

## Introduction

- School Transportation is a side issue to school districts, but with a very important caveat.
- We hope to provide an overview that will get you started and ready to ask the right questions in your district.
- Are there specific areas of interest that anyone would like to be sure we cover?

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## This is a bus



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## These are also buses



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## Priorities

- **Safety – if the ride isn't safe, nothing else matters, to the parent, the student, to you**
- **Efficiency – we need to keep the costs in control; efficient bus service is less costly**
- **Fairness – is over rated in our world. It is more fair to students to keep the \$ in the classroom**

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## 123B.88 Independent school districts; transportation

In any district, the board must arrange for the attendance of all pupils living two miles or more from the school, except pupils whose transportation privileges have been voluntarily surrendered under subdivision 2, or whose privileges have been revoked under section 123B.91, subdivision 1, clause (6), or 123B.90, subdivision 2.

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## Type III and Activity buses have new legislative mandates.

- **The operator MUST BE annually trained and certified in the safe operation of a school bus.**
- It is the operator's employer that is responsible for adopting and implementing a policy that provides for annual training and certification of the operator in:
  - Safe operation of Type III school bus
  - Understanding student behavior, including issues related to students with disabilities
  - Encouraging orderly conduct of students on a the bus and handling incidents of misconduct appropriately
  - Knowing and understanding relevant laws, rules of the road and local school bus safety policies
  - Handling emergency situations
  - Proper use of seat belts and child safety restraints
  - Performance of pre-trip vehicle inspection: and

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## Type III and Activity Bus pg 2

- Safe loading and unloading of students, including but not limited to:
  - Utilizing a safe location for loading and unloading students at the curb, on the nontraffic side of the roadway or at off-street loading areas, driveways yards, and other areas to enable the students to avoid hazardous conditions
  - Refraining from loading and unloading students in a vehicular traffic lane, on the shoulder, in a designated turn lane, or a lane adjacent to a designated turn lane
  - Avoiding a loading or unloading location that would require a pupil to cross a road, or ensuring that the driver or an aide personally escort the pupil across the road if it is not reasonably feasible to avoid such a location; and
  - Placing the Type III school bus in "park" during loading and unloading

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## Type III and Activity Bus pg 3

- A background check or background investigation of the operator **MUST BE** conducted that meets the requirements under Minnesota Statutes, Section 122A.18 subdivision 8, or Section 123B.03 for school district employees; Section 144.057 or Chapter 245C for day care employees; or Section 171.321, subdivision 3, for all other persons operating Type A or Type III school bus under this subdivision.
- An operator **MUST** submit to a physical examination as required by Minnesota Statutes, Section 171.321, subdivision 2.
- The operator **MAY BE** subject to controlled substance / alcohol testing if the employer has adopted and implemented a policy that provides for mandatory drug and alcohol testing of applicants for operator positions and current operators, in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, Section 181.951, subdivision 2, 4, and 5.
- The operator's driver's license **MUST BE** verified annually by the entity that owns, leases or contracts for the school bus service.

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## School Board Policies

- Which students are transported – busing areas - ages
- How distances are measured – traveled roadway
- What conditions are hazardous
- Fee amounts and how applied

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## Basic Methods of Providing School Transportation

- District provided service, own your buses, employ your drivers
- Contract for service, someone else owns them and employs the drivers – bids or quotes are allowed – 123B.52 subd 1b.
- Blend of above
- Pros and Cons of either

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## Managing Transportation

- School district employs transportation staff and controls transportation
- School district delegates transportation management to contractor
- Management contract by a third party
- Larger districts usually manage, smaller ones often delegate (contract).
- Fuel Cost controls – two strategies –
  - Contract to buy fuel at a set price
  - Set a fuel cap clause for your contract

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## Transportation Communication/ Management Strategy

- Define your communication strategy for transportation.
- Bus Company or Staff member first responder handle 90% of calls.
- Define problem response process to ensure resolution.
- Never have the Superintendent be first responder.
- School board involvement in transportation issues is micromanagement – avoid if you can by having clear policy agreement before an issue develops.

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## Transportation Management and Funding

- **Transportation Data Collection**
  - Pupil Transportation Annual Report
  - MARSS (Student Accounting System)
  - UFARS (Financial Accounting System)

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## Transportation Management and Funding

- **Cost Allocation provided in statute**
  - Salary and Fringe Benefit Limitations
  - Standard basis for both district and contract bus service – miles, hours or routes
  - Some expenditures are not allocated
  - Further allocation on a cost per student or mile may need to be done

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## Transportation Management and Funding

- **Transportation Data Collection**
  - MARSS (Student Accounting System)
    - Transportation Category
    - Only collect the number of public school students transported to and from school during the regular school term
    - To and from school is defined as the student's trip to school at the beginning of the school day and the trip home at the end of the school day.

