



**Transportation Issues Study Committee
The 185th Meeting
March 21, 2012**

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 25, 2012, Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Conference Center A, Room 3 & 4, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Present:

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
Kelly Wosika, MDE School Finance/Transportation
Lieutenant Brian Rue, Department of Public Safety
Jeannie Tarnowski, First Student
Jerry Ladwig, First Student
Brad Lundell, Minnesota Association of Pupil Transportation (MAPT) Lobbyist

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

Special Education Transportation: Sara Winter, MDE Monitoring and Compliance Division presented on restrictive procedures at the meeting that was held on February 15, 2012. There are many concerns surrounding this issue. Sara may be presenting at other transportation conferences in the future.

Kelly Wosika presented a draft version of the updated Reference Guide to Transporting Special Education and Special Students in Minnesota. Some of the updates included updated logo, website links, table of contents, new Q & A on care and treatment, language changes on tuition billing and cost allocation and a few glossary terms updates.

Shelly Jonas mentioned that the answerer to the question about selecting a car seat could be worded better. Kelly Wosika said she will look into it and get back to the group.

Office of Student Transportation Safety: Lieutenant Brian Rue said that DPS has been working with Fox 9 News on doing an article on the growing number of buses that have been getting rear-ended while stopping for railroad crossings. If anyone has any comments about this subject please send them to Lieutenant Rue.

The Regional School Bus Safety Program that was held in Mankato on March 14, 2012, was well attended. There were a lot of good conversations about pre-trip inspections and driver training requirements. There still seems to be some confusion about the self-certification process.

Minnesota Department of Education: Shelly Jonas suggested that the insurance requirements in the MDE model contract be changed to better reflect what transportation contractors have in their insurance policies.

John Thomas who had chaired the committee on developing the model contract agreed with the change. Kelly Wosika said she will work on making the change and reposting the document to the MDE website.

There was a discussion on what MARSS Transportation Category code should be used when transportation is provided during cold weather to students who normally walk to school. It was suggested that districts have a policy on providing transportation under these circumstances and that the students should be coded as 00-Walker or Transportation Does Not Apply.

Applications for Safe Routes to School grant funds for projects that will help more children safely walk and bicycle to school are now available. Applications are due Friday, April 27, at noon and are available at www.mndot.gov/saferoutes/.

There was a discussion about the amendment to the law that describes the uses of health and safety revenue. The amendment includes that the revenue would be available for pupil transportation radio communications equipment upgrades required by federal law.

The charter choice survey, the form that charter schools uses to inform MDE and the district in which they are located on their transportation choice were due March 1, 2012.

Kelly Wosika reminded the group to check their district-owned bus inventory listings, if you have them. Some districts have not been watching the listings and then noticing too late that some buses were not included on the list. Some have lost special education aid entitlement due to special education buses not being included on the inventory.

Legislation: Brad Lundell explained what has been happening during the legislative session. The requirement crossing arms that was proposed by MSBOA is moving forward in the Transportation Omnibus Bill. The bill also includes the amendment that includes the national standards that are recommended for school buses.

It was uncertain where the changes to the law on the drug testing requirements of Type III drivers are at. Transportation contractors would like to have the option to terminate them instead of having to provide treatment to drivers that fail the drug test.

The bill to amend the cost allocation for student transportation expenditures is in the process. It does not have an author yet.

There is a bill to clarify responsibility for education, revenue and transportation for students experiencing homelessness that is moving forward.

Miscellaneous: The results of the contract survey are available on the MAPT website including outstate contracts.

Derrick Agate provided a summary of the EduPro Special Education Transportation Conference that was March 14-21, 2012. Derrick said the conference is was very informative and recommends it as a resource for information on transporting children with special needs.

There were 16 attendees from Minnesota at the national conference.

Future Meetings: Wednesday, April 25, 2012, MDE Conference Center A, Room 3 & 4, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Adjourn: 11:20 a.m.