” [Statutory Citation: 105 ILCS 5/29-3]. **Please consider this our formal request and petition in writing expressing our concern that the crossing at Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road poses a serious safety hazard to the children residing in our subdivision that are required to access this crossing everyday in order to get to Prairie Point Elementary School.**

In 2012, when bus transportation cuts were considered, the Board of Education suggested that the students that resided in Morgan Crossing could safely travel to school if they traversed on the Prairie Point bike trail, by entering it at the location at the east end of Morgan Valley Drive. This increases our own children’s walking distance from 0.9 miles (via the Grove Road bike path) versus 1.4 miles via the Prairie Point bike trail. It almost doubles the walking distance. Walking from our homes in Morgan Crossing to Prairie Point Elementary via the Prairie Point bike trail takes an adult walker 39 minutes, one way. With young children in tow, it takes just slightly longer. This path is NOT cleared of snow in the winter (like the Grove Road path, which is ALSO not cleared of snow during the winter), and it runs across secluded areas such as ponds and open fields. By IDOT’s description, while this path is technically less than 1.5 miles from the school, it should not be considered as a route for our children to travel to school because it is not a “normally traveled road or street”. In regard to the state’s definition of the measurement of distance from school and the routes that children should travel, these are the specific parameters for which considerations for safe passage to school should follow:

State statute defines the measurement as the distance from the exit of the property where the pupil resides to the point where pupils are normally unloaded at the school attended; such distance shall be measured by determining the shortest distance on normally traveled roads or streets. [Statutory Citation: 105 ILCS 5/29-3 Administrative Rule: 23 Ill Admin Code, Section 120.30(a)(1)(A).]

We understand budget cuts are needed but the decision to discontinue bus transportation to and from school for students that reside within the Morgan Crossing subdivision clearly puts our children in danger. We know that the stakeholders tasked with making budget cuts certainly don’t want to put kids in harm’s way. Now is the time for us to work collectively to be proactive about rethinking this bus route cut for Morgan Crossing so that we can keep our children safe—and prevent an unnecessary tragedy from occurring. We are pleading for you to review and reconsider your decision to discontinue bus transportation for the students who reside in the Morgan Crossing Subdivision.

We also want to thank you for your service in our school district and in our community. We look forward to working together to achieve a positive solution in this matter.

Sincerely,

Christy and Larry Valyou

Jennifer and Robert Hillgoth

Anitra and Kristofer Brase

Julie and Mike Valencic

Jessica and Jim Bellomo

Lisa Schwinn

Izzy Krukowski

Christin Galloway

Alison Graham

Danielle Lewandowski

Kalyn Baumgartner

Jessica Robinson

Jen Barker

Jamie Murray

Kristin Clark

Trisha Christke

Jennifer Marchese

Lindsay Bewick

Kelly and Rich Pimpinella

Keli Kolar

William and Andrea Hatzinger

(On behalf of all of the Morgan Crossing residents)



Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>

Fwd: Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing subdivision

1 message

Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Wed, May 27, 2020 at 1:25 PM

To: Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Christy Valyou** <[REDACTED]>

Date: Wed, May 20, 2020 at 1:53 PM

Subject: Re: Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing subdivision

To: Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Dear Ms. Simosky,

Thank you for the information.

Looking forward to hearing more soon,
Christy Valyou

Sent from my iPhone

> On May 20, 2020, at 12:52 PM, Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org> wrote:

>

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Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT

Director of Transportation



District 308 Transportation Center

[55 Stonehill Road](#)

[Oswego, IL 60543](#)

[630-636-2977](tel:630-636-2977)



Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>

Fwd: FW: Edited Letter-Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing

1 message

Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Wed, May 27, 2020 at 1:25 PM

To: Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **John Sparlin** <jsparlin@sd308.org>

Date: Wed, May 20, 2020 at 1:36 PM

Subject: FW: Edited Letter-Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing

To: Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

FYI...John

From: 308 Superintendent <superintendent@sd308.org>**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2020 9:13 AM**To:** John Sparlin <jsparlin@sd308.org>**Subject:** Fwd: Edited Letter-Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Christy Valyou** <[REDACTED]>

Date: Wed, May 20, 2020 at 9:10 AM

Subject: Edited Letter-Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing

To: <superintendent@sd308.org>

Dr. Sparlin,

Thank you for your response and your help in this matter. I've attached a link to a google document. I've edited the letter that I sent to you last night to reflect the most recent information we have in our subdivision about the most recent traffic study.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gmnX01hY4eJn6l6q_DpJk7CrR-XMF0XcgLBE7FdCRQ0/edit?usp=sharing

Have a wonderful day,

Christy Valyou

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Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT
Director of Transportation



District 308 Transportation Center
55 Stonehill Road
Oswego, IL 60543
630-636-2977



Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>

Fwd: Cutting Bus Service

1 message

Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Wed, May 27, 2020 at 1:25 PM

To: Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Dawn Simosky** <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Date: Wed, May 20, 2020 at 9:39 AM

Subject: Re: Cutting Bus Service

To: Steve Dzik <[REDACTED]>

Cc: mdearmond@sd308.org <mdearmond@sd308.org>, amiller02@sd308.org <amiller02@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>

Good morning Mr. Dzik,

Thank you for your email. We are currently establishing the boundaries based on walking distance to the school, and will provide a more detailed response to address your concerns in the very near future.

