



JPB Board of Directors
Meeting of December 1, 2022

Correspondence as of November 23, 2022

Subject

- 1 Service Interruption and Train Schedule
- 2 Treatment of Minors on Caltrain
- 3 Disembarking Incident on 10/23/22

From: [Nabong, Sarah](#)
To: shawng2@stanford.edu
Cc: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](#)
Subject: RE: Frustrated Commuter
Date: Monday, November 21, 2022 11:48:06 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Dear Shawn Gillespie,

Your email to the Board was forwarded to me for response and they will receive a copy of this email.

First I want to apologize for the delayed response to your comments. Recently, track work maintenance is causing us to single track throughout the system. We anticipate additional service changes to accommodate the continued work along the railroad and encourage you to sign up for updates at: <https://www.caltrain.com/projects>.

Again, I sincerely apologize for your recent experience while travelling on Caltrain.

In addition to signing up for planned updates, feel free to reach out to our Customer Service Department for assistance. They can be reached at 1-800-660-4287, Monday through Friday, 7am – 7pm, Weekends and Holidays 8am – 5pm.

Best Regards,

Sarah Nabong, Customer Service Representative 2

1250 San Carlos Ave San Carlos, CA 94070

Phone: 650.508.7925

Websites: [Caltrain](#) | [SamTrans](#) | [TA](#)



I hope this message finds you all well

Today was a particularly rough commute on Caltrain. I boarded the 11:58AM train at 4th and King and at 1:35 PM we were stalled at Menlo Park waiting for a northbound train. I ended up biking the last leg from Menlo to Stanford and arrived just a few minutes ago.

I appreciate that electrification improvements are ongoing and service disruptions are to be expected. Having said that, it's hard for me to understand why such delays should be so common and lengthy when a single train is moving in either direction every hour.

Moving forward, I will be calling before making my way to the station to see if delays are excessive.

I believe strongly in public transport, but the way Caltrain has been operating lately is only going to

push people to take their own cars. It's not unreasonable to expect that a train schedule should be roughly accurate. I implore you to redouble efforts to mitigate service disruptions as electrification is ongoing.

From: [Rios, Rona](#)
To: "S.A."
Cc: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](mailto:Board (@caltrain.com))
Subject: RE: Treatment of Minors on Caltrain
Date: Tuesday, November 22, 2022 10:04:47 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hi!

Thank you for your response. I will forward the specific conductor information to our Operations team for personnel review and handling as appropriate.

Regarding your thoughts and ideas on creating a video to help our youth, I'm happy to coordinate a conversation between you and our video creative services staff, we may need a phone number to connect in the future but we will be in touch through email first.

Again, thank you and hope you have a wonderful weekend!

Rona Rios, Director of Customer Experience
1250 San Carlos Ave, San Carlos, CA. 94070
Office Phone: 650-508-6239
Websites: [Caltrain](#) | [SamTrans](#) | [TA](#)



From: S.A. <greenginkgo815@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2022 9:47 AM
To: Rios, Rona <riosr@samtrans.com>
Cc: Board (@caltrain.com) <BoardCaltrain@samtrans.com>
Subject: Re: Treatment of Minors on Caltrain

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Hi Rona,

Thank you very much for the follow-up email. I really appreciate it!

I would be happy to share additional details. Since this involves being specific about an individual employee, I hope this can remain confidential and discreet. This has been the reason for my using initials as well.

These incidents have usually occurred in the mornings on the #304 (7:58 a.m. departing Millbrae) between Millbrae and Hillsdale Stations. It was at the Hillsdale Station where 4 kids (1 middle schooler, 1 freshman, and 2 sophomores) were kicked off. A student took a video as this was happening, but I do not want to get young people involved, so I have not asked her for the footage.

Unfortunately, in the morning rush, I did not note down the specific dates, but everything that I witnessed occurred between August and November. If anything occurs again, I will note down the dates to share. The conductor's name is Rocio Elizalde. I have never had any other negative experiences on Caltrain, and I appreciate how the conductors interact with customers, young or old. All the others treat people so incredibly well and educate customers who might be confused about something instead of walking around with the ticketing machine, eager to hand out tickets and scold people.

Looking ahead, I would love to partner with Caltrain to develop student-friendly programming that helps young people ride the trains more effectively and safely and also outlines the repercussions, should they choose to ignore the rules. Kids are not perfect, and they need to be given the chance to learn, make mistakes, and grow, not be scared away.

Some ideas that I have include developing a short video or series of videos and/or a PDF(s) geared towards young people and/or their parents. These materials could be circulated at schools whose students use Caltrain heavily, and maybe these schools could require future riders to watch/read these materials. Given how many young people seem to ride Caltrain, maybe even creating an advisory committee consisting of young people could help us hear their voices and gain input.

As someone who has been riding public transit since high school, thanks to the support and encouragement of conductors, my wish is to have this be a possibility for young people on the Peninsula as well.

I am happy to continue the conversation and appreciate your time!

Warmly,
S.A.

On Monday, November 21, 2022, Rios, Rona <riosr@samtrans.com> wrote:

Dear S.A.,

Your email to the Caltrain Board of Directors was forwarded me for review and response.

First, I want to thank you for taking the time to share your observations and also for sharing your recommendations to improve the experience of our riders. This feedback is extremely valuable in helping us better understand where we are missing the mark as a service provider, and we certainly want to do the best we can. Your suggestion for retraining is definitely one we will send to our Operations Management team to implement as soon as possible. Also, as Customer Experience Director, I'm always open to the recommendations and implementable suggestions you have to improve

relationships.

