



**Transportation Issues Study Committee
The 184th Meeting
January 25, 2012**

**Next Meeting: Joint Meeting with Office of Transportation Safety Stakeholders, February 27, 2012
State Patrol Offices, 1110 Centre Pointe Curve, Suite 420 Mendota Heights, MN 55120 at 9:00 a.m.**

Present:

Keith Paulson, Anoka-Hennepin School District
David Peterson, St. Paul Schools
Kelly Wosika, MDE School Finance/Transportation
John Thomas, Eastern Carver County Schools
Fran Wilke, Minnetonka Schools
B.J. Ison, St. Paul Schools
Derrick Agate Sr., Hopkins Schools
Shelly Jonas, Minnesota School Bus Operators Association (MSBOA)
Jan Vanderwall, Roseville Area Schools
Linda Andert, Lorenz Bus

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

Special Education Transportation: Margaret Westin, attorney with the Osseo School District presented on the issues surrounding confidentiality for special needs students at the meeting that was held on January 18, 2012.

Office of Student Transportation Safety: Lieutenant Ed Carroll was not in attendance. It was mentioned that Lieutenant Ed Carroll is planning on retiring mid-February. Keith Paulson mentioned that Minnesota Association of Pupil Transportation (MAPT) recognizes his years of dedicated service in the area of student transportation.

Minnesota Department of Education: Kelly Wosika mentioned that A Reference Guide for Transporting Students with Disabilities and Special Transportation for Selected Students in Minnesota is being updated. If you have any comments or suggestions give them to Kelly to be included in the update.

The statewide workgroup on educational stability for children in foster care continues to meet. The group has been expanded to include county and tribal social service agencies, courts, schools, corrections and other stakeholders to improve the educational outcomes for Minnesota children in foster care. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 22, 2012, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Minnesota Counties Insurance Trust Building, 100 Empire Drive St. Paul, MN 55103. The

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 made changes to federal law adding provisions regarding school enrollment, educational stability and transportation costs.

The Minnesota Council on Transportation Access has completed their legislative report which summarizes the council's activities for the year. The report is posted at CoordinateMNTransit.org.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is partnering with the U.S. Department of Education to recognize these schools with the newly launched Green Ribbon Schools program.

The application for the Green Ribbon Schools program is available. Applications must be submitted to MDE by February 22, 2012. The U.S. Department of Education expects to make decisions on final awards in April during Earth Day Week and will host a national recognition award ceremony in Washington D.C. in May or June. Local ceremonies are scheduled for fall 2012 at winning schools.

Kelly Wosika presented MDE's response to care and treatment transportation reasonableness language that was passed in the 2009 legislative session. During that session, Minnesota Statutes 125A.15 and 125A.51 were amended to allow districts to adopt a policy on reasonable restrictions to transporting students that are attending care and treatment programs.

Transportation reporting for FY11 is now closed. State aids in the various transportation categories will be calculated and included in the payment schedules to the districts.

Kelly Wosika mentioned that after review of FY11 year-end data, there seems to be some confusion on the MARSS Transportation Categories 06-Special and 05-Ineligible. The confusion may impact a district's state aid calculations. Districts should be aware of which students are reported into these categories.

The charter choice survey, the form that charter schools use to inform MDE and the district in which they are located on their transportation choice will be available soon. The form is due March 1, for existing and July 1, for new charter schools. Kelly Wosika cautioned the group to check the accuracy of this form when you receive it from charter schools, as there have been mistakes in the past.

Legislation: There was a discussion on the amendment that would require crossing arms that was proposed by MSBOA. The amendment is a response to six-year-old student that was run over and killed by a school bus. Dave Peterson commented that MAPT supports the crossing arm language but with the change to exclude Type A, B and D buses, buses transporting special needs students and a clause that includes if the crossing arm malfunctions, the bus would not be put out of service. Shelly Jonas said that exemptions would weaken the argument for crossing arms. There was a discussion on ways to word the amendment so not to minimize the argument. The failure of the device is an issue. There was an opinion that the failure of the device should not be a reason to bring the bus down. The crossing arm is not a traffic control device like lights.

Keith Paulson would like to set up a meeting with Tom Melcher to discuss the cost allocation law that was passed last year that eliminated the hour and route cost basis.

Shelly Jonas mentioned that MSBOA is working on making changes to the law on the drug testing requirements of Type III drivers. Instead of having to provide treatment to drivers that fail the drug test, the school bus operators would like the option to terminate them.

Miscellaneous: Shelly Jonas mentioned that she would like to see the insurance requirements in the MDE model contract changed. John Thomas is working on some language changes to this. This topic will be on the next meeting agenda.

There was a discussion of the recent School Bus Safety Expo that was held on January 20-21, 2012. Overall the group felt the conference went very well. Peggy Burns was one of the best speakers they had so far. The group discussed future locations, speaker and agenda items that would make future conferences even better. John Thomas is working on putting out a survey to the attendees to get their thoughts on the conference.

Derrick Agate gave kudos to the conference committee members that organized the expo. They did an excellent job.

Future Meetings: Monday, February 27, 2012, Joint meeting with Office of Student Transportation Safety, 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday, March 21, 2012, MDE Conference Center A, Room 8, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Adjourn: 11:15 a.m.