

BOARD BRIEF

Date: August 12, 2022

BOARD INFORMATION: X

MEETING PREPARATION:

FROM: E. Scott Merriman, Director of Pupil Transportation and Fleet Management

THROUGH: Dr. Alicia Hart, PMP, Chief of Facilities & Operations
Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Meagan Alderton, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Ongoing Recruitment and Retention Efforts and Impacts, Bus Drivers

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 1: Systemic Alignment

Goal 2: Instructional Excellence

Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support

Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation

Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

SY 2022-2023 FOCUS AREA:

N/A

FY 2023 BUDGET PRIORITY:

N/A

SUMMARY:

The Department of Facilities and Operations, Office of Pupil Transportation and Fleet Management, has been working with Human Resources on innovative ways to recruit and retain qualified bus drivers. These efforts have included:

- A recruitment open house held on May 7, 2022
- “Now Hiring” banners affixed on school property around the city
- “Now Hiring” banner on ACPS website (main page)
- Advertisements posted with our city recreation partners
- Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn social media posts and
- A recruiting collaboration with the workforce development center

Current Staffing and Potential Impacts for Start of Year

At this time, we have 87 FTE bus drivers (83% fill rate). For our route planning purposes, we

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consider this to be a critical shortage of drivers. A “critical shortage” means there are more bus routes than available bus drivers to efficiently transport students to and from school daily without having to complete multiple runs. Given this, we will likely start the year with multiple bus runs (double back) for certain bus routes. As driver vacancies are filled, routes will be updated and multiple runs eliminated. Our office is working with Communications to ensure this is proactively communicated to families, to include a request to drive students to schools as possible and promoting bike riding to schools (where safe to do so).

Additional Context

Bus driver shortages are not unique to ACPS. Since the onset of the pandemic, there has been a national bus driver shortage that has required many school districts to make significant adjustments to minimize or remedy the impacts created from a shortage of drivers. We have and continue to meet with the Human Resources and Financial Services departments to determine solutions to this issue, to include robust recruitment strategies and financial incentives for new and existing bus driver staff.

BACKGROUND:

The Office of Pupil Transportation and Fleet Management plans the transportation for 11,000 students each day who are eligible for transportation. The Office collects and reconciles data as it relates to actual student ridership and available capacity on ACPS buses.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the status update on bus driver staffing and next steps.

IMPACT:

Effective and efficient bus operations allow for a positive transport experience for our students.

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

REFERENCES:

N/A

CONTACT:

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