APPENDIX 12:

Efficiency Study of the Rochester City School District Pupil Transportation Program

Pupil Transportation Safety Institute
Efficiency Study of the Rochester City School District
Pupil Transportation Program
Interim Report

Phase I
Phase II

Rochester City School District
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Rochester, NY 14614

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Chief of Operations: Michael Schmidt
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By the

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1. Summary of Project

The Pupil Transportation Safety Institute Senior management Consultant Dr. Richard Ahola did a comprehensive review of the Rochester City School District Pupil Transportation program including administration, district owned school bus operations, contract school bus operations, and use of the regional public transit system. The purpose of the study was to identify cost inefficiencies and make recommendations for cost savings. On-going evaluations to Phase II occurred over an extended period of time to allow for consideration of chronological impacts to operations and programs, which culminated in a deferred release of this report. This report outlines observations and assessments based on the school district's status at the time of Phase II and will most certainly need to be adjusted to reflect the current status of operations and programs overall in Phase III. It should be noted in the scope of Phase III should be expanded to that a specific assessment related to Special Education programs and operations should be included., , Dr. Ahola performed the study as described below.

2. Scope of Services

The Pupil Transportation Safety Institute Senior Management Consultant met with the Rochester City School District Superintendent of Schools, district leaders, and all stakeholders in the Transportation Department. Opportunities for input were offered to the Board of Education, parents, contractors, and The Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority. Dr. Ahola rode buses operated by the School District, First Student, Monroe Transportation, and the Regional Transit Service and visited with staff at the bus terminal located within the Rochester City School District. He visited school sites to observe school bus and transit bus loadings and unloading areas and to discuss transportation practices and concerns. The study included the reviews and recommendations for cost savings and efficiencies including:

- The current program operation including labor costs, labor agreements, maintenance process and procedures, management effectiveness, staff training, software knowledge and use, and staffing levels.
- Routes servicing the School District to transport students to and from school and/or special education locations.
- School District policies and procedures that provide the service levels.
- Reports and other means of communication that provide information regarding service level expectations.
- Financial efficiency of the transportation program overall as district owned versus contractor-owned.

- Detailed reviews of labor issues including labor agreements, terms and conditions of employment, payroll functions, and potential impacts.
- Maintenance protocols and procedures, work order tracking, scheduling processes, software utilization, maintenance cost tracking as relating to contractor owned versus district owned.

- Alternatives to the present means by which transportation services are provided, including detailed pros and cons of outsourcing transportation services to a contractor.

- Potential impact on other transportation services including Field and Athletic Trips as well as the Summer School transportation program.

Dr. Ahola carried out a Phase II review to study the transportation elements related to the districts "Path Forward" initiative including transportation to neighborhood schools versus the current hybrid model. He rode district owned buses, First Student buses and RTS transit buses. He documented yellow bus and transit bus ridership in the 2017-18 school year. Per pupil bus costs for the large upstate New York City school districts were compared and the cost of public service transportation expense and process was investigated for Albany, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo.

The current Map Net software was determined not to meet the future needs of the city district and alternative software programs including Edulog and Versatrans were considered for adoption. A suggested calendar for the implementation of the Map Net software is included in the report.

Dr. Ahola and the district's Transportation Director visited the Syracuse School District to observe the use of alternative software and Director Mello-Dupre visited Buffalo for the same purpose.

Dr. Ahola interviewed staff responsible for special education transportation and discussed 2017-18 start-up problems with senior management of Monroe Transportation. Dr. Ahola's suggestions for improvement of transportation service for special education pupils are the result of those discussions, and should be readdressed in Phase III of this project

3. Demographic

The Rochester City School District has a resident public and non-public school enrollment of 34,696 and transports all pupils living more than 1 ½ miles from school and all special education pupils with an IEP which includes transportation services. Children attending nine city wide elementary schools and twenty eight neighborhood elementary schools in three zones may be transported to school within the one and one half mile distance by administration practice. Transportation is provided to twenty five secondary school sites, thirty six private and parochial schools and to eighteen charter schools.

