

# Welcome Task Force Members & Guests

## A few notes prior to the meeting starting:

Task Force Members please have your camera on, audio muted, and relevant documents available at the beginning of the meeting.

- Welcome to the public who are watching the meeting via Live Streaming.
- If the public has any questions or comments regarding *transportation operations*, these can be sent via email to Susan Miller at [miller\\_s@cde.state.co.us](mailto:miller_s@cde.state.co.us)
- If the public has any questions or comments regarding *transportation funding*, these can be sent via email to Amy Carman at [carman\\_a@cde.state.co.us](mailto:carman_a@cde.state.co.us)

# SB 23-094 School Transportation Task Force



**January 22, 2024**

**Virtual Meeting**

# Overview of Today's Agenda

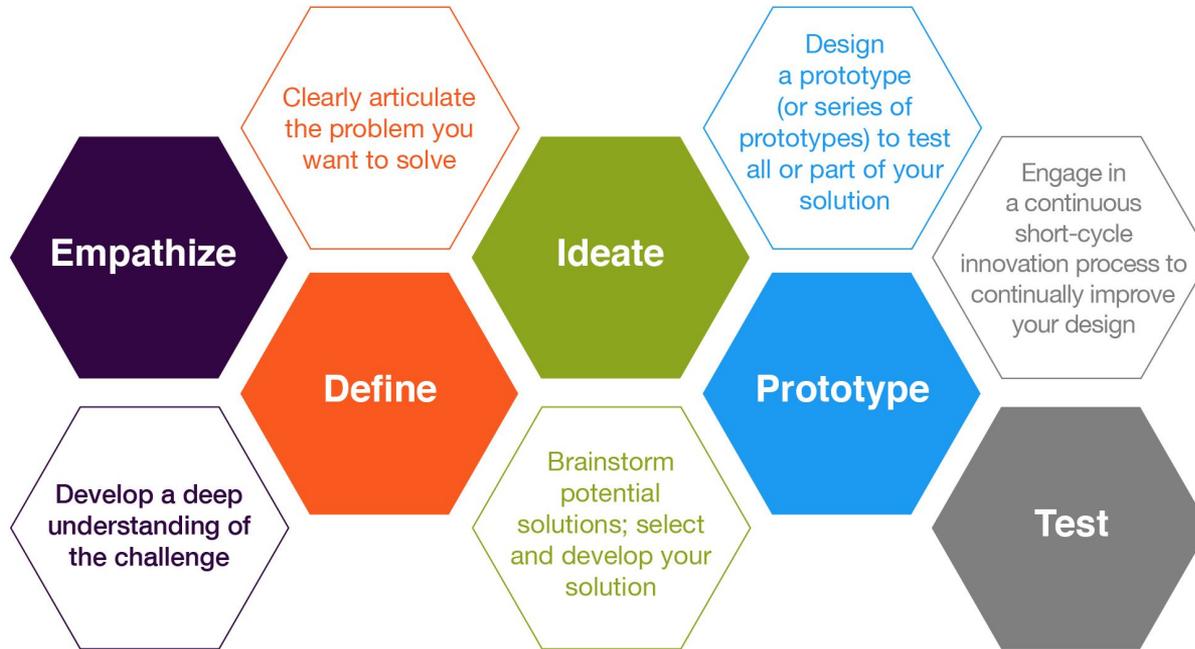
1. Agenda Item #1- Project Plan
2. Agenda Item #2- Innovation Grant Program
3. Agenda Item #3- Transportation Collaborations
4. Agenda Item #4- Next Steps

# Guidelines for Interaction, Deliberation and Collaboration

- Respect others
- Cameras on whenever possible
- High engagement from all members
- High level of trust with each other
- Assume positive intent
- Collaborate as a team to benefit our students
- Encourage open dialogue
- Respectful dialogue
- Enable every member to have a voice
- Consider other member's experience and knowledge
- Consider other member's viewpoints
- Avoid assumptions
- Avoid personal or professional motives
- Provide and review topics in advance
- Establish clear agendas and desired outcomes for each meeting
- Develop clear goals and objectives
- Keep the work task and outcome oriented
- Keep the interests of the task force and the needs of the students at the forefront of the work.
- Keep students at the center of the conversation

Key Norm Areas:  
*Decision Making Norm*  
*Equality of Process*  
*Conflict Resolution*

