



Presented 07/23/2019

# Methacton School District

2019-2020

Transportation Update

# Agenda

- **District Transportation Services Overview**
- **Responsibilities**
- **Challenges**
  - Drivers
  - Routing
  - Bus Capacity and Ride Times
  - Communications
- **Current Status**
- **Focus Going Forward**
- **Key Takeaways**

# District Transportation Services Overview

- The District is responsible for providing transportation services to public, parochial/private/charter school students who live within the District boundaries to locations up to 10 miles from the nearest District boundary
- We are responsible for communicating, coordinating, and safely transporting more than 5,500 students on a daily basis up to 82 different locations
- We receive approximately 5-10 change requests per week and have many alternative schedules and routes for many students all within a 2-3 tier routing system
- We coordinate specialized transportation to accommodate student needs, displaced students, special events, athletics, and work study needs
- The District oversees First Student and eight (8) other 3<sup>rd</sup> Party contracts to coordinate and provide these services

# Responsibilities

- Methacton School District – Business Office
  - Contract management & state reporting
  - Call Center staffing 2019-2020
  - Non-public, parochial & charter school communications/coordination
  - Communication/notification to Methacton School District students/parents of stops/times
    - Non-public, parochial & charter school are now responsible for communication to their students/parents
  - Working with 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors
- First Student
  - Maintaining fleet of vehicles
  - Call Center staffing 2020-2021 and forward
  - Providing proper quantity of qualified drivers
  - Transporting students safely to and from school and home and to extra curricular activities
  - Routing of Methacton School District, non-public, parochial & charter school students
  - Testing and on going route maintenance
  - Performing state safety checks
  - Working with 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors

# Challenges

## Challenges

- Driver Shortage
  - First Student continues to aggressively advertised, provides driver incentives, & provides ongoing training
- Routing
  - Looking to run 2 tier verses 3 tier routing
- Capacity & Ride Time
  - Routing of non-public, parochial & charter school students completing Act 372 forms and opt out of busing for high school students with parking permits
- Communications
  - Non-public, parochial & charter school communicating with their students and increased advance communication with Methacton School District families

# Drivers

- 103 regular drivers are projected for start of school
  - 94 regular drivers on staff
  - 2 drivers on leave of absence
  - 7 sub/casual drivers
- 1 Driver training Behind The Wheel (BTW)
- 4 additional certified drivers on operational staff
- The current expectation is to run 92 routes

# Routing

- Bell Times
  - Routing plans for arrivals 5 minutes prior to bell times.
- Working on converting to a 2 tier system verses 3 tier. This will not be in place for 100% of the runs
  - High School to Skyview
  - Arcola to Elementary
  - High School to Worcester
- Clean-up of overlapping routes
- Leveraging driver feedback from tested routes to full extent possible Aug

## Methacton School District Bell Times

AM Times							
Category	MHS	Arcola	Skyview	Arrowhead	Eagleville	Woodland	Worcester
<b>Earliest Arrival Time</b>	7:15 AM	7:50 AM	8:25 AM	8:50 AM	8:50 AM	8:50 AM	8:50 AM
<b>No Later than Arrival Time</b>	7:25 AM	8:00 AM	8:35 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM	9:00 AM
<b>Bell Time</b>	7:30 AM	8:05 AM	8:45 AM	9:05 AM	9:05 AM	9:05 AM	9:05 AM
<b>Bus can depart School</b>	After Drop	After Drop	After Drop	9:05 AM	9:05 AM	9:05 AM	9:05 AM