During the consultants, 8,486 secondary pupils, and 15,277 elementary pupils were transported to city public schools. In addition 4,542 charter school pupils and 983 private and parochial school pupils receive transportation services. The following charts summarizes the transportation to and from school by service provider for the over 30,000 pupils transported on a daily basis under Rochester City School expenditures for the 2016-17 school year. The chart below account for daily transportation to city schools, special education agencies (i.e., outside organizations with which District contracts for Special Education services) and transportation under the urban suburban program.[1]

2016-2017 TOTAL STUDENTS TRANSPORTED

SERVICE PROVIDER	Elementary	Secondary	Charters	Private & Parochial	Urban Suburban	SE Agencies	TOTAL
First Student	14147	357	4319	748	542		20113
First Student SE		1				3	4
MST	781	404	90	102	1	511	1889
RCSD (All SE)	349	469	1			42	854
RTS		7262	132	133	216	1	7744
TOTAL	15277	8486	4542	983	759	557	30604
	39 Sites	25 Sites/pgms	18 Sites	36 Sites	47 Sites	50 Sites	
No. of Routes	567	FS 42	145	55	40		
	(7PM ONLY)						

2017-18 STUDENTS TRANSPORTED BY SERVICE PROVIDER TO AND FROM SCHOOL

SERVICE PROVIDER	Elementary	Secondary	Charters	Private & Parochial	Urban Suburban	SE Agencies	TOTAL
First Student	14261	401	4980	730	579		21261
First Student SE							
MST						2031	2031
RCSD (All SE)						881	881
RTS		7777					7777
TOTAL							
No. of Routes							

[1] The Urban Suburban program is a cooperative student exchange program (K-12), funded by the State of New York.

2017-2018 RTS RIDER BREAKDOWN

8.31.17

Code	School	Express	FLEX	Non-Express	
58	School No. 58	457			457
61	East	571			571
66	Monroe	890			890
67	Wilson	403			403
73	Northeast College Prep	439			439
74	SOTA	980			980
89	Northwest College Prep	139			139
95	Edison	1081			1081
97	Vanguard Collegiate	367			367
101	Integrated Arts & Tech	423			423
102	Early College @ Wilson F	109			109
102	Early College @ MCC	122			122
103	Leadership Academy	557			557
1178	Ptech @ Edison	348			348
		6886	**0**	**0**	**6886**
	ALL DAY REGULAR LINE SERVICE ONLY:				
1165	All City		280		
69	SWW - All Day		241		
1181	Big Picture Alt Prgm (former water tower)		30		
9340	New Beginnings (Youth & Justice)				
		0	**551**	**0**	**551**
	Private & Parochial				
360	Aquinas/Nazareth			26	
361	Bishop Kearney HS			35	
364	McQuaid Jesuit			14	
366	Our Lady of Mercy			20	
		0	0	**95**	**95**
	Urban Suburban [1]				
371	Pittsford Mendon			22	
372	Pittsford Sutherland			32	
379	Dake Middle			31	
380	Irondequoit HS			54	
385	Twelve Corners Middle			17	
386	Brighton HS			42	
352	Eastridge HS			10	
350	East Rochester			31	
		0	0	**239**	**239**
	Miscellaneous Programs				
285	Rochester Academy Charter				
286	UPrep		6		
487	Project Search				
		0	6		**6**
	TOTALS	6886	557	334	**7777**

EXPRESS	6886
FLEX	557
NON-EXPRESS	334
	7777

[1] The Urban Suburban program is a cooperative student exchange program (K-12), funded by the State of New York.

4. Service Providers

The Rochester City School District owns and operates 90 school buses used to transport special education pupils. The majority of the buses have bus attendants who assist 70 school bus drivers. The 50 assistant bus drivers are part of the service specified by the pupil(s) Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and their salaries are an aid-able expense under state law and regulations.

In 2015-16, Rochester City School buses traveled 836,892 miles and produced $7,089,802 in aid-able transportation expense, not including the expense for the office of the Transportation Director whose responsibility includes supervision of contract and transit transportation.

