

BOARD BRIEF

Date: AUGUST 9, 2019

For ACTION

For INFORMATION

Board Agenda: Yes

No

FROM: Charles Stone, Director of Pupil Transportation

THROUGH: Mignon R. Anthony, Chief Operating Officer
Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: SY 2019-20 Pupil Transportation Status

BACKGROUND:

Providing a review of preparations made by the staff in the ACPS Pupil Transportation Office to ensure a smooth school opening and adequate school bus services for the SY 2019-20.

SUMMARY:

Spring & Early Summer Preparations

During April thru June, Pupil Transportation has been preparing for the start of SY 2019-20 by cleaning out of date information and making adjustments to the road map representation within the planning software.

Letters were mailed to 10,043 families in June to alert parents regarding the established walk-to-school area around their campus. At the high school level, walk-to-school boundaries were made based on criteria approved by the Board, this caused the number of students to walk to school to decrease. We conducted a desk, map, or on-site review of walk-to-school paths that our students will be expected to use and added several new exception zones to allow students to be eligible for school bus services where appropriate.

Employee Recruitment

Employee recruitment, specifically for Bus Drivers, began in April with a referral incentive program open to any ACPS employee. Thirteen employee referrals were made, of those only four applied. All were interviewed, two were recommended to be hired. One was rejected during the HR background check.

We have interviewed nine additional applicants and hired six of those. All are in training at this time or awaiting onboarding with HR. We are arranging interviews with remaining applicants who have passed the email screening process we use and will continue recruitment efforts throughout the Summer and into the Fall.

Overall, Transportation requires 102 bus route drivers, 10 spare drivers, and 4 Trainers, or a total of the authorized 116 FTE Drivers. We have 4 casual employee drivers, 1 for the St. Colletta School van and 3 others that help out, as needed.

We also have requirements for 37 Bus Monitors to meet the current operational needs of 31 riding on buses, 2 Spares, and 4 riding in taxicabs.

Status for the Start of SY 19-20

We believe that we will have 100 drivers, 10 spares, and 3 trainers, total of 113 of the authorized FTE drivers. In addition, there will be 3 casual bus drivers, 1 van driver, and 36 Monitors available for the start of school. We expect to have several applicants that will still be involved in the 44 hours of training required by VDOE prior to driving with students on the day school starts.

During the later half of July, we have assigned bus stops to those students not meeting the routing software assignments criteria. During this process, we added bus stops to accommodate additional eligible riders and to accommodate other students not properly offered service from last year's bus stop locations.

An added refinement this year is that each bus route was examined closely to ensure that the flow of the path is efficient, logical and safe.

To date, 10,811 bus assignments have been uploaded into PowerSchool. This allows the school to include bus stop details within their information letter to families. Bus information will be updated weekly starting September 11th so that parents and staff will be able to view bus assignments and their bus stop times & locations directly within the student/parent PowerSchool portal at any time.

During the interim period, schools will use *Temporary Bus Passes* to approve student riders going to existing bus stop locations.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends School Board review the information provided in this Board brief.

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