Regards,

Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT
Director of Transportation

On Mon, May 18, 2020 at 8:38 AM Steve Dzik <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi, I was looking at the cut's being made to the bus service at Prairie Point and notice Morgan Crossing Sub division is included do the cuts for service include all of Morgan Crossing or just parts? Thanks

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Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT
Director of Transportation



District 308 Transportation Center
[55 Stonehill Road](#)
[Oswego, IL 60543](#)
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Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT
Director of Transportation



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630-636-2977



Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>

Fwd: Prairie Point and Southbury

1 message

Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Wed, May 27, 2020 at 1:24 PM

To: Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Steve Corcoran** <scorcoran@eea-ltd.com>

Date: Wed, May 20, 2020 at 11:55 AM

Subject: Prairie Point and Southbury

To: Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Dawn,

EEA was out there Nov 12 and 13th from roughly 7-10 AM and 2:30-4:30 PM looking at both schools.

I am working on your route questions.

Stephen B. Corcoran, PE, PTOE

Director of Traffic Engineering

p 847.223.4804 Ext. 21

c 847.254.9792

Eriksson Engineering Associates, Ltd.

Civil Traffic & Parking Landscape Architecture | www.eea-ltd.com

[145 Commerce Drive, Suite A, Grayslake, IL 60030](#)

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Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT

Director of Transportation



District 308 Transportation Center

[55 Stonehill Road](#)

[Oswego, IL 60543](#)

630-636-2977

Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>

Fwd: Bus routes

1 message

Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Wed, May 27, 2020 at 1:24 PM

To: Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Dawn Simosky** <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Date: Wed, May 20, 2020 at 12:55 PM

Subject: Re: Bus routes

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Cc: John Sparlin <jsparlin@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>, Lauri Doyle <ldoyle@sd308.org>

Good afternoon Ms. Pimpinella,

Thank you for your input on the recent changes to bus routes in your community. We are working with the Village of Oswego and the park district, and will provide a more detailed response to address your concerns in the very near future.

Kind Regards,

Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT
Director of TransportationOn Wed, May 20, 2020 at 12:46 PM Lauri Doyle <ldoyle@sd308.org> wrote:

I have forwarded this email to Transportation. They can assist you with any transportation inquiries.

Thank you!

Lauri doyle

On Wed, May 20, 2020 at 10:29 AM Kelly Pimpinella <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Mrs Doyle,

While I'm sure you've been bombarded with emails in regard to the elimination of certain bus routes I wanted to actually see if my route is eliminated.

I am located in Morgan Crossing subdivision and my address is exactly 1.5 miles from Prairie Point. Will my bus stop be removed? It's directly across the street from me on Hackney Ln.

Thank you

Kelly Pimpinella

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Lauri Doyle
Oswego CUSD #308
Board of Education
President
630-660-9256

--

Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT

Director of Transportation



District 308 Transportation Center
55 Stonehill Road
Oswego, IL 60543
630-636-2977

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Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT
Director of Transportation



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Oswego, IL 60543
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Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>

Fwd: FW: Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing subdivision

2 messages

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Wed, May 27, 2020 at 1:25 PM

To: Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>

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From: **Dawn Simosky** <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Date: Wed, May 20, 2020 at 12:52 PM

Subject: Fwd: FW: Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing subdivision

To: <[REDACTED]>

Cc: Lauri Doyle <ldoyle@sd308.org>, John Sparlin <jsparlin@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>

Good afternoon Mr. & Mrs. Valyou,

Thank you for your input on the recent changes to bus routes in your community. We are working with the Village of Oswego and the park district, and will provide a more detailed response to address your concerns in the very near future.

Kind Regards,

Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT
Director of Transportation

From: Lauri Doyle <ldoyle@sd308.org>**Sent:** Wednesday, May 20, 2020 8:13 AM**To:** Christy Valyou <[REDACTED]>; John Sparlin <jsparlin@sd308.org>**Subject:** Re: Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing subdivision

Thank you for your letter. I will forward this to the appropriate administrator for further discussion. Please let me know if you do not receive a response.

Thank you!

Lauri Doyle

On Tue, May 19, 2020 at 9:51 PM Christy Valyou <[REDACTED]> wrote:

May 19, 2020

Dear Dr. Sparlin and the Members of the Oswego Board of Education,

We understand that Oswego Community School District #308 is facing a budget shortfall which is the direct result of a failed referendum and a broken education funding model in Illinois. That being said, we know that it is never an easy decision to make budget cuts that ultimately impact the quality of education our students experience, decrease opportunities for arts/extracurricular activities, reduce the capacity of our school district to provide supports for families, and make it incredibly difficult to retain and attract qualified staff in our schools.