# Design Thinking



# Data Collection Update

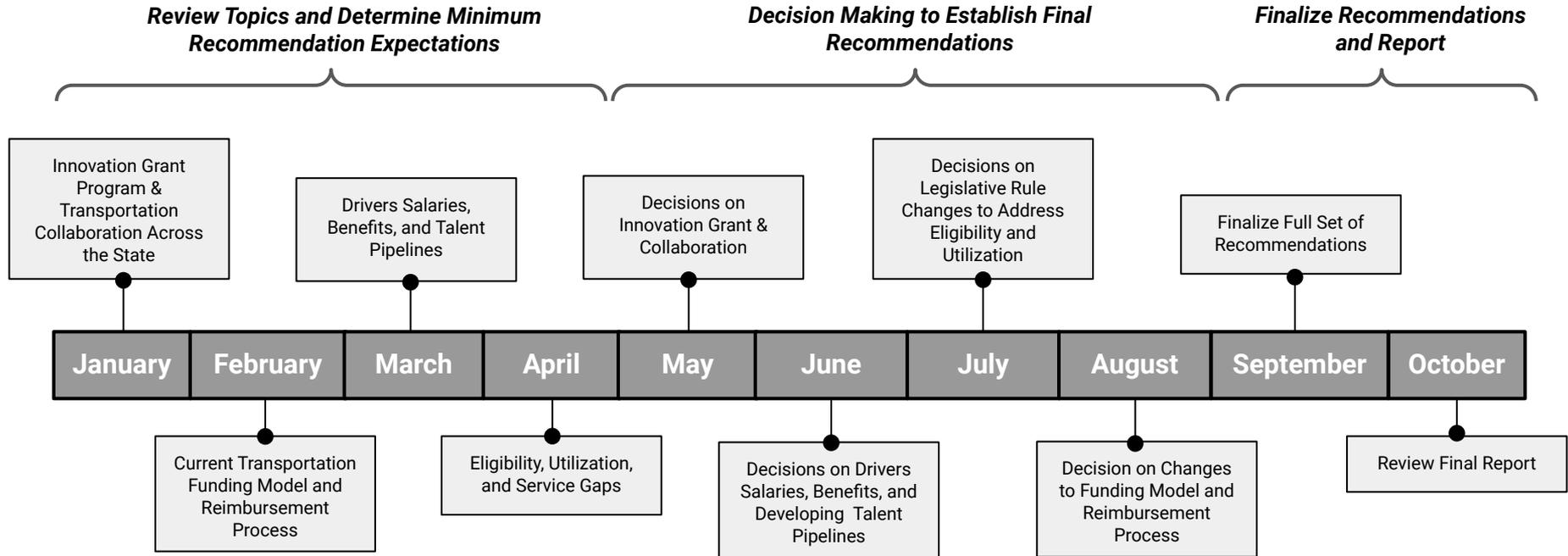
## Parent/Guardian Survey and Driver Survey

- Finalized after December meeting
- Spanish versions were created
- Public links were posted and distributed
- Number of responses so far
  - Parent/Guardian Survey-
  - Driver Survey-

## District Data Request

- Finalized after December meeting
- Shared with 3 Task Force members with a District connection for piloting and feedback
- Once we receive feedback, data request will be finalized and sent to districts

# Tentative Project Plan



Should the Transportation Task Force move forward with the proposed Project Plan?

## Decision Needed

1. Recommendation Stated
2. Fist to Five Vote
3. Articulate Concerns\*
4. Discussion of Concerns\*
5. Restate Decision & Record Vote



No way. I don't support this decision and I am vetoing.

I have strong reservations but will support the decision and will not veto.

