



**Transportation Issues Study Committee
The 165th Meeting
April 22, 2009**

Next Meeting: June 24th, 2009 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

CC- 1 & 2, Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Roseville, MN 55113

Present:

Keith Paulson, Anoka-Hennepin Schools
Shelly Jonas, Minnesota School Bus Operators Association (MSBOA)
John Thomas, Eastern Carver County Schools
Kelly Wosika, MDE Program Finance/Transportation
Jan Vanderwall, Roseville Schools
Lieutenant Ed Carroll, Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS)
Rob Anderson, Minneapolis Schools
Dave Peterson, St. Paul Schools
Derrick Agate, Eden Prairie Schools
Fred Lenz, Lenz Bus Service
Randy Dukek, Rosemount Schools
Lori Jonason, Minnetonka Schools
Brad Lundell, Minnesota Association of Pupil Transportation (MAPT) Lobbyist

Summary: The summary of the March Transportation Issues meeting was approved.

Special Education Transportation Committee: Lori Jonason said the recent Special Education Transportation Committee was well attended. The group discussed Chapter 8 of the Labor Relation's Press (LRP) Question and Answer Book which is on the topic of least restrictive environment. They also viewed Peggy Burns's recent video on confidential information. The video provided guidelines regarding when school district employees and bus drivers should share private student information. They also viewed an informative crash test video. Information on getting a copy of the crash test video should be directed to suej@convaaid.com. Lori had additional copies of the handouts from the most recent National Conference on Special Education Transportation if anyone is interested.

There was a discussion regarding a school district's transportation responsibilities are for a student who has special education transportation identified in their IEP. The discussion touched on certain situations such as open enrollment and extended school year.

Dave Peterson mentioned federal stimulus funds are available for purchasing vehicles used to transport special education students. Since this is a one-time funding source, a bus purchase would be a wise purchase to make to benefit existing programs but not to supplant to new programs.

Jan Vanderwall expressed appreciation for Randy Dukek's work on the Special Education Drivers Handbook that was written by Rosemount Schools. Jan references the handbook often within his district.

Rob Anderson mentioned that a transportation office staff should attend the student's IEP meeting if special education transportation must be provided.

Minnesota Department of Education: Kelly Wosika presented a document on the awards that school district's received from the Safe Routes to School Program. [Information and an application for the award can be obtained from the Safe Routes to School Website.](#)

There was a discussion on the interpretation of the McKinney Vento Federal Law on Homelessness. One proposed interpretation is that a homeless student placed in a shelter longer than 30 days means an implied change in responsibility for transportation and education. Under this proposed interpretation, the district in which the homeless shelter is located would be responsible for education and transportation. The majority of the Transportation Issues Committee's group did not agree with this interpretation. Rather the committee thought the student should continue going to the district of origin and the district of origin should provide transportation until the student is no longer is homeless or until the end of the school year.

The Model Contract and Best Practice files are hard to find on the MDE Website. Kelly will send the files to Jim Schmidt so they can be posted on the MAPT Website.

A proposal was offered to allow expenditures in Finance Dimension 728 related to transporting parents of homeless students to require school related activities such as parent teacher conferences and IEP meetings. Kelly said that expenditures reported in UFARS under the 700 Finance Dimensions series only relate to student transportation and do not include transportation of parents.

Office of Student Transportation Safety: Lieutenant Eddie Carroll explained that bus inspections that have occurred since the beginning of the year are posted on the DPS Website. DPS recently hired school bus inspectors and who are now going into the field to perform inspections. The new inspectors will also be equipped to do presentations. More troopers will be hired at the end of July. Eddie will bring a map of the regional inspection areas to the next meeting. Each region will have an inspector assigned to it.

May 8 -21 is designated Passenger Carrier Strike Force Enforcement Week. During this time DPS will be inspecting motor coaches and contractor carriers for compliance issues. Additionally Traffic and Passenger Enforcement Week will be here soon. Sergeant Paul Davis will report on the results of these taskforces at the next meeting.

Eddie explained that districts and contractors should be aware that it is illegal for contractors to transport children without charter authority. Those contractors do not have Department of Transportation authority or for-hire authority or adequate insurance to transport school children. Contact Eddie or any of the other regional DPS bus inspectors to report this illegal activity.

DPS is currently working on updating the School Bus Inspection Manual and hope to post it to the DPS Website soon.

The next Pupil Transportation Safety Stakeholders Committee is scheduled for May 18 at 9:30 a.m. Kelly will look into scheduling a room at MDE for the meeting. Eddie said that you don't need to be a stakeholder member to attend, everyone is welcome.

Eddie is open to ideas and suggestions for the School Bus Safety Week. He reminded everyone that the School Bus Rodeo will be held at the Academy of Holy Angels in Richfield on May 30, 2009.

Eddie presented the group with the School Bus Transportation document made available by the House Research Department. The document provides a brief outline of state regulations of school buses and school bus drivers.

Legislative: Brad Lundell provided information on current legislative initiatives.

- The bill on modification to Type III driver qualifications is in the governor's office.
- The bill on school bus technical corrections will probably move forward. The cost allocation method was clarified
- Shared services bill moves in and out as a topic in the legislative session. Either the Legislative Auditors or MDE will develop the list of available contractors. The rates will be available on-line. This is not currently mandated.
- The post crash inspection requirements change is moving forward.
- The Minnesota Miracle is still in the works and may include stipulations on hazardous area transportation.
- All other legislative initiatives involving transportation have not received action from either the Senate or the House.

There was a discussion on making Desegregation Integration Aid for education purposes based more on achievement rather than racial diversity and how this new direction would be started.

There was also discussion on seatbelt safety, the pros and cons and the funding issues surrounding it. The higher seat back regulation makes it harder for the driver to see if the students are wearing seat belts. It was mentioned that it would be hard to phase seat belts into an existing fleet over time. Parents would be concerned whether their student was offered seatbelts or not.

New Business: There was a discussion on what is the safest way to transport vaulting poles to a track and field event on a bus. Eddie will look into this further and bring back suggestions to the next meeting.

Future Meetings: Future meeting dates are:

June 24, 2009	Education Conference Ctr A., Rooms 1 & 2, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
July 22, 2009	Education Conference Ctr A., Rooms 1 & 2, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
September 23, 2009	Education Conference Ctr A., Rooms 1 & 2, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Adjourn: 11:40 a.m.