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We are formally requesting that a new traffic study is completed to verify the safety of the crossing at Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road and that NO changes are made to bus transportation during the 2020-21 school year for students who reside in the Morgan Crossing Subdivision until such time when an accurate depiction of peak traffic can be assessed. At this time, it would be impossible to do an updated traffic study given our extraordinary circumstances with the impact of the Covid-19 Stay At Home Executive Order in place in Illinois. Therefore, we believe it is in the best interest and safety of the student population at Prairie Point Elementary School, that no changes are made to bus transportation until the cessation of the Illinois Stay At Home Executive Order and the Illinois School Closure that was ordered.

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bus cuts, we might expect a dramatic increase in vehicular traffic at the Morgan Valley Drive Crossing, as well.

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According to IDOT, *“A vehicular serious safety hazard exists when a pupil is required to walk along normally traveled roads or streets where walking is alleged to constitute a serious safety hazard due to vehicular traffic or rail crossings as determined by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), or is required to walk between their home and assigned school or between their home or assigned school and a pickup point or bus stop along roads or streets where walking is alleged to constitute a serious safety hazard due to vehicular traffic or rail crossings as determined by IDOT”*. [Statutory Citation: 105 ILCS 5/29-3]. **It is our belief that the Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road intersection meets the definition of constituting a serious safety hazard as outlined here in the IDOT statutes that were enacted to ensure students’ safe passage to and from school.**

Furthermore, IDOT statutes delineate that: *“The determination as to what constitutes a serious vehicular safety hazard is determined by the school board, in accordance with guidelines established by IDOT and in consultation with the State Superintendent of Education. IDOT will review the findings of the school board and approve or disapprove the school board’s determination that a serious safety hazard exists within 30 days after the school board submits its findings to the department. If a hazard is determined to exist, the school board shall annually review the conditions and determine whether the hazardous conditions remain unchanged. The State Superintendent of Education may request that IDOT verify that the conditions have not changed.”* **It is our formal request that this case is referred to IDOT and the State Superintendent of Education for review to determine the hazardousness of the Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road crossing, that is, IF the Board of Education does not act to reinstate bus service for the children in Morgan Crossing so that they have a safe way to arrive at school.**

Last, IDOT states: *“A parent or guardian can submit a petition in writing on behalf of a pupil for whom adequate transportation for the public is alleged not to exist because the pupil is required to walk along normally traveled roads or streets where walking is alleged to constitute a serious safety hazard due to vehicular traffic rail crossings or criminal gang activity, or the pupil is required to walk between their home and assigned school or between their home or assigned school and a pickup point or bus stop along roads or streets where walking is alleged to constitute a serious safety hazard due to vehicular traffic, rail crossings, or criminal gang activity. A school board shall conduct a study and make findings, which IDOT shall review and approve or disapprove.”* [Statutory Citation: 105 ILCS 5/29-3]. **Please consider this our formal request and petition in writing expressing our concern that the crossing at Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road poses a serious safety hazard to the children residing in our subdivision that are required to access this crossing everyday in order to get to Prairie Point Elementary School.**

In 2012, when bus transportation cuts were considered, the Board of Education suggested that the students that resided in Morgan Crossing could safely travel to school if they traversed on the Prairie Point bike trail, by entering it at the location at the east end of Morgan Valley Drive. This increases our own children’s walking distance from 0.9 miles (via the Grove Road bike path) versus 1.4 miles via the Prairie Point bike trail. It almost doubles the walking distance. Walking from our homes in Morgan Crossing to Prairie Point Elementary via the Prairie Point bike trail takes an adult walker 39 minutes, one way. With young children in tow, it takes just slightly longer. This path is NOT cleared of snow in the winter (like the Grove Road path, which is ALSO not cleared of snow during the winter), and it runs across secluded areas such as ponds and open fields. By IDOT’s description, while this path is

technically less than 1.5 miles from the school, it should not be considered as a route for our children to travel to school because it is not a "normally traveled road or street". In regard to the state's definition of the measurement of distance from school and the routes that children should travel, these are the specific parameters for which considerations for safe passage to school should follow:

State statute defines the measurement as the distance from the exit of the property where the pupil resides to the point where pupils are normally unloaded at the school attended; such distance shall be measured by determining the shortest distance on normally traveled roads or streets. [Statutory Citation: 105 ILCS 5/29-3 Administrative Rule: 23 Ill Admin Code, Section 120.30(a)(1)(A).]

We understand budget cuts are needed but the decision to discontinue bus transportation to and from school for students that reside within the Morgan Crossing subdivision clearly puts our children in danger. We know that the stakeholders tasked with making budget cuts certainly don't want to put kids in harm's way. Now is the time for us to work collectively to be proactive about rethinking this bus route cut for Morgan Crossing so that we can keep our children safe—and prevent an unnecessary tragedy from occurring. We are pleading for you to review and reconsider your decision to discontinue bus transportation for the students who reside in the Morgan Crossing Subdivision.

We also want to thank you for your service in our school district and in our community. We look forward to working together to achieve a positive solution in this matter.