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## Transportation Management and Funding

- **Transportation Data Collection**
  - Seven possible MARSS codes are:
    - 00 – Walkers or Transportation Field Does Not Apply
    - 01 – Regular
    - 02 – Excess
    - 03 – Disabled
    - 04 – Desegregation
    - 05 – Ineligible
    - 06 – Special

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## Transportation Management and Funding

- **Transportation Funding**
  - Rolled into the General Education Revenue in 1996-97
  - 4.85 percent of General Education Basic Revenue is considered the transportation portion
    - $4.85\% \times \$ 5,124 = \$248.51$  (for 2009-10)
    - Transportation sparsity
  - Districts are not required to spend this amount on transportation, nor are they limited to this amount

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## Transportation Management and Funding

- **Transportation Funding**
  - Nonpublic School Pupils
    - Second prior year average cost of transporting public and nonpublic regular and excess category students (Finance Dimension 720)
      - Times
    - Current year nonpublic regular and excess category students
    - Nonpublic nonregular is based on second prior year costs

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## Transportation Management and Funding

- **Transportation Funding**
  - **Special Needs Transportation**
    - Rolled into the special education formula beginning in 1998-99
    - Revenue is based on current year expenditures. (2009-10 expenditures in Finance Dimension 723 and 728 are used to determine funding for 2009-10)
    - Excess special education revenue generates extra revenue in any year in which special education costs increase greatly from the base year.

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## Transportation Management and Funding

- **Transportation Funding**
  - **Interdistrict Desegregation/Integration Transportation Funding**
    - State determines the amount of funding already received for to-and-from school transportation services (\$248.51 plus sparsity) and subtracts it from the district's cost for this service.
    - Funding covers additional costs

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## Transportation Open Enrolled

- **Public School Enrollment Options**
  - Student's choice to attend a public school in another school district
  - Responsibilities of resident district
  - Responsibilities of serving district
  - Mileage reimbursement available to low-income families.

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## Transportation Nonpublic Students

- **Nonpublic School Students**
  - Nonpublic school located within the district
  - Nonpublic school located outside the district
  - Timely mileage claims
  - Safety training

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## Transportation Charter School Students

- **Charter School Students**
  - Selecting a site
  - District provided transportation
  - Charter school provided transportation

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## Transportation Students Experiencing Homelessness

- **Homeless Students**
  - Transportation responsibility- Enrolling district provides the transportation
  - Transportation funding
  - Important points on transporting homeless students

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## Transportation Students with Disabilities

- **Students With Disabilities**
  - Resources
    - National School Transportation Specifications and Procedures  
<http://www.ncstonline.org/>
  - Driver and aide must receive training in:
    - First aid
    - Dealing with specific needs of students
  - Buses – two-way communication system

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## Care and Treatment Programs and 504 Accommodation Plans

- **Students that attend Care and Treatment Programs**
  - Residential
  - Day Treatment Centers
    - Transportation Responsibility
- **Students that have a 504 Accommodation Plan**
  - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal civil rights statute that assures individuals will not be discriminated against based on their disability

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## Program Audit on Student Transportation

- **Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) Program Audit on Student Transportation**
  - Best Practices
  - Model Contract
  - [http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Accountability\\_Programs/Program\\_Finance/Transportation/index.html](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Accountability_Programs/Program_Finance/Transportation/index.html)

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## Transportation Purchases and Leases

- **State School Bus Purchase Program** –member of the Cooperative Purchasing Venture (CPV)
- **Contracting for Transportation** – competitive sealed bids, direct negotiation, performance bonds
- **Leasing School Buses- Operating vs. Capital**
- **Wide Area Transportation Services** – provides transportation for choice and interdistrict deseg programs

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## Transportation Legal Requirements

- **Diesel Exhaust** – MN Statute 123B.885 provides that exposure be minimized
- **Student School Bus Safety Training** Student training – all students K-10 are required to receive training annually. K-3 twice annually.
- **Stopping for a School Bus** – Flashing lights, passing a school bus, penalized for violations

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## Transportation Contacts and Information

- **Legislature**
- **Transportation Contacts**
  - Department of Education
  - Department of Public Safety
- **Web Sites**
  - Departments of Education, Public Safety and Transportation
  - Weather information
  - Sites with safety information

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## Where to Get More Information

[http://education.state.mn.us/mde/Accountability\\_Programs/Program\\_Finance/Transportation/index.html](http://education.state.mn.us/mde/Accountability_Programs/Program_Finance/Transportation/index.html)

<http://www.dps.state.mn.us/patrol/comveh/schoolbus/index.htm>

<http://mnapt.org/home.htm>

<http://www.msboa.com/index.htm>

<http://www.aaafoundation.org/home/index.cfm>

<http://www.hsem.state.mn.us/>

<http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/>

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/>

[www.leg.state.mn.us](http://www.leg.state.mn.us)

<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/>

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## Transportation Contacts

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## Safe at the stop



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## Safe at the school



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