

PUBLIC SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

December 3, 2019

The Transportation Formula Committee met on Tuesday December 3, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. in the DDOE Library 2nd Floor, Townsend Bldg. Those in attendance were:

Chuck Longfellow, DOE	Kelly Shahan, Red Clay SD	Jason Bonner, Caesar Rodney SD
Bruce Ashby, Capital SD	Tyler Bryan, DOE	Natosha Rivera, Seaford SD
Linda Sullivan, DOE	Garcia Garnett, Christina SD	Laird Stabler, Contractor Lobbyist
Ruth Ann Jones, CGO	Gerald Dutton, Contractor	David Sutton, Contractor
Tom Harmon, Contractor	Bonnie Dixon, DOE	Mary Nash Wilson, OMB

Two Guests: David Zickafoose & Shay Edwards

Welcome:

Mr. Bryan started the meeting at 10:05 a.m. with introductions of New Committee Members that were not present at November 13, 2019 meeting. Natosha Rivera (Seaford SD) will be the new representative from Sussex County. Introductions of entire group were made by Mr. Bryan.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Bryan asked for the committee members to review the meeting minutes from November 13, 2019 meeting. A motion was made by Kelly Shahan and seconded by entire group to accept the meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed.

Workgroup Updates/Discussion on past meeting topics:

The committee continued discussion regarding fire suppression on new buses, retro fitting for Special Needs buses, and Trauma Informed care to add 1 hour to 4-hour training. The group spoke with Mr. Longfellow about benefit insurance for contract drivers as a future possibility. Mr. Longfellow was to forward contact information for Willis, Towers & Watson to Laird Stabler. Mr. Bryan discussed proposed budget for FY2021 for contractor and districts to receive a tier allowance of 1 hour of additional compensation for double bus routes, and 1 ½ of additional compensation for triple bus routes. Mr. Longfellow will work towards setting up a meeting with Superintendents to discuss continuous discipline issues on school buses. The committee felt this was extremely important due to school bus driver retention.

School Bus Driver pay scale vs Commercial Driver License hourly rates:

Mr. Bryan gave current report on issues Districts/Contractors are facing with losing drivers due to pay. For Delaware CDL Position Hourly pay Part-Time Fixed Route Operator (Kent)-DART earns \$17.69 hr, for

(New Castle County) \$15.96 hr, & (Kent/Sussex) \$16.50 hr. For Class B CDL Dump Truck Driver (New Castle County) \$18.00-19.00 hr, CDL-B Driver (Kent) \$17.00-21.00 hr, and First Transit Passenger Driver (Sussex) \$16.00 hr-Full Time w/benefits. Mr. Bryan gave comparison of Delaware bus driver pay vs Easton Pennsylvania bus driver pay as of 11/23/19. The four-year contract started retroactively on July 1, 2019 and expires June 30, 2023. The **2019-20 school year** will consist of a morning run to school or afternoon run from school: \$22.24 an hour (minimum 2 hours each). A kindergarten bus run, a late activity run or alternative education/midday run: \$13.35 an hour (minimum 1.5 hours) with field trips: \$22.24 an hour. The **2020-21 school year** will increase on a morning run to school and afternoon run from school: \$22.86 an hour (minimum 2 hours each). A kindergarten bus run, a late activity run or alternative education/midday run: \$13.72 an hour (minimum 1.5 hours) with field trips: \$22.86 an hour. The **2021-22 school year** morning run to school or afternoon run from school: \$23.50 an hour (minimum 2 hours each). A kindergarten bus run, a late activity run or alternative education/midday run: \$14.10 an hour (minimum 1.5 hours) with field trips \$23.50 an hour. Lastly, for **2022-23 school year** a morning run to school or afternoon run from school: \$24.16 an hour (minimum 2 hours each). A kindergarten bus run, a late activity run or alternative education/midday run: \$14.50 an hour (minimum 1.5 hours) with field trips \$24.16 an hour. All drivers assigned to work at least 25 hours a week are eligible for health benefits for themselves and their dependents. **This does not include substitute drivers who may drive 25 hours a week, but aren't guaranteed assignments.** The committee discussed at length the importance of pursuing higher pay rates and possible benefits for Delaware drivers. Mr. Bryan informed group if requested, this must be phased in due to the financial impacts. It was decided at next meeting for Districts and Contractors to bring their pay scales for group discussion. The committee felt this would be a good starting point for pay scale discussion.

Per-mile time compensation: The committee discussed the inaccuracies of 40 miles an hour and 1 ½ mile per minute rate. According to Gerald Dutton, he felt 2 mile per minute rate to be more realistic. Kelly Shahan and Jason Bonner will bring figures to next meeting on how many miles are being traveled by bus for committee review.

Transportation position funding discussion: Mr. Garnett discussed the possibility of hiring a Safety Coordinator for all Districts. He felt the Coordinator would be a tremendous help to the organizations with meeting daily operational needs. The committee recommended Administration attending monthly meetings to be informed of new Federal regulations, along with new drug screening requirements of drivers. The new requirements are creating additional workloads on School Transportation departments across the state.

Safety Initiatives: Mr. Bryan led the group in discussion on Fire Suppression to be retro fitted for Special Needs buses. Mr. Bonner informed group he has a contractor that is opposed to Fire Suppression being placed on his buses. The pros/cons on this subject matter was discussed. The question was presented if this would be an insurance incentive to the Districts/Contractors if Fire Suppressions were placed on all buses. According to Mr. Bryan, this could become a standard spec through National Congress on School Transportation. The committee felt NTSB's recommendation of Fitness for Duty Testing is a major concern for Districts/Contractors. Mr. Dutton voiced his concern, but is being pro-active by advising his drivers this may be coming in near future. He has informed his drivers to practice when time allows.

Public Comments: None

Meeting Adjourned 12:02 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday January 16, 2020, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., DDOE Cabinet Room-Townsend Bldg.

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