Sincerely,

Christy and Larry Valyou

Jennifer and Robert Hillgoth

Anitra and Kristofer Brase

Julie and Mike Valencic

Jessica and Jim Bellomo

Lisa Schwinn

Izzy Krukowski

Christin Galloway

(On behalf of all of the Morgan Crossing residents)

--

Lauri Doyle

Oswego CUSD #308

Board of Education

President

[REDACTED]

--

Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT
Director of Transportation



District 308 Transportation Center
55 Stonehill Road
Oswego, IL 60543
630-636-2977

--

Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT
Director of Transportation



District 308 Transportation Center
55 Stonehill Road
Oswego, IL 60543
630-636-2977

Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Wed, May 27, 2020 at 1:25 PM

To: Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **John Sparlin** <jsparlin@sd308.org>

Date: Wed, May 20, 2020 at 8:43 AM

Subject: FW: Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing subdivision

To: Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>, Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Good morning Christi and Dawn,

Please read the email below. I highlighted an area that needs research and possible action. Please be sure that all of the emails we are receiving are followed up at minimally letting people know that we received them and any additional information will be provided in a follow up in the near future.

Thank you,

John

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]



Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>

Fwd: Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing

1 message

Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Wed, May 27, 2020 at 1:25 PM

To: Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>, Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Christy Valyou** <[REDACTED]>

Date: Wed, May 20, 2020 at 10:44 AM

Subject: Bus Cuts to Morgan Crossing

To: <amiller02@sd308.org>, <dsimosky@sd308.org>, <mdearmond@sd308.org>

Dear Administration for District 308 Transportation,

Recently, bus cuts were made for the Morgan Crossing subdivision. As concerned parents, we are writing to share with you about a significant safety hazard that is present at the intersection of Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road, where our children must cross to go to and from Prairie Point School every day.

The residents of Morgan Crossing subdivision have outlined our concerns in this letter and we are submitting this as our formal request and petition to have the safety hazards at this intersection reevaluated. Please read this letter with specific details about our concerns.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gmnX01hY4eJn6l6q_DpJk7CrR-XMF0XcgLBE7FdCRQ0/edit?usp=sharing

Thank you for your work to keep our children safe. We are looking forward to working with you to come up with a positive solution that ensures a safe passage for the children of Morgan Crossing to Prairie Point School in the fall.

Sincerely,
Christy Valyou

--

Dawn Simosky, CDPT, CSNT
Director of Transportation



District 308 Transportation Center
[55 Stonehill Road](#)
[Oswego, IL 60543](#)
630-636-2977

May 24, 2020

Dear Dr. Sparlin, the Members of the Oswego Board of Education, and the Administration of District 308 Transportation,

The residents of Morgan Crossing Subdivision submitted a petition on May 19, 2020 with our request for the serious safety hazards present at the Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road crossing to be investigated further and referred to IDOT and the State Superintendent of Education for assessment. Today, we are writing to share additional evidence which substantiates our claim that this crossing poses a serious safety hazard. Using several resources, the research and analysis conducted revealed inaccurate documentation within the 2019/2020 Traffic Study.

In the memorandum, dated January 6, 2020, written by Stephen B. Corcoran (Director of Traffic Engineering, Eriksson Engineering Associates, LTD) and addressed to Dawn Simosky, it was noted the methodology utilized in this study was based upon the manual "School Safety Busing and Instructions for Submitting Findings" issued by the Illinois Department of Transportation (December 2001). Mr. Corcoran explained components of their analysis had been collected from the school district, field surveys and aerial photographs being the following:

- **The grade level of the pupil**
- **The walking route of the school**
- **Location, condition, and width of the walkway relative to the adjacent road**
- **Speed, control, and volume of traffic on the road**
- **Length of the walkway section**

While reviewing the findings that were agreed upon by both Ericksson Engineering and School District 308, it was noted that this study awarded the intersection of Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road, 11 total points which now deemed this intersection safe for Prairie Point students to use as a crosswalk. This finding would ultimately eliminate busing previously implemented as a result of earlier studies which found this intersection to be too hazardous for students to cross. Additionally, on April 27, 2020, the Board of Education reviewed the study completed by Ericksson Engineering. The discussion by board members included the estimated cost savings for each bus route that was to be eliminated as well as board members' own concerns regarding known hazards existing at these affected locations. The discussion also mentioned concerns regarding anticipated strong responses by parents who shared the same safety concerns. It was then on May 11, 2020, that the Board of Education unanimously voted to remove bus service from several locations including Morgan Valley Drive, based on the hazardous study conducted by Ericksson Engineering.

The IDOT Serious Safety Hazard Finding Application and The Illinois Board of Education Application for Determination of a Serious Safety Hazard also provide guidelines and definitions as they relate to students crossing a roadway (type III crossing).