I do need some additional information so we can address the specific comment about the conductor verbally berating or chasing young people off the train. Can you share with me additional information such as the day, train, stop location, conductor name, etc., so we can address the specific employee?

Any information you have will allow us to further investigate this situation. Additionally, I'm available to talk if you prefer, or you can send me an email with this information and I'm happy to respond.

Again, thank you for your thoughtful feedback and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Rona Rios, Director of Customer Experience
[1250 San Carlos Ave, San Carlos, CA. 94070](#)
Office Phone: 650-508-6239
Websites: [Caltrain](#) | [SamTrans](#) | [TA](#)



From: S.A. <greenginkgo815@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2022 2:12 PM
To: Public Comment <PublicComment@samtrans.com>
Subject: Comment Regarding Treatment of Minors on Caltrain

You don't often get email from greenginkgo815@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Members of the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board:

I am writing to inquire whether today's meeting is the best venue to discuss how individuals, particularly middle and high school students, who may be new to the Caltrain system are treated while onboard. Caltrain provides a very important service in the Bay Area, but many of my students are being deterred from riding it. Although my observations as a daily commuter and monthly passholder for nearly the last two years have been overwhelmingly positive, I have witnessed several incidents in the last few months by one particular conductor between the Millbrae and Hillsdale Stations that have been very alarming. These have included yet not been limited to verbal berating, confiscation of a Clipper card, and chasing young people off the train while yelling at them.

Young people need to be educated on how to ride the Caltrain, perhaps even be issued warnings, rather than be treated in the ways that I have seen. Many of my students and their families have decided to no longer subject themselves to such treatment and instead are finding other, less environmentally-friendly ways to get to school. If Caltrain does not wish to have young people ride the trains, then it is readily achieving its goal.

As an educator and a mother, I would like to achieve the following: 1) retrain this particular individual on how to treat customers and 2) I want to work together with the Board to improve the relationship between the youngest and often least experienced riders on Caltrain and Caltrain's methods of informing these riders on how to properly ride Caltrain. As an educator, I believe that I am well-equipped to offer implementable suggestions in this regard.

Thank you for your consideration,

S.A.

From: [Nabong, Sarah](#)
To: nloyola02@yahoo.com
Cc: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](mailto:Board (@caltrain.com))
Subject: RE: Incident on 10/23/22
Date: Wednesday, November 23, 2022 3:00:21 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Dear Nicole Loyola,

Your message to the Caltrain Board of Directors was referred to me for response. The Board members will receive a copy of our correspondence.

First, I want to sincerely apologize for the delay with my response however, I was waiting for a response from the Operations team before getting back to you. The experience you described is extremely troubling and I understand your concern with regards to children or others being left unattended on the platform.

I have been reassured by Operations that before doors are closed on Caltrain, the assistant conductor is supposed to step down from the train to verify that all passengers have boarded and that the doorways are clear. Once this is verified, the assistant conductor signals to the lead conductor it is clear. The conductor then checks his end of the train before closing all the doors with one step. In this case, the conductors were interviewed and there was a full review which indicated that no child could be seen left at the station. Although they did not see the child, is it possible he used the stairs immediately off the platform which would have placed him out of view?

Please know that Management received your feedback and employees have been reminded about the importance of ensuring all passengers are clear before closing the doors. This situation is concerning to our Operations team as well, and again, there has been a full review of processes regarding exiting and boarding the trains.

We do regret that you and your family had such an unsatisfactory experience on Caltrain, and please know we sincerely apologize for this issue. We are grateful for the outcome.

We hope your future travels on Caltrain are pleasant ones.

You indicated your son enjoys trains and we are happy to send a few items to him if you think he will enjoy them. If so, please send your mailing address.

Kind Regards,

Sarah Nabong, Customer Service Representative 2

1250 San Carlos Ave San Carlos, CA 94070

Phone: 650.508.7925

Websites: [Caltrain](#) | [SamTrans](#) | [TA](#)



To the Board of Directors,

I'm writing this email to raise awareness to what could have been a tragic incident aboard one of your trains.

My 11-yr old son who is obsessed with trains, my 3-yr old daughter, and I decided to go on our favorite pre-pandemic pasttime activity which is riding the train. We boarded on Sunday 10/23 from the Redwood City station, catching the 4:56pm train, northbound towards San Bruno. We sat in the seats closest to the doors. As the train approached our station, I told my son to go in front of us as I had my toddler in my arms, along with a stroller and grocery bag. My son hops off the train, and as i descend the steps to the door, the train doors closed. I'm banging on the doors and yelling to stop the train while frantically searching for a way to communicate with the train operator to no avail! Another passenger helps and is unable to locate a way to contact the train operator as well. She calls 911 and I call my son who is distressed as he is all alone on the platform. I get off at the next station where I take calls between my son and the police officer who is desperate to get to him as fast as he could while I'm waiting to catch the next train back to him. Thank goodness the officer found him and was kind enough to offer to take him to me so we can be reunited.

The reason I bring this to your attention is because I felt that between the train stopping, and doors closing, there was very little time to disembark. I'm a mother of 2, healthy and fit but had a hard time making it to the door before it closed. I can imagine that this is a major struggle especially for persons with disabilities. I felt there was little regard to this as I helplessly watched the train I'm still on pull away, watching my terrified son standing on the platform by himself. It was a traumatizing experience that I know could have been prevented. I hope your team will look into this further. It may save a child's life.