

## BOARD AGENDA ITEM

October 26, 2021

### ***SUBJECT:***

Proposed Incentive for Bus Driver Recruitment and Retention

### ***BACKGROUND INFORMATION:***

Our District, like many others, continues to deal with a significant shortage of bus drivers. Most drivers are working longer days and driving additional routes to compensate for the shortfall. This results in earlier and delayed student arrivals and delayed student departures (which also impacts school staff who may be required to arrive earlier, stay later, and/or forego other duties in order to monitor students). The Administration is seeking ways to recruit new drivers and retain employed drivers.

### ***ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:***

The Administration believes a sign-on bonus for newly-hired, permanent drivers would work as a recruiting tool and a per quarter retention bonus (per nine weeks, based on the 2021 – 2022 school year calendar) would incentivize current bus drivers to maintain employment. Proposed parameters for each bonus are described in the attachments.

#### Sign-On Bonus

- \$1,000 bonus overall
- Newly-hired, regular part-time or full-time drivers would be eligible. PRNs (temporary employees) would not be eligible unless moving to regular employment status.
- \$500 would be paid shortly after initial hire (by the second paycheck) with the remaining \$500 paid upon completion of a driver's 90-day evaluation. Both bonuses would be paid on a regular pay date.
- Current employees are not eligible, whether maintaining employment or departing then returning.
- The sign-on bonus provision would sunset September 30, 2022. Any extension deemed necessary would be recommended by the Administration for Board consideration and approval.

#### Retention Bonus

- \$500 for each nine-week period during the 2021 – 2022 school year, up to a total of \$2,000 for the year. [The Administration proposes retroactive application to the first day of the school year, if approved.]
- Any bus driver (regular part-time, regular full-time, or PRN, including newly-hired) who drives 42 of the quarter's 45 regular school days is

eligible. Driving for athletics or other extracurricular activities is not counted towards the 42 days.

- Transportation supervisors and transportation secretaries meeting the above threshold are also eligible.
- Bus monitors are not eligible unless also serving as a driver for 42 of 45 days during the quarter.
- The tally to a quarter's 42 days starts anew with each nine weeks.
- Bonuses would be paid two to three weeks after the conclusion of a quarter to allow sufficient time for processing. The first and second nine weeks' bonuses would be paid in late January 2022, the third nine week's bonus would be paid in early April 2022, and the fourth nine week's bonus would be paid in mid-June 2022. Bonuses would be paid on stand alone dates, not regular pay dates. Exact dates will be announced in the future.
- Any extension deemed necessary beyond the 2021 – 2022 school year would be recommended by the Administration for Board consideration and approval.

The sign-on bonus and retention bonus will be subject to payroll tax but not State retirement.

The net cost is difficult to gauge and would be dependent upon on the number of new hires plus the number of employees who qualify for the quarterly bonus. For planning purposes, projected costs are estimated at \$200,000. Costs will be incurred by the General Fund. The current budget for Transportation salaries and fringe should be sufficient to cover a significant portion of the projected cost.

***RECOMMENDATION:***

Approve implementation of sign-on and retention bonuses for bus drivers

***PREPARED BY:***

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