The Illinois State Board of Education, Application for Determination of a Serious Safety Hazard (Forms and Instructions 2008-2009), defines "the number of lanes of traffic on the roadway being crossed" is to include "through lanes, turning lanes and parking lanes." While Grove Road is technically a two lane, non-residential roadway, at the point of intersection with Morgan Valley Drive, the roadway width increases as it becomes 4 lanes on the north end. These lanes consist of one lane for traffic in each direction and two auxiliary lanes being a dedicated right turn lane and a dedicated left turn lane. This factor directly influences the actual width of roadway students must cross from Morgan Valley Drive. The south end of this intersection maintains a similar increase in width as this portion of Grove Road contains a painted median to accommodate the width increase on the north end.

This is why special consideration is given to these types of crossings by both IDOT and ISBE guidelines as it pertains to safety hazards and providing school busing.

The Illinois State Board of Education also identifies a Type III hazard of crossing a roadway by simply defining "lanes of traffic crossed" as being **where the designated crosswalks are in the roadway**. Rather, a safety rating (or point designation) is accurately measured *based on the length of the crosswalk in the roadway otherwise known as the width of the roadway at said crosswalk*. The safety study performed by Eriksson Engineering Associates, LTD., provides the following information for the Grove Road intersection at Morgan Valley Drive:

- *Crossing Length- 75'*
- *Width of Road- 25'*

The parameters of determining a serious safety hazard assessment for Type III-Crossing of a Roadway [Section 556.140] are outlined explicitly in the Illinois Department of Transportation School Safety Busing guidelines (2001). *We would like you to focus on the information related to the width of the roadway* in regards to determining a safety hazard, for this is where an inaccurate figure was documented as it applies to this intersection in the 2020 Traffic Study. (See Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2)

Figure 1.1 IDOT School Safety Busing Guidelines, Type III Crossing

Determination of serious safety hazard.

1) Factors to be considered. The following factors are relevant in determining whether pupils crossing a roadway are endangered by a serious safety hazard: grade of pupil, type of intersection control, speed and volume of traffic, and width of roadway. To determine whether a serious safety hazard exists in a particular situation, a school board shall assign points as appropriate for these factors, using the following tables (IDOT, School Safety Busing, 2001).

Figure 1.2 Width of Roadway, Table 14 (from IDOT, School Safety Busing, 2001. Section 556.140)

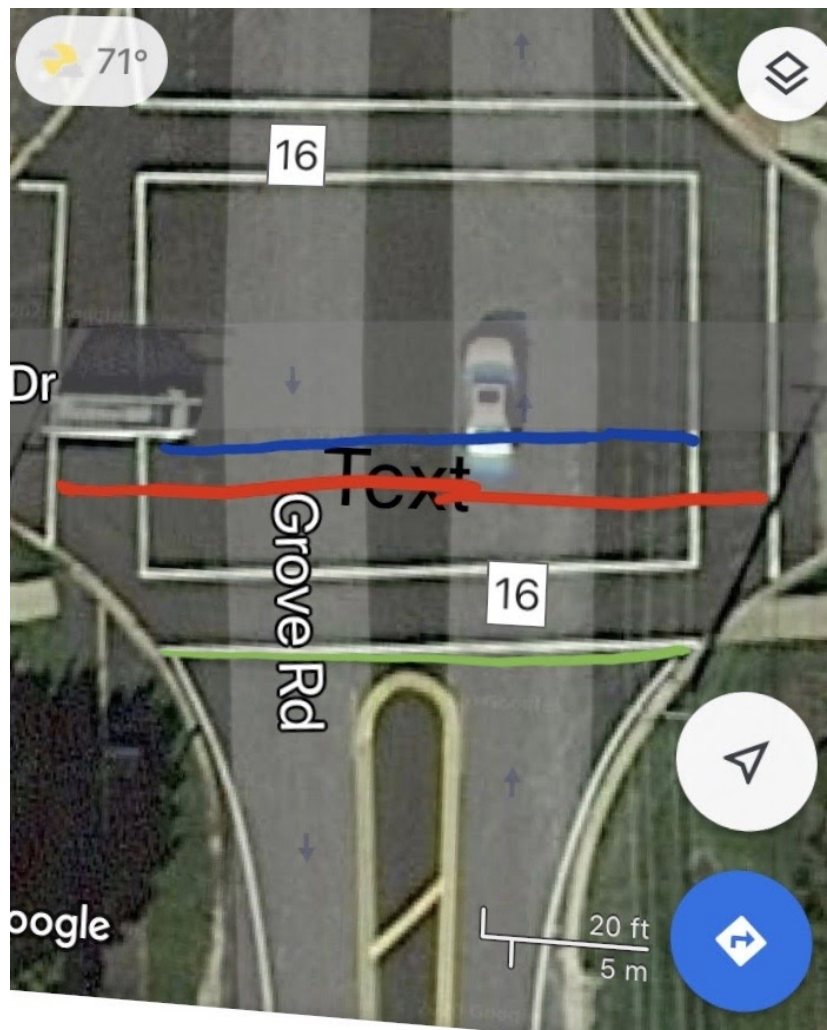
WIDTH (FT)	POINTS
40 or Greater	2
25 - 39	1
24 or Less	0.5