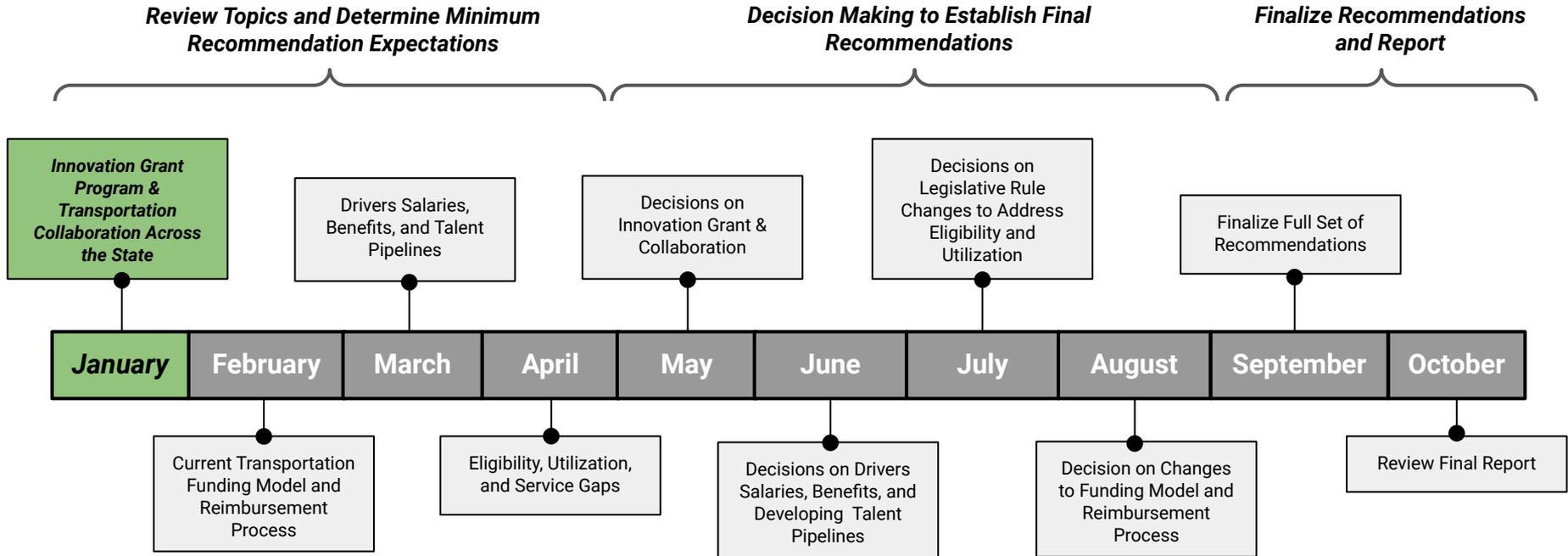
I am uncomfortable with the decision but can live with it.

This decision is okay with me.

I support this decision.

I strongly support this decision.

# Tentative Project Plan



# Minimum Requirements

## What do we mean by Minimum Requirements?

Minimum requirements will provide ***focus areas and “must haves”*** for each of the topics addressed during the May through August Meetings.

Minimum requirements will look different for each topic area but should be viewed as a ***first step towards your list of final recommendations*** for the year-end report.

22-107-104 (2e) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING A TRANSPORTATION INNOVATION FUND TO SUPPORT LOCAL EFFORTS TO CREATE NEW AND INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS THAT MAY SERVE AS A MODEL TO SCALE AND SUSTAIN IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS;

House Bill 22-1395 (*Transportation Innovation Grant Program*) was introduced in April of 2022 but failed in the House Committee on Appropriation.

- HB 22-1395 sought to create the competitive transportation innovation grant program in the department of education to ***address the public school transportation shortage through a competitive grant program.***
- HB 22-1395 aimed to enable selected applicants to ***implement innovative strategies, solutions, and services*** to ensure pupils are safely and efficiently transported to and from school, and career pathway programs and to help provide all pupils better access to the schools of their choice and career pathway programs.

- The Transportation Innovation Grant Program would be ***available to school districts, charter schools, institute charter schools, the state charter school institute, boards of cooperative services, a consortium of school districts, tribal governments, local governments, and community organizations that partner with school districts.***
- Eligible ***applicants would serve students of color and students from under-resourced communities*** who are disproportionately impacted by the transportation shortage and struggle to access school districts of their choice and career pathway programs because of their limited access to transportation.

# Selection Process

- State **Board of Education would select grantees** who develop and implement innovative solutions, strategies, and services to address the public school transportation shortage.
- In selecting grantees the State Board would **give priority to school districts that include high-poverty schools and rural school districts.**
- Eligible applicants that chose to participate would be required to submit an application to the Department of Education which would include, at a minimum, the following information:
  - **A description of public school transportation shortage challenges** being faced by the eligible applicant;
  - **A plan** to develop innovative solutions, strategies, and services;
  - How the eligible applicant will **use the grant award** to implement innovative solutions, strategies, and services identified in the plan;
  - The **amount of matching funds**, if any, that the eligible applicant intends to provide to augment grant money received from the grant program and the anticipated amount and source of matching funds.

