

F.O.I. Compliance – *Subject to approval at a future Committee meeting*

REGIONAL SUPERVISION DISTRICT COMMITTEE

Date: October 07, 2021

Regular Meeting – REMOTE MEETING held

(To view a recording of this meeting, please visit our website www.reg4.k12.ct.us and select “Remote Meeting Recordings” under the BOARD OF EDUCATION Heading)

CHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION: David Fitzgibbons, Charlene Fearon
DEEP RIVER BOARD OF EDUCATION: Miriam Morrissey, Bob Ferretti, Missy Campbell
ESSEX BOARD OF EDUCATION: Lon Seidman, Nancy Johnston
REGION 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION: Jane Cavanaugh, John Stack

Also in attendance: Brian J. White, Superintendent; Sarah Brzozowy, Assistant Superintendent; and Robert Grissom, Finance Director

CALL TO ORDER and Verbal Roll Call

Committee Chair David Fitzgibbons called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and took a verbal roll call.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly made and seconded the Committee unanimously VOTED to approve the consent agenda consisting of the Minutes from the regular meeting of June 03, 2021, the special meeting of June 30, 2021; and the Accounts Payable Report.

PUBLIC COMMENT – No comments were made.

REPORTS AND OTHER ITEMS

Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent White will hold his district update until the Joint BOE meeting immediately following this meeting.

There was a discussion regarding two donations proposed for Committee acceptance.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously VOTED to accept a donation from Doreen and Jon Joslow of a used pop-up professional backdrop display with travel cases to store and transport foldable structure, fabric panels, and lighting (valued at approx. \$500-\$1,000) for use district-wide at the discretion of the administration.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously VOTED to accept a donation of \$3,000 from LEARN to partially defray the cost of two students attending the collaborative preschool program.

Assistant Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Brzozowy will hold her district update until the Joint BOE meeting immediately following this meeting.

Finance Office Report

Finance Director Bob Grissom reviewed the Finance Office enclosures including the unaudited End-of-Year Financial Report and the Year-to-Date Financial Reports for Supervision District. The audit is in progress and going well. The unaudited 2020-21 End-of-Year report currently shows a sizeable unexpended funds balance. Various reasons for this surplus were discussed.

Other Reports

Ann Grunbeck, First Student Chester Location Manager shared a beginning of year transportation report (see attached) and answered several questions from Committee members.

Individual BOE reports:

None were made

Committee Reports:

None were made

PUBLIC COMMENT – no comments were made

On motion duly made and seconded the Committee moved into an Executive Session at approx. 6:55 p.m. related to personnel matters for the presentation of the Superintendent's Goals and a discussion re: the evaluation process.

The Committee returned from Executive Session at approx. 7:01 p.m.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Next regular Supervision District Committee meeting – Dec. 02, 2021 @ 6:30 p.m.
- Supervision District Budget Workshop I – Dec. 15, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

On motion duly made and seconded, the Committee unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Bryan, Clerk

Transportation Overview

Regional Supervision District Committee of the Board of Education

Thursday, October 7, 2021

Ann Grunbeck, Location Manager



Transportation Overview



First Student provides:

- **15 Bus routes for both HS/MS and Elementary Schools (~ 2 hours in both AM/PM)**
 - AM Route
 - Buses leave the yard between 6:30 am and 6:40 am
 - Arrive at VRHS (doors open at 7:15 am) and at JWMS (doors open at 7:24 am)
 - Perform bus checks and start elementary routes immediately by 7:35 am
 - Arrive at elementary schools (doors open at 8:09 am)
 - PM Route
 - Buses leave the yard at 2:00 pm
 - Arrive at JWMS (depart approx. 2:25 pm); VRHS (depart approx. 2:35 pm)
 - Perform bus checks and go to elementary schools immediately
 - Arrive at elementary schools (depart approx. 3:15 pm)
- **Vinal/VoAg route (~ 2.5 hours in AM/PM)**
- **SPED: 2 vans, each doing 2 routes (~ 2.5 hours each in AM/PM)**
- **Pre-K: 1 AM route; 2 mid-day routes, 1 PM route (~ 1 hour each)**
- **Late Bus: 2 routes for HS/MS in PM (4 days per week, ~ 1 hour)**
- **Athletics and Field Trips: As needed**

Ridership

- Increased for 2021-22 School Year
- All students have been assigned a bus based on home address. On average, for elementary school:
 - Chester - 52 students on 4 buses;
 - Deep River – 55 students on 4 buses; and
 - Essex – 45 students on 7 buses.

These numbers become skewed because many students have multiple bus stops (split custody, daycare arrangements, etc.) that vary between AM/PM and days of the week.

- While no surveys have been taken this year of ridership, best approximations:
 - Chester - 75%;
 - Deep River – 80%; and
 - Essex – 50%

Challenges this School Year

Bridge closure on Route 80

- First two weeks of school
 - Redesigned routes;
 - Worked with district to use emergency access road, police presence
- Continues to be one way with flagger for afternoon routes
- Traffic congestion causing delays at VRHS and JWMS

Covid 19

- Compliance with Governor's Vaccine mandate
- Disinfection of the buses
- Mandatory mask wearing
- For contact tracing, work closely with schools to review bus footage; identify specific students in close contact (as opposed to quarantining an entire bus)

Bus Driver Shortage

Nationwide shortage

- Numerous factors including:
 - Covid-19 health-related concerns;
 - Federal unemployment benefits; and
 - Training requirements and state certification process.

Region 4 is in better shape than most other districts

- 100% driver retention from last year (although we did lose drivers last year due to Covid-related health concerns)
 - Strong Team (new union contract with strong wages)
 - Solid Recruiting
 - Sign on bonuses
 - Multiple Drivers in Training
- => Difficult to find overflow drivers from other yards to fill in gaps

Conclusion

Despite obstacles, First Student has provided consistent service:

- 100% coverage of all routes
- Some delays in both HS/MS and Elementary, but not significant (i.e., traffic at JWMS, impacts ability to be on time for elementary routes); very few drop offs of students after start of school

Communication: Open and honest dialogue with school administrators

- Daily updates/route sheets
- Arrive at mutually-agreeable solutions to transport sports while completing routes

We appreciate your understanding and partnership in facing these challenges.