Figure 1.5 IDOT Serious Safety Scoring Tables, (see Width of Roadway, at bottom of chart)

IDOT Serious Safety Hazard Scoring Tables			
Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV
Walking <u>Along</u> a Roadway	Walking <u>on</u> a Roadway	Crossing Roadway	Crossing RR Tracks
Grade:*	Grade:*	Grade:*	Grade:*
K-8 = 5 9-12 = 2	K-8 = 5 9-12 = 2	K-8 = 5 9-12 = 2	K-8 = 5 9-12 = 2
Distance Between Roadway and Walk:*	Distance on Roadway:*	Controls On Roadway Being Crossed*	Number of Tracks
[No Curb] < 5 Ft. = 3 5 - 10 Ft. = 1	Minimum of 350 Ft on Roadway = 3	None = 3 Traffic Signals = 2 Two-way Stop = 1 All Way Stop = .5	Active Protection 3 or More = 3 2 Tracks = 2 1 Track = 1
[Curb] < 4Ft. = 2 4 - 8 Ft. = .5	50 + Narrow Bridge/Underpass = 4	Hourly Traffic Volume Speed 40-55 Mph > 1,500 = 5 1,000 - 1,500 = 4 500 - 999 = 3 250 - 499 = 2 100 - 249 = 1	Cross bucks Only 3 or More = 5 2 Tracks = 4 1 Track = 2
Speed	Speed		Daily Number of Trains
50-55 = 4 40-45 = 2 30-35 = .5	50-55 = 4 40-45 = 2 30-35 = .5	Speed 30-40 Mph > 1,500 = 4 1,000 - 1,500 = 3 500 - 999 = 2 250 - 499 = 1	Speed < 40 Mph 4 + Trains = 4 3 Trains = 3 2 Trains = 2 1 Train = 1
Hourly Traffic Volume	Hourly Traffic Volume		Speed > 40 Mph 4 + Trains = 5 3 Trains = 4 2 Trains = 3 1 Train = 2
[2 Lane] > 1,500 = 5 1,200 - 1,500 = 4 800 - 1,199 = 3 400 - 799 = 2 100 - 399 = 1	[2 Lane] > 1,500 = 5 1,200 - 1,500 = 4 800 - 1,199 = 3 400 - 799 = 2 100 - 399 = 1		
[4 Lane] > 1,500 = 4 1,200 - 1,500 = 3 800 - 1,199 = 2 400 - 799 = 1 100 - 399 = .5	[4 Lane] > 1,500 = 4 1,200 - 1,500 = 3 800 - 1,199 = 2 400 - 799 = 1 100 - 399 = .5	Speed < 30 Mph > 1,500 = 3 1,000 - 1,500 = 2 500 - 999 = 1	
Distance (Miles)*	Distance (Miles)*	Width of Roadway*	
> 1.0 = 2 .8 - 1.0 = 1.5 .5 - .7 = 1 .2 - .4 = .5	> 1.0 = 5 .8 - 1.0 = 4 .5 - .7 = 3 .2 - .4 = 2 < .02 = 1	> 40 Ft. = 2 25 - 39 Ft. = 1 < 24 Ft. = .5	
K-8 Max Score = 19.0 K-8 Min Score = 7.0	K-8 Max Score = 23.0 K-8 Min Score = 10.0	K-8 Max Score = 15.0 K-8 Min Score = 7.0	K-8 Max Score = 15.0 K-8 Min Score = 7.0

Independent measurements of the crossing length of the crosswalk on Grove Road at Morgan Valley Drive vary from 92' on the east end of the crosswalk to 70' on the west end of the crosswalk. The measurement of 75 feet referenced in the Eriksson Engineering, LTD. study is possibly an average figure between the two. So, when we shared with you that young children cannot safely cross this intersection while trying to avoid oncoming vehicular traffic, you can imagine why this is true. If they are crossing on the east end of the crosswalk, they are actually required to walk 90 feet in order to clear the roadway. See figure 1.3 below, which shows the two crosswalks painted on Grove Road at the Morgan Valley Drive intersection.