# Selection Process Continued

- In making recommendations and awarding grants, the minimum criteria would be considered:
  - Would the eligible **applicant's need** for innovative transportation solutions, strategies, and services have a significant impact on pupils and families;
  - What would be the likelihood that the eligible applicants plan would result in the implementation of innovative transportation solutions, strategies, and services and **improve equitable access** to a pupil's school district of choice and career pathway programs;
  - The degree to which the proposed innovative solutions, strategies, and services would be **different from current public school transportation operations**; and
  - The **sustainability** of innovative solutions, strategies, services and maintenance of successful practices once the eligible applicant is expanded the awarded grant money.

# Timeline and Requirements

- The *Department of Education will operate the grant program.*
- The grant program will provide a *one-time grant payment*, but grantees have *2 years to spend the grant money.*
- If selected for a grant, a *grantee would be required to submit a report to the Department of Education following the first year of the program and again after completion of the program.* The report would include an explanation of the solutions, strategies, and services developed and implemented with the grant money as described in the grantee's grant application.
- Following submission of the grantees report, the *Department of Education would submit a report, summarizing information submitted by the grantee*, to the Education Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives or any successor committees.

# Possible Solutions, Strategies, and Services

Innovation solutions, strategies, and services could include but would not be limited to:

- Addressing **personnel shortages**
- Incentive programs to **attract and retain bus drivers**
- Parent **carpool or rideshare** programs
- **Analyzing bus route efficiency** between and within school districts, district charter schools, and Institute charter schools
- Partnering with **local transit authorities**
- Establishing **partnerships with community partners**
- Supporting **collaborations** between school districts
- Addressing transportation needs to **travel to employment sites**
- Implementing **intra-district transportation** solutions
- Creating options to **reduce costs, improve efficiency, and increase access**
- Implementing **internet-connected transportation** options.



## Clarifying Questions

**What, if any, changes are needed to the current Innovation Grant Program draft?**

**What are the minimum requirements of an Innovation Grant Program?**



Should the Transportation Task Force move forward with the minimum requirements for a Innovation Grant Program discussed?

## Decision Needed

1. Recommendation Stated
2. Fist to Five Vote
3. Articulate Concerns\*
4. Discussion of Concerns\*
5. Restate Decision & Record Vote



No way. I don't support this decision and I am vetoing.

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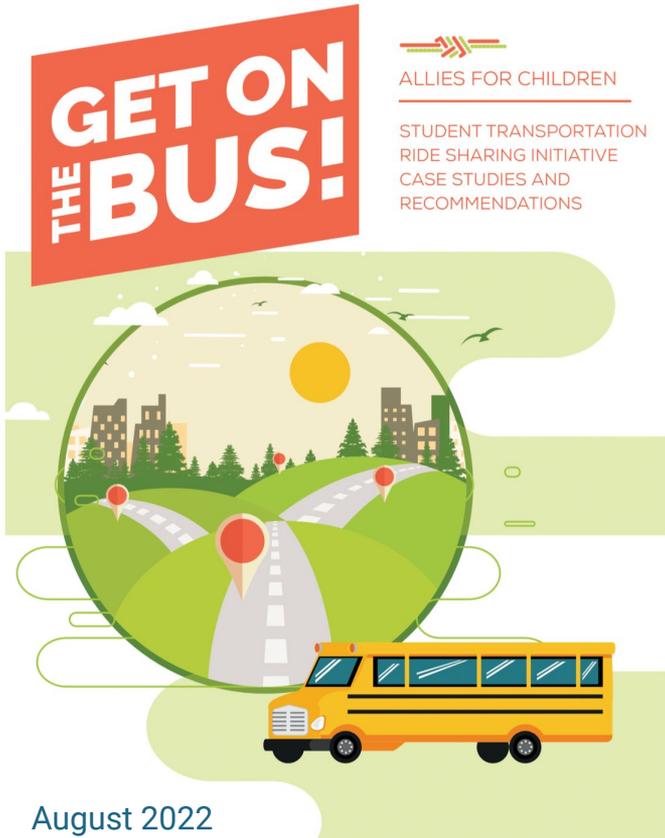
I support this decision.

