

Utah Pupil Transportation Advisory Committee March 7, 2014
Granite District Offices
2500 South State
Auditorium D
Salt Lake City, Utah
Minutes

Attendees: Brent Bills, Superintendent Joel Coleman, Dan Ellis, Tom Given, Von Hortin, Murrell Martin, Superintendent Rick Nielsen, Wynn Porter, Dave Roberts, Glen Simkins (representing Superintendent Brotherson), Tandalaya Stitt, Matt White

8:30 Welcome Facilitator, Murrell Martin – USOE Pupil Transportation Specialist

8:32 Introductions

8:35 Minutes Approval – *Murrell deemed this unnecessary because of the late timing of sending them out.*

8:40 Presentation on capturing a more complete cost per mile – *Murrell gave a brief history of how they used to capture cost per mile. In the old formula, there used to be a separate bus replacement/depreciation fund. They estimate 200,000 miles on buses and divided that between the average costs. The legislative fiscal analysts (LFAs) were upset because ending odometers were no longer being tracked, and there wasn't a system in place to make sure buses weren't going beyond 200,000 miles. We immediately started collecting ending odometers. The question now is can we capture the average costs in a way that the LFAs would approve. Matt and Murrell think the solution is looking at a bus when it's sold. Districts would report the ending odometer when it's sold.*

Discussion of capturing the complete cost per mile – The calculations were made using numbers from last year's (2012-2013) Form F. The districts report the information about their buses on this form. We've taken the original cost and divided it by the ending odometer to get the cost per mile of the bus over its lifetime. For the district average we've added up all the costs and all the mileage and divided the total cost divided by the total odometer to get the average for those buses. The average is \$0.37; it was projected at \$0.50. Tom asked if they added all the districts and divided by a number of districts or if they added all the buses and divided by the number of buses. Matt explained that he did it by the number of districts. Tom doesn't think the number is weighted correctly. Murrell agreed that a more accurate average would be averaging by the number of buses instead of by districts. Rick thinks it would possibly be better with a rolling three-year number. That would help prevent having "high peaks and low valleys" in rates. Murrell believes a statewide average would force districts to look at their maintenance records and that in turn could create a better life cycle for the buses. Tom asked the purpose of capturing this. He also questioned regular route buses vs. Special Ed buses. Special Ed buses may not accumulate high miles, but they get worn out because of their usage. Brent added that highway miles also make a difference, because those types of miles put less wear and tear on buses. Murrell explained that statutory dictates that we come up with a cost per mile and this would be an attempt to say that depreciation is a cost per mile. Murrell also mentioned that, with a committee recommendation, we could go to the LFA to make the case to get the \$.37 added as part of the cost per mile. The next step would be to go to the Governor's Office of Management and Budget.

There was a brief discussion on the difference between "C" and "D" buses; capacity, pricing, maintenance, etc. Murrell expressed that he thinks we're at a pretty good balance and that he thinks that that's one of the things they wanted to see, some "C" buses mixed in.

Murrell proposed adding a column for salvage cost, to reduce the purchase cost, as part of the equation. Von thinks a mileage cap needs to be in place. Murrell explained that they only get the mileage for the "to and from" routes. Dave suggested capping years and miles. Brent says it would be fair if that were funded. He thinks just changing the formula will cause problems. Murrell thinks the \$0.37 would accurately demonstrate the funding gap.

Decision on an advisory committee recommended capture of complete cost per mile – Superintendent Rick Nielsen made the motion to capture the cost per mile as presented with two adjustments: subtract the sell/salvage cost as discussed and average the number of buses and not on the number of districts. Superintendent Joel Coleman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous; all in favor.

Tom asked the question about field trip/activity mileage. Joel recommended addressing trips on a future agenda.

9:00 *Presentation on how the \$30,000 base is used and the new cap – Matt explained that the funding allocation is currently calculation by taking the cost per mile, cost per minute, and the In-Lieu of expenses to get the total estimated eligible costs. We then give every district a base of \$30,000, and then we pro-rate the remainder of the allocation. We are looking at the percent of estimated to/from costs funded by the allocation estimate after applying the formula cap. The thought was that the base should be held harmless and should be moved to the end of the formula (comparison attached). Matt explained that we also looked at reducing the base to \$25,000.*

Discussion on the best use of the base and the appropriate amount for a base – Murrell doesn't think this could be rolled with the spring estimate. Brent doesn't think the dollar figures hurt anyone substantially enough to be an issue. The issue is whether this is the right policy or not. If it's the right policy, we should go ahead. Joel thinks that we're being arbitrary with the numbers. He feels that we should justify the base. He recommended surveying before setting the base. Von explained that we arrived at \$30,000 based on a formula ran by Randy Raphael of the USOE. Matt asked that if a motion is made to move the base to the end, should we make the change for the spring estimate.

Decision on the appropriate amount for a base and the appropriate use of the base – Tom made the motion to move the \$30,000 base to the end for the spring estimate. Superintendent Joel Coleman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous; all in favor.

9:20 *Update on the Child Safety Network (CSN) Safe Bus - Utah Pilot Program – They are offering Utah, free of charge, two products through their corporate sponsors; a major PSA campaign – identifying a Utah celebrity – to show the value of school bus transportation and alerting and asking drivers to stop for red lights on school buses; and an interactive instructional program. There are two other optional products; GPS units (that has an app that parents can download for notifications) on all the buses that requires the district to acquire their own corporate sponsor; and photo enforcement – CSN will acquire the corporate sponsor – that would put cameras on the side of the bus that would capture license plates of vehicles that do not stop for the red lights on the bus. The plan is to have an agreement with the local municipality to share the \$100 fee for anyone that is ticketed for not stopping for the bus. Murrell asked for a motion to formally accept the offer. Wynn Porter made the motion to accept the offer for the two products, with the option for two additional products. Superintendent Rick Nielsen seconded the motion.*

9:30 *Dismiss*