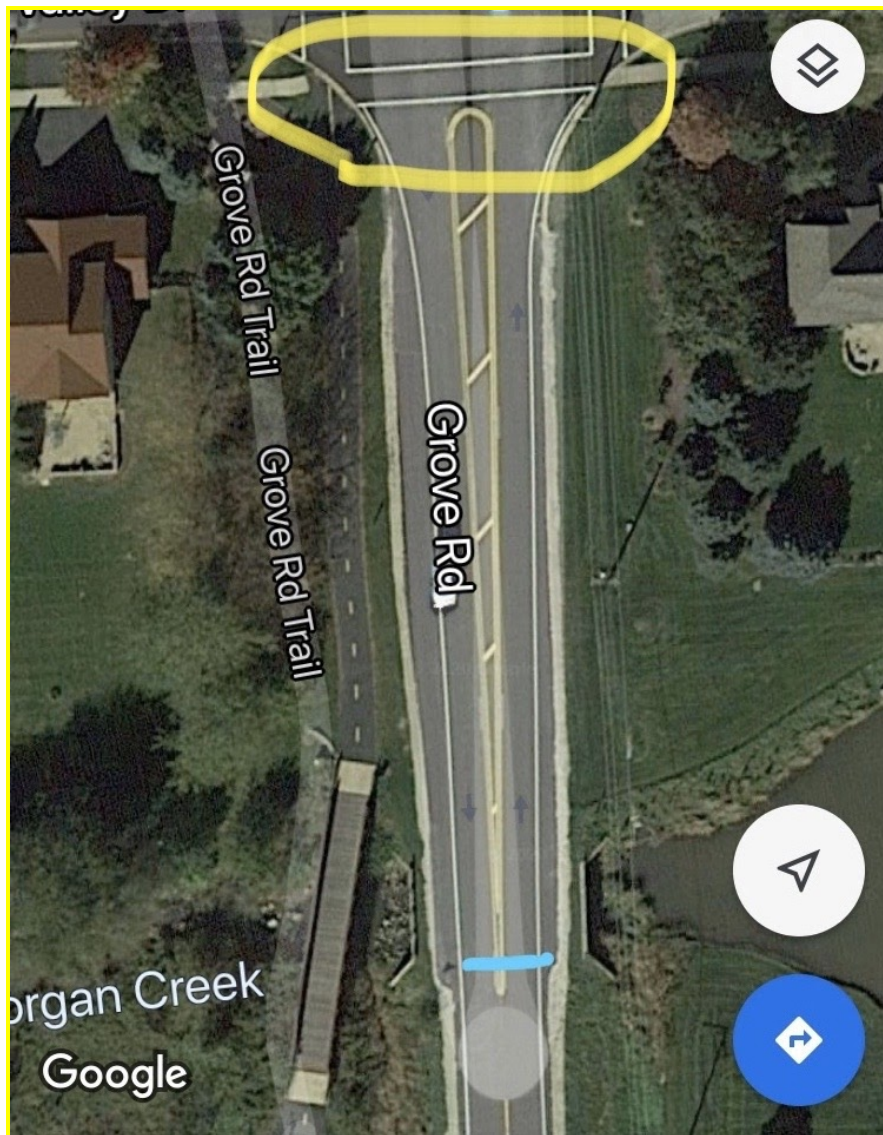
Figure 1.3 Width of Roadway and Crossing Length of Grove Road Intersection at Morgan Valley Drive



IDOT "School Safety Busing", December 2001 guidelines, which are used by not only the state but was also used in the 2020 Traffic study, require the width measurement of the roadway to be at the location where the children would be crossing. The IDOT School Safety Busing Guidelines assigns 1 point for a width of 25-39 feet versus 2 points for a width of 40 feet or greater.

The point at which Grove Road appears to measure 25 feet in width is pictured below in Figure 1.4. As you can see, the point at which the roadway measures 25 feet in width is NOT the point at which students would cross at either the north or south crosswalks. *Eriksson Engineering, LTD. applied a width of 25 feet as the measurement for the width of roadway relevant to crossing a roadway and the hazards associated with said crossing.*

Figure 1.4 Crosswalk at Grove Road at Morgan Valley Drive (highlighted in yellow) and the point at which Grove Road measures 25 feet in width (marked with a blue line).



IT IS EVIDENTLY CLEAR THAT THE ASSIGNMENT OF 1 POINT RELATIVE TO THE WIDTH OF ROADWAY AS IT RELATES TO THE CROSSING OF A ROADWAY, IS INACCURATE. The correct width of the roadway is the width at which the crosswalk is located. Both

crosswalks at Grove Road and Morgan Valley Drive range from approximately 70 to 92 feet and crossings with this width are awarded 2 points. Since both crossings have a width greater than 40 feet, then 2 points should have been awarded, rather than 1 point as was done in the 2020 Traffic Study. When applying the correct and accurate measurement to the intersection and crossing of Grove Road at Morgan Valley Drive, it's total consists of 12 points (without additional judgement points awarded by the BOE) in turn, deeming this intersection to be a hazardous crossing.

It is inappropriate and reckless to use a measurement on a portion of Grove Road that is at any other location than where the students are legally required to cross. Thus, using a section of Grove Road located a considerable distance from the crosswalk could be viewed as a form of deceptive practice as this intersection has historically been found to be hazardous when applying the proper data. Furthermore, residents who are familiar with this particular intersection are also aware that the only change which has occurred since the completion of prior safety/hazardous studies, has been an increase in vehicular traffic due to increased construction and residential development.

As we are all aware, human mistakes *do occur*. As community members and parents tasked with ensuring the safety of children that reside in Oswego, we have a responsibility to be critical consumers of information, challenging any information that we notice *does not make sense*. It is also an expectation that when both the safety and lives of students are affected, our school board and administration would be just as vigilant, equally concerned and professionally considerate as information regarding safety and hazards are communicated by parents and the community. That is what we've done as we've reviewed the traffic study completed by Eriksson Engineering Associates, LTD.