I strongly support this decision.

# Break



22-107-104 (2f) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FACILITATING PARTNERSHIPS AMONG SCHOOL DISTRICTS, DISTRICT AND INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOLS, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS, PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS, AND LOCAL NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO MEET TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND CREATE COST EFFICIENCIES, WHILE MAINTAINING SAFETY STANDARDS;



## Case study by **Allies for Children** regarding Ride Sharing Initiatives.

**Allies for Children** is a non-profit in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania whose mission is to build alliances and serve as a bold voice for policy and practice changes that improve the wellbeing of all children in Allegheny County.

**Get on the Bus!** focuses on implementing shared routes for charter and non-public school students, identifying best practices through national benchmarking, and beginning to lay the foundation for a regional shared-services model.

There is intense pressure for districts to create transportation efficiency but

- Limited education funding
- Increased spending on student supports
- Ability to be efficient is limited by state and federal laws
- No economies of scale for small rural districts (few students-large areas)

There are significant benefits for all types of districts through collaboration

- Increase economies of scale
- Reduce transportation burden on individual districts
- Increase energy efficiency
- Decrease transportation costs per pupil
- Decrease transportation time for students

These are a few options for Multipartner Collaboration

- Joint Transportation
- Collaboration of certain project or initiatives
- Sharing information to help with decision making

- **Administrative:** MOUs, agreements, and administrative considerations to cover office staff costs, supplies, insurance, and legal fees.
- **Technology:** Technology platforms and software can be used for scheduling, routing, and billing.
- **Bus Driver Staffing and Training:** Federal regulations require all school bus drivers to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL), screen for drug and alcohol testing and receive additional training before transporting children. Additional training, like behavior management, communication skills, and transporting students with disabilities or special circumstances can be a benefit.
- **Insurance:** Standardizing insurance requirements for bus contractors to reduce administrative burden.
- **Funding and Billing:** Cost sharing among partners. (*Actual or historical costs, per pupil, mileage, organization split*)
- **Scheduling:** Potential differences in organizational calendars

- **Regional Approach:** Multidistrict or multicounty, with a robust administrative component.
- **Two or Three Districts Share Resources:** Joint agreement among districts for transportation-related activities.
- **A Smaller District Joins with a Larger District:** Smaller district gain purchasing power and administrative efficiency by teaming up with larger districts.
- **Public Transit, Unique Routing, and MPOs:** For school districts that partner with public transit, public transit systems can make minor modifications to their service to accommodate school transportation needs. Federal transit regulations are intended to prevent public providers from displacing private school bus transit operators. Public transit systems cannot provide transportation routes exclusively for students and school personnel. Other districts are finding cost savings by modeling routes after those in public transportation (continuous loops rather than point-to-point routes) or partnering with metropolitan planning organizations to coordinate transportation planning.

## Regional Approach:

- **BOCES**- Operate in 37 regions across New York State and partnering with almost all districts in the state. BOCES do not provide transportation for all students, instead they provide transportation for a subset of the student population. Some BOCES provide transportation services, including shared busing for career and technical education, special education students, or field trips.
- **Sussex**- Sussex County Regional Transportation Cooperative serves more than 70 schools districts across five counties in New Jersey. The Cooperative provides transportation services for special education, public, non-public, vocational-technical, and charter students, as well as students attending after-school activities and extra co-curricular activities.

## Two or Three Districts Share Resources:

- **Shared Services, Belmont County-** Ohio Auditor of the state found that school districts could save hundreds of thousands of dollars by establishing a shared services model for bus maintenance. The agreement serves three districts.
- **Transportation Joint Agreement-** Operated by two Crystal Lake Illinois districts. Chartered in 1974, TJA currently operates 125 school buses, employs 161 workers, and provides transportation for 10,000 students daily. TJA provides transportation for elementary, high school, and parochial school students. Oversight is provided by an advisory board of school officials from the participating schools.

## A Smaller District Joins with a Larger District:

- **Dallas-** Provides school bus and supplemental transportation services to surrounding districts in and around Dallas County, Texas. The Cedar Hills School District, which participates in the transportation sharing agreement with Dallas County Schools, estimates annual transportation savings of \$500,000 due to the agreement.
- **Massachusetts Regional Schools-** Product of regional consolidation. Smaller, rural districts were incentivized to consolidate into regional districts because the state offered to help cover administrative costs, like fully funding transportation costs.