Monroe Student Transportation provides to and from school transportation to special education pupils using small school buses operated by drivers and bus attendants who work out of a bus terminal located on the west side of the city.

First Student provides both small and large school buses operating out of four terminals (one located in East Irondequoit). As the previous chart indicated, 66% of riders are transported on First Student buses.

In 2015-16, contract expenses approved for aid were $49,154,480. For the same year, public service expenditures (RTS) for allowable pupils including summer school totaled $12,395,857.

When expenses of the transportation office were added in, the Grand Total Transportation expense for 2015-16 as reported by N.Y.S.E.D. was $70,910,244. In 2016-17 the total expense increased to $73,901,928.

5. How Transportation Costs are Allocated

District owned costs are developed by totaling the costs for bus purchase, bus maintenance, and expenses for drivers and bus attendants including fringe benefits, materials and supplies including fuel.

Contract costs are the result of competitive bids awarded by the Board of Education.

Public Service (RTS) costs are negotiated by the Rochester City School District and the Regional Transit Service Inc. which is governed by the Rochester Genesee Board of Commissioners. The 13 member board is made up of officials representing the City of Rochester, Monroe County, surrounding counties and municipalities in which the authority provides service.

According to the five year transportation contract between RTS and RCSD, the school district compensates the RTS for the transportation of students to and from school based on the District's enrollment projection of eligible student riders. While this consultant acknowledges that the subsidy agreement was properly negotiated by both parties, the amount of the subsidy is inappropriately high when compared to the fares paid for by the general public. The following comparison illustrates the consultant's conclusion.

> For 2016-17 school year, 7,744 pupils used RTS buses for a cost of $10,849,000 or $7.66 per day for a 182 day school year. Compare that to the standard adult fare of $2.00 for 2 rides or the all-day unlimited Freedom pass for $3.00 per day. Use of a $3.00 daily rate rather than the subsidy agreement rate would save the City School District $6.6 million a year.

Recommendation I

Negotiate the 2020 RTS subsidy agreement to more closely reflect the public adult fare.

6. District-Owned vs. Contract vs. RTS Costs

Per pupil costs are useful in comparing school district cost and routing efficiency. In the following section of the report, Rochester per pupil costs will be compared with other NYS city school districts. However, the comparison of per pupil costs for RCSD buses, and RTS buses is somewhat like comparing apples to pears. The school district buses special education pupils with small loads and most buses have a second adult who serves as a bus attendant or assistant driver. Monroe School Transportation buses serve similar populations resulting in small loads and the expense of an extra adult. First Student buses do transport some special education pupils but, for the most part, they are used for transportation to the city's elementary schools.

RCSD bus costs are higher than contract or RTS due to RCSD transporting only Special Education students, which requires both driver and monitors. Contracted transportation costs also include the cost for a percentage of special education student transportation. For example Monroe Transit costs are higher than First Student because of the Special Education students served on their buses.

The following per pupil costs were developed using data as reported on the Transportation Formula Aid Output Report from the New York State Educational Department Website.

Annual RCSD Bus per (SWD) Pupil Costs

$$\text{2015-16 data} \quad \frac{\$7,089,802}{817 \text{ Pupils}} = \$8,677.85$$

$$\text{2016-17 data} \quad \frac{\$7,175,426}{854 \text{ Pupils}} = \$8,402.14$$

Annual Contract Bus per Pupil Costs

$$\text{2015-16 data} \quad \frac{\$48,803,183}{21,748 \text{ Pupils}} = \$2,244.03$$

$$\text{2016-17 data} \quad \frac{\$52,287,047}{22,006 \text{ Pupils}} = \$2,376.04$$

Annual RTS Bus per Pupil Costs

$$\text{2015-16 data} \quad \frac{\$11,424,350}{7,079 \text{ Pupils}} = 1,613.84$$

$$\text{2016-17 data} \quad \frac{\$10.849,000}{7744 \text{ Pupils}} = \$1400.96$$