PM Times							
Category	MHS	Arcola	Skyview	Arrowhead	Eagleville	Woodland	Worcester
<b>Buses Staged</b>	2:10 PM	2:40 PM	3:05 PM	3:20 PM	3:20 PM	3:20 PM	3:20 PM
<b>Student Dismissal (Tier 1/K-1)</b>	2:20 PM	2:50 PM	3:15 PM	3:30 PM	3:30 PM	3:30 PM	3:30 PM
<b>Student Dismissal (Tier 2/2-4)</b>			3:20 PM	3:35 PM	3:35 PM	3:35 PM	3:35 PM
<b>Bus Departure Time Tier 1</b>	2:30 PM	3:00 PM	3:20 PM	3:42 PM	3:42 PM	3:42 PM	3:42 PM
<b>Bus Departure Time Tier 2</b>			3:25 PM				

# Bus Capacity and Ride Times

## Capacity Targets

- Bus capacity routing targets are set by the Methacton School District standard which is less than the manufacturer's recommendation for safe transport of students.
  - Grades K - 6:  $(\text{Manufacturer's Capacity} / 3) \times 2.5 = \text{MSD Seating Capacity Target}$ 
    - Example 72 Passenger Bus:  $(72 / 3) \times 2.5 = 60$
  - Grades 7 - 12:  $(\text{Manufacturer's Capacity} / 3) \times 2 = \text{MSD Seating Capacity Target}$ 
    - Example 72 Passenger Bus:  $(72 / 3) \times 2 = 48$

## Ride Time Targets

- Methacton School District students not to exceed 50 minutes
- Non-public/private/charter school students not to exceed 60 minutes



# Communications

## Timeline

- July 17 – First notification via School Messenger sent to MSD families that bus assignments will be only available in PowerSchool. Message added to Transportation page of website and posted on social Media
- July 29 – Reminder to be sent out via School Messenger to MSD families regarding bus information being in PowerSchool only
- July 31 – Non-public, parochial & charter schools sent busing information to provide to their students
- August 5 – All routes finalized for Methacton School District
- August 8 – Reminder to be sent out via School Messenger to MSD families regarding bus information being in PowerSchool only
- August 14 – First Student bids routes
- August 15 – Reminder to be sent out via School Messenger to MSD families regarding bus information being in PowerSchool only
- August 18 – Route information is available on PowerSchool
- August 19 - Call Center staffed and operational
- August 28 - First Student Day

# Communications

## Call Center

- Address parent questions and/or routing requests/changes in first few weeks of school.
  - Provide 4 trained staff to begin August 19
  - Coordinated effort by Methacton staff and First Student staff to address requests and plan appropriate responses and changes
  - Entering and tracking inbound calls into a database system, which is then prioritized for changes if appropriate
  - Continue with this effort until determined no longer needed

# Current Status

- Overall we are on schedule with our timeline, which is about 1 week ahead of last year
- Majority of students placed on stops and routes
- Rollover is done, compared to a roll over date of 7/24/2018 last year
- Routing of kindergarten and new students is in process
- Removal of opt out and addition of Act 372 students is ongoing
- Specialized transportation begins once district is notified of work study assignments

# Going Forward

## Focus

- Drivers
  - Continuous review of our driver needs and coordination with contracted drivers
  - Finalize driver contingencies in advance in case of driver shortage
  - Stage a bus at each of the elementary schools to support delayed runs
- Routing
  - On going routing changes due to the enrollment changes
  - Continued improvement of the routes for efficiency
  - Eagleville Road closure & Collegeville bridge work are being monitored. Planning as if both situations remain the same with streamlined routes once opened.
- Capacity and Ride Times
  - Continuous data monitoring
- Communications
  - Weekly updates to the Board on the status of the routes (capacity and ride time) Starting July 29

# Key Takeaways

- Bus assignments available in PowerSchool August 18
- 92 planned routes with 94 drivers and 7 sub/casual drivers
- Two Tier System being created for routes
- Test Runs for route efficiency and familiarity August 15 – August 23
- Bus Assignments to Methacton School District families via PowerSchool Only
- Bus Assignments to non-public, parochial & charter schools to be completed by those schools.
- Capacity and Ride Times Reporting to be done weekly and provided to the Board
- Communication plan to families and schools is in place