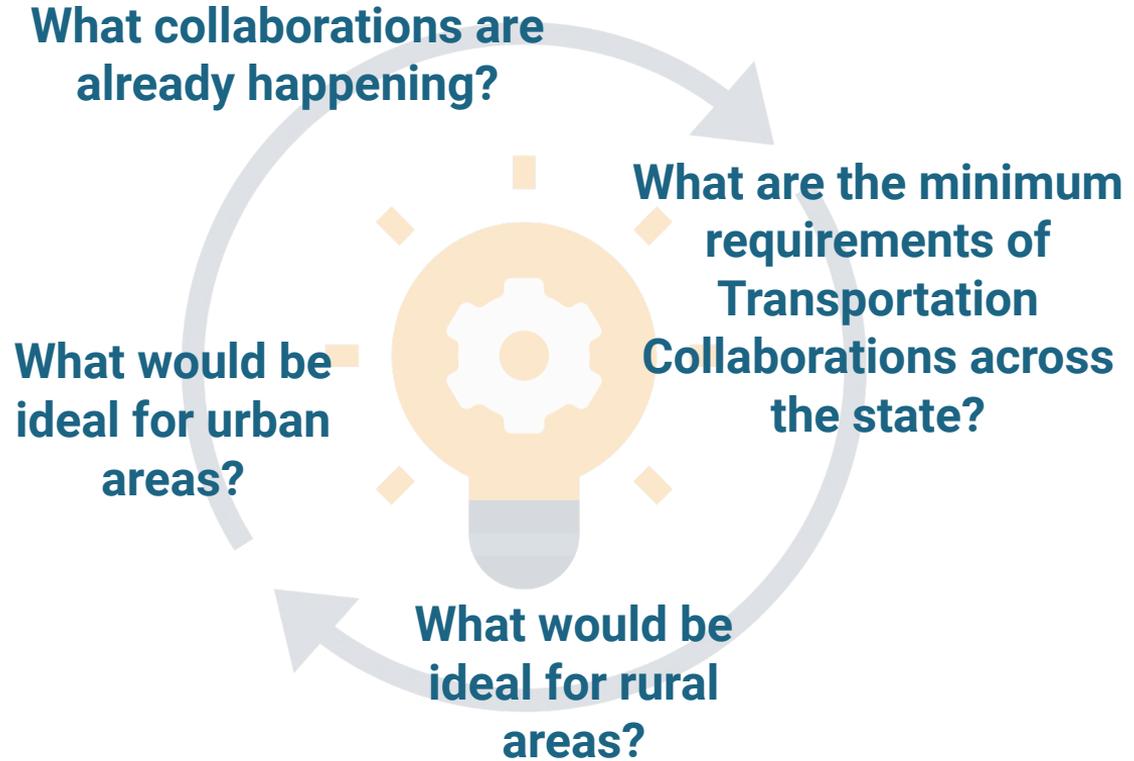
# Examples: Small District Joins Larger District

## Public Transit, Unique Routing, and MPOs:

- **Denver-** DPS provides traditional students and charter students with a variety of options for transportation. Three alternative models for transportation for students beyond the traditional Yellow Bus system: Success Express, Use of Free Public Transit, and SchoolPool.
- **Minneapolis-** The state requested a study to understand the efficiencies that could occur from a regional approach to student transportation to help reduce costs and increase transportation efficiency and equity. The study found a number of way to make improvements. One area focused on students accessing the GoTo Pass program which enabled students to utilize public transportation to access educational opportunities. MPS also created a school bus training academy with Dakota County Technical College.



## Clarifying Questions



Should the Transportation Task Force move forward with the minimum requirements for Transportation Collaborations/Partnerships discussed?

## Decision Needed

1. Recommendation Stated
2. Fist to Five Vote
3. Articulate Concerns\*
4. Discussion of Concerns\*
5. Restate Decision & Record Vote



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# Next Steps

## Next Meeting:

February 13th @ 10AM

## Next Topic:

Current Transportation Funding Model and Reimbursement Process

- *Agenda and Pre-reads will be sent out the week before*
- *If you have suggested readings for the group please send to Susan or Kate*

**Thank You!!**  
See you on February 13th