

# Transportation Committee Meeting - Sept 12, 2024

The meeting of the Mercer County School District Board of Education Transportation Committee was held on Thursday, September 12th, at 4:30 p.m., in the Unit Office. Persons present were Board Members Julie Wagner, Lori Nelson, Tab Balmer, Transportation Secretary Jodi O'Leary, and Supt Tim Farquer.

\*Call to Order at 4:32 p.m. by Wagner. Roll Call: Wagner, Nelson, Balmer. No public comment.

1. **Community Navigator:** Supt Farquer initiated discussions with Visit Merco, MC Health Dept, and MCBT (initially to work on a grant process) and discussed the possibility of a Community Navigator program partnership with these groups. This would assist students ID'ed with mental health issues by the MCHD, a615nd their families, with transportation to doctor appointments, getting food, bedding, household supplies, etc. **Committee recommends (6.1) to the full board that we collaborate with community agencies to flesh out "Community Navigator" concept.**
2. **School Bus Options:** Supt Farquer presented a 5-year ownership bus plan vs a fully leased option for our district buses. Due to the drastic jump in lease pricing since COVID, the ownership plan shows a savings of \$863,615 over 10 years. Transportation 5 year ownership plan is on BOE Reference site. First year recommendation (25-26): send out RFP for two options to compare pricing – either A) 12 leased buses, or B) 2 bus purchases of 2 or 3 year old buses just coming of a lease plan and then leasing 10 more buses. The plan is then to purchase 2 buses each year thereafter until we no longer have leased buses. **Committee recommends (6.2) to the full board to issue RFP for Type C Yellow School Buses for next school year with July 1, 2025 delivery to district.**
3. **Johannes Bus Service:** Supt Farquer proposed to work with Johannes Bus Service to secure a grant for electric buses for the east side Johannes routes (fewer miles per route, more miles hard road per route, etc). We would use the grant money to purchase new electric buses to be used for 5 years and operated by Johannes (driver only service). Must stipulate that at the end of the 5 year agreement, the district will be the sole owner of the electric buses.

Also discusses the lack of quality buses or security cameras on board the Johannes routes. Committee believed that the last time we worked out a contract with them for an extended period, that they agreed to add cameras to their routes. As of this meeting, they have not.

**Committee recommends (6.3) to the full board to collaborate with Johannes Bus Service to continuously improve.**

OTHER: Supt Farquer and Transportation Secretary O'Leary will gather Johannes route information and get board access for us.

**Adjourn** Nelson moved, Wagner 2<sup>nd</sup> to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Wagner