

As Administrative Director, certain heuristics and biases maybe impacting our interpretation of the current issue involving the buses being late. At the start, prior hypothesis bias may be evident due to past experiences with bus delays. Prior hypothesis bias is related to circumstances when a decision maker makes decisions based on previous beliefs. Parents perceive delays when the students are picked up by the bus and then arrive late to school. Prior hypothesis bias may drive us to conclude that the delays were being caused by bad route planning. Further examination may find that under increased safety protocols, we are not accounting for new sanitization processes for the buses that are being implemented. Perhaps the routes do not need to be adjusted, but rather the sanitization process might need to begin earlier.

Secondly, selective perception may play a part in the decision-making process. Selective perception occurs when a situation is judged by the similarity of another situation that drives someone to see things in a certain way. In the past, parents who are typically stressful during the beginning of a school year may have complained about bus delays. In the past, it may have been found that the bus drivers did not follow the defined schedules for departure. As a decision maker, I may be influenced by selective perception and incorrectly assume that the current bus delays are due to the same disorganization.

The school district department should not be compelled to rush a decision but should attempt to clarify and completely attempt to understand messiness of the situation. To approach this issue, the district board should draw a diagram of the messiness using sensemaking. Sensemaking has been defined as “the making of sense” (Ancona). Obviously, the issue of transporting students cannot be solved if the issue is not correctly addressed. Weick, the father of sensemaking, explains that, “Sensemaking involves... trying to explain the unknown is the only way to know how much you understand it” (Ancona). Teachers administer exams in order to gain an understanding of the knowledge absorbed by their students. Similarly, assessing the mess will determine our understanding of the craziness. Afterwards, we will be able to act with the information available in order to arrive at the most appropriate decision. In addition, the board of directors must determine if the bus arrival time is really the issue. Buses could be arriving on schedule, but students cannot board and disembark the bus as quickly as in previous years due to Covid-19 procedures that includes mandatory spacing between students. More so, students are forbidden from rushing and crowding the main doors of the lobby as hundreds of students are being dropped off at the school. Students have to wait in lines and slowly flow into school, which may possibly leave them late for their classes. Therefore, the late arrivals might have nothing to do with bus routes and more directly related to new safety procedures.