



School Transportation Task Force Minutes

December 11, 2023 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

[SB23-094](#)

Task Force Members Present: Albert Samora, Brenda Dickhoner, Chad Miller, David Werner, Erin Camper, Jennifer Douglas, Joel Newton, Jon Hanover, Kaycee Headrick, Kevin Vick, Leiton Powell, Michael Madden, Michelle Exstrom, Morgan Judge, Sarah Swanson, Stephanie Hansen, Steve McCracken, Trevor Byrne, Diane Shiele, Debra Johnson

Task Force Members Absent: Amy Lloyd, Casey Ungs, Dave Slothower, Debra Johnson, Jana Schleusner, Jessica Morrison, Nicholas Martinez, Robert DiPietro

Guest Observers: Facilitator & Support: Kate McDonald, Sarah Sullivan, and Katie Tartaglia – Dillinger Research & Applied Data, Susan Miller and Jennifer Okes- Colorado Department of Education

Welcome and Agenda Review

- Kate McDonald began the meeting at 10:05AM by welcoming the members and public. She reviewed contact information to enable the public to ask questions or share comments (slide 1).
- Kate reviewed the agenda items (slide 3) and guidelines for interactions, deliberation, and collaboration (slide 4).

Agenda Item #1- Review Decision Making Process

- Kate reviewed the decision making process that had been agreed upon by the Task Force members at the September meeting and the Fist to Five decision making process (slides 5 & 6)
 - Brenda Dickhoner expressed concern that a “Fist” vote could prevent movement forward of a proposal by one individual in a large group.
 - Kate reminded the group that this was the agreed upon method but asked if others wished to comment and also mentioned that no vote would be taken before extensive discussion had taken place on a given topic, which hopefully would help avoid veto votes.
 - No additional comments or questions were asked about the decision making process.

Agenda Item #2- Decision on a Path Forward

- Kate reviewed the final recommendations that would be needed for the final report to provide context to the group regarding the four path options to be presented (slide 8).
- Kate reviewed each of the four options and discussed pros and cons to each including what communication would be permitted with each option (slides 9-12).
 - OPTION 1: Monthly meetings with prereads for each January - October
 - OPTION 2: No meetings January - April. Prereads only from January - April then monthly meetings May - October.
 - OPTION 3: No prereads, meetings, nor communication January - April. Mega meeting and preread the beginning of May followed by monthly meetings May - October.
 - OPTION 4: No prereads, meetings, nor communication January - April. May - October 2-3 meetings per month
- Kate reminded all Task Force members that communication is severely limited amongst members and CDE outside of meetings due to Colorado Open Meeting Laws.
- Kate indicated that a survey would be sent out to determine meeting dates for the upcoming year based on the results of the vote.
- No Task Force members had any questions on any of the options presented.
- Kate reviewed the process for voting.
 - Each option would be voted on one at a time
 - Task Force members would enter their vote (Fist to Five) in the chat.
 - If a member voted Fist, they were asked to include a reason they felt the option needed to be blocked.

- Votes were tallied and the option with the highest overall vote score would be used moving forward.
- Chad Miller asks about data collection time frames as they relate to meeting cadence/timing. Kate responds that it would be difficult to say when data would be ready but hopeful data would be collected quickly, to align with the monthly schedule but that the schedule could change if data was not yet available.
- Susan Miller shared with the group the intention to share data as it is received.
- Voting began at 10:33 and all members present cast votes for each option.
- Susan tallied votes
 - Option 1 received an overall score of 86
 - Option 2 received an overall score of 59
 - Option 3 received an overall score of 51
 - Option 4 received an overall score of 26