We are hopeful this was an honest error and not a deliberate act to deceive by altering the hazardous safety scores for financial gain as it pertains to the discussions had regarding the cost of savings through the elimination of busing services. If this were in fact the case, one would consider this to be a serious act of misconduct that would cause or permit a child to be placed in circumstances that endanger their life or health.

The good news is this: if in fact, there was an honest error in reporting by Eriksson Engineering Associates, LTD., and this error was overlooked by the BOE and administration, it can easily be corrected with no additional traffic studies required to verify the hazardous crossing conditions--we could simply use the updated and *corrected* version of the traffic study completed in 2020.

Furthermore, the ILGA administrative code, Title 23, section 1.510, subsection (d), describes the requirement of each school district to conform to the regulations established by the Department of Transportation. Additionally, the ISBE statutory citation [105 ILCS: 5/29-3 Administrative Rule: 23 III Admin Code, Section 120.30(a)(1)(A)] describes determining the shortest distance as being measured on normally travelled roads or streets.

We are hopeful that our Superintendent, Directors of Transportation and Board of Education would agree and will work with us to ensure a fair and accurate outcome, one which provides the safe passage of our children from Morgan Crossing Subdivision to Prairie Point Elementary School by reinstating and continuing the bus service provided.

With the deadline to submit the district's Transportation Reimbursement Claim through the Pupil Transportation Claim Reimbursement System (PTCRS) for the 2020-21 School Year (payable in fiscal year 2022), there is an urgency to investigate the claims we submitted that substantiate the hazardousness of this intersection and would require revision of current transportation plans for the 2020-21 School Year. Section 5/29-5 of the School Code specifies that the statutory date for transmission of the claim to the State Superintendent of Education is typically due in August. It is not too late to correct the mistake that was made, but we will need to act quickly.

If you would be so kind as to reply to this email to verify that you are in receipt of this letter, we would be grateful. We have not yet received confirmation of receipt of our previous letter by Superintendent, Dr. Sparlin and would like to verify that the information in both our previous letter and this one has been received by all stakeholders responsible for decision making for bus transportation in Oswego District 308.

Sincerely,
Christy Valyou and Jennifer Hillgoth
(On behalf Morgan Crossing Subdivision)



Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>

Fwd: 2020 Traffic Study Error: Morgan Crossing subdivision

1 message

Christi Tyler <ctyler@sd308.org>
To: Mary Buckley <mbuckley@sd308.org>

Wed, May 27, 2020 at 10:47 AM

Christi Tyler
Chief Financial Officer/CSBO



71 Stonehill Road
Oswego, IL 60543
Office: 630.636.3180
Cell: 630.383.6592

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Christi Tyler** <ctyler@sd308.org>
Date: Tue, May 26, 2020 at 11:03 AM
Subject: Re: 2020 Traffic Study Error: Morgan Crossing subdivision
To: 308 Superintendent <superintendent@sd308.org>, <[REDACTED]>
Cc: John Sparlin <jsparlin@sd308.org>, Dawn Simosky <dsimosky@sd308.org>

Good Morning Ms. Valyou,

We have received your concerns about using the intersection of Grove Road and Morgan Valley Drive as a potential crosswalk for students in the Morgan Crossing subdivision. Although the engineering firm considers that students *could* cross Grove Road and walk along the path on the east side of Grove, this is NOT being considered by the District. Our plans only consider walk routes within the neighborhood for students residing less than 1.5 miles from Prairie Point Elementary School. The Transportation Department is working diligently to identify all families impacted by the changes in bussing so that safe walk routes can be communicated to parents as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your input. Please let me know if we can answer any additional questions.

Christi Tyler
Chief Financial Officer/CSBO



71 Stonehill Road
Oswego, IL 60543
Office: 630.636.3180

On Tue, May 26, 2020 at 8:08 AM 308 Superintendent <superintendent@sd308.org> wrote:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Christy Valyou** <[REDACTED]>
Date: Mon, May 25, 2020 at 7:47 PM
Subject: 2020 Traffic Study Error: Morgan Crossing subdivision
To: <superintendent@sd308.org>

Hello Dr. Sparlin,

The residents of Morgan Crossing Subdivision submitted a petition on May 19, 2020 with our request for the serious safety hazards present at the Morgan Valley Drive and Grove Road crossing to be investigated further and referred to IDOT and the State Superintendent of Education for assessment. Today, we are writing to share additional evidence which substantiates our claim that this crossing poses a serious safety hazard. Using several resources, the research and analysis we've conducted revealed inaccurate documentation within the 2019/2020 Traffic Study.

Please find the our letter of explanation at this google drive link below:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XChK0JjoGQTkxYwBw18LazMec14drkS3Dty9jXUfJCU/edit?usp=sharing>

Thank you in advance for reviewing the information contained in this letter.

Sincerely,

Christy Valyou and Jennifer Hillgoth
(on behalf of the residents of Morgan Crossing Subdivision)