FIVE MINUTE BREAK 10:50

Following the break the voting results were shared with the members

Agenda Item #3- Finalize Data Collection

- Kate reviewed the data collection considerations (slide 15).
- Required data collection areas were reviewed with the members then members reviewed and discussed documents.
 - Kevin Vick asked if Special Education data was included in requests.
 - Katie Tartaglia indicated that there was language to address that included.
 - Steve McCracken asked who at the district would be receiving the district/charter/service provider request.
 - Susan indicated that it would be sent to the superintendent but they would function as the point person and wouldn't be expected to complete the document themselves.
 - Jon Hanvoer asked about adding a question that would ask if a lack of transportation prevented students from attending a different school on the parent survey.
 - Brenda suggested asking "Would you choose for your student to attend a different school if transportation services were available..."
 - Jennifer Douglas suggested adding a "part 2" to the question: If yes, is that school within your district or another school district.
 - Michelle Exstrom agreed this was an important question to ask, especially for families in the border areas. She also suggested simplifying the question to ask if the school is outside of your current school district.
 - Steve asks if there are any open-ended questions to receive additional info beyond what is in the documents.
 - Kate indicated that an open-ended question could be added to the end of the parent and driver surveys.
 - Brenda asked if any of the district representatives could comment on the district data.
 - Steve commented that he thought the district/charter/service provider data request was thorough and would provide data needed.
 - Albert Samora asked about collecting more information around non-traditional transportation because Denver has shuttle transportation that everyone is eligible for.
 - Michael Madden pointed out a few items on the district/charter/service provider data request that could possibly be collected from the CDE-40 or other documents submitted to the CDE.
 - Sarah Swanson asked about adding a question on the parent survey to address how districts are letting parent's know what they are eligible for so that the Task Force could make recommendations regarding communication.
 - Susan mentioned that some school districts may put out notice of eligibility but in many cases the parents are required to call and request.
 - Albert mentioned that Denver has a parent portal that provides transportation information for parents but agreed that they could do a better job contacting parents regarding changes that occur during the year.
 - Steve mentioned that in a smaller district communication is considerably easier.
 - Sarah reiterated that it would be useful to capture info on whether districts were

- communicating with parents and if they were how they were doing it.
- Steve also mentioned that it would be helpful to collect information on accessibility of students with handicaps to district transportation.
 - Stephanie Hansen asked about adding questions to the parent survey regarding access to transportation to extracurricular activities as well as after school programs?
 - Stephanie also asked about survey accessibility for all groups and how surveys might be made available to residents who don't have access to computers and/or the internet. She also asked about providing surveys in languages other than English and Spanish?
 - Kaycee Headrick asked about including a question regarding summer program transportation.
 - Trevor Byrne mentioned that in the drivers survey it would be helpful to have options for hourly pay rates and salary pay rates.
 - Trevor also mentioned that it would be helpful to add a question asking if driving was their only current job, with a follow up question if the respondent said it wasn't, asking what was the reason for having multiple jobs.
 - A comment was made that some questions needed to clarify the difference between license types and bus types.
 - Jennifer asked about adding a question to the driver survey regarding training they had received or that was available.
 - Susan commented that a training question might be complicated because the needs would be very district dependent.
 - Kevin asked about adding a question regarding driver feelings of safety.
 - Chad agreed and also suggested adding a question regarding driver liability concerns.
 - Erin Camper asked to add a question about drivers who transport students with special needs and whether the drivers feel they are getting sufficient information on students to stay safe and keep students safe.
 - Susan asked if there were questions in the district/charter/service provider data request about computer generated routing.
 - Katie indicated that there were questions covering that in the data request.
 - Brenda asked whether the third party contractor tab on the district/charter/service provider data request was capturing alternative arrangements with transportation companies.
 - Susan explained that there are a variety of alternative methods of transportation identified- routes, activities, companies (big and small).
 - Albert asked about rephrasing and/or clarifying under routes (in the district/charter/service provider data request) to address alternate transportation options. He suggested adding the category for alternative transportation options and asking how many routes were covered by these options and the number of students that were utilizing the options.
 - Jon asked about also adding a question to address the needs/use case for these alternative transportation options (e.g. IEP, wheelchair etc).
 - It was also mentioned that a definition for this type of alternative transportation should align with the current definition for small capacity vehicle.
 - Michelle asked about adding a question to the parent survey regarding whether parents have to pay to access transportation to and from school separate from the reimbursement questions.
 - Steve suggested adding a question under routes in the district/charter/service provider data request asking how many vehicles the district owned and leased.
 - Albert suggested that this question might fit better under the Fleet tab.
 - Albert also suggested that it would be beneficial to ask for data 5 yrs back because inflation as a result of Covid was significantly increasing the cost of transportation.
 - Kevin asked what the typical lifespan of a bus would be. Answers included anywhere from 16 to 25 years, depending on the region.
 - Michael mentioned that his district receives on average a 16 % reimbursement rate and was wondering if the members could see all district rate information from the CDE.
 - Jennifer Okes said that the typical rate was between 23-25 % of eligible expenses but there was variability. She also told the members that she could get them the numbers for review.

Next Steps (12:50)

- Kate indicated that a survey with possible meeting dates for the upcoming year would be sent out in the next couple of days so members could vote on preferred meeting dates (Slide 24).
- Brenda asked about reviewing and voting on a project plan at the January meeting.
- Kate indicated that a tentative project plan could be shared out ahead of the January meeting and could be voted on at that time.
- Kate McDonald thanked the Tack Force members for attending and closed the meeting at 12:54 p.m.