Since this type of service is different for Monroe School Transportation and First Student, a comparison of 2015-16 per pupil costs for both contractors are shown as following:

First Student Bus per Pupil Cost

$$\frac{\$35,759,363}{20,110 \text{ Pupils}} = \$1,778.19$$

Monroe School Bus (Special Education) per Pupil Cost

$$\frac{\$11,613,572}{1,638 \text{ Pupils}} = \$7,090.09$$

District – Owned vs. Monroe Student Transportation per Pupil Costs (Special Education)

RCSD Buses $8,677.85 per pupil
MST Buses $7,090.04 per pupil

These costs are similar especially when one considers that RCSD buses provide almost all of the sports and field trips for the district. The 2017 – 2018 data for all related aspects reported in this document will be provided in Phase 3 of this on-going project.

7. Sports and Field Trips

Sports and athletic trips are dispatched at the transportation center according to the following priority:

- RCSD Part-time drivers (less than 40 hours)
- RCSD Full-time drivers (overtime pay)
- Other Transportation Center Staff
- First Student Principals, the Athletic Director, and Dispatchers express satisfaction with field and sports trip service.

8. Yellow School Bus Transportation

The district's elementary schools consist of citywide schools and schools serving children living in three zones. In theory, children going to a regional school (versus citywide) would result in efficient routes that would allow buses to be filled near capacity. However, district protocol limits route time to 60 minutes. Additionally the District permits children attending regional schools to live or use baby-sitters anywhere in the city, outside of their residential zone.

For example, if a child moves from one elementary zone to another, he or she is not required to change schools. Also, liberal childcare transportation practice results in children being transported from one zone to another. When one looks at a map showing pupil rider locations, the distribution of pupils attending regional schools is similar to that of the citywide schools. The following chart summarizes yellow school bus transportation to the district's elementary schools. The chart indicates the following:

- Only 11% of pupils attending elementary school are walkers.
- The average route accommodates 26 pupil riders assigned to buses using the Trapeze Routing Software. (The actual number of riders is actually less because not all drivers report the children who are assigned to buses who do not actually ride.)

RCSD ELEM SCHOOLS, ROUTES, ENROLLMENT 16.17 11.28.16

RCSD Elem	Routes #	# of Routes	1st Stu Riders	MST Riders	RCSD Riders			Total riders	Walkers	
1	100-111	12	266	6	17			289	0	0%
2	117-126	10	194	19	22			235	88	37%
3	133-150	18	491	29	3			523	3	1%
	03pma-b	2	67							
4	160-170	11	170	25	73			268	92	34%
	04am1-04am5	5	102							
5	177-190	14	453	37	3			493	84	17%
7**	202-219	18	514	37				551	1	0%
8	220-237	18	403	33	1			437	76	17%
9	239-259	21	672	29				701	9	1%
10	316-330	15	235	23				258	6	2%
12	262-286	26	694	3	17			714	72	10%
15**	331-341	11	296					296	2	1%
16**	343-360	18	481	30				511	0	0%
17	361-378	18	521	22				543	34	6%
19	380-389	10	218	23				241	111	46%
20	394-404	11	267	18	7			292	40	14%
22**	405-424	20	543	31				574	1	0%
23	428-438	11	233	14				247	46	19%
25	449-459	11	219	12	6			237	61	26%
28	460-481	22	597	59				656	26	4%
29	494-501	8	167	37	52			256	6	2%
	29pm1-29pm2	2	68					68		
33	522-544	23	686	17	59			762	221	29%
34	552-564	13	281	22				303	110	36%
35	569-586	18	396	10				406	24	6%
39	604-620	17	419	28				447	116	26%
41	625-641	17	381	18	34			433	65	15%
41	41pma-c	3	61							
42	651-665,667	16	385	22	11			418	57	14%
43	669-685	17	384	42				426	68	16%
44	691-699	9	167	2	12			181	3	2%
	44apm-44bpm	2	37					37		
45	706-720	15	357	56				413	125	30%
46	726-738	13	252	14				266	39	15%
50	744-762	19	525	23	4			552	56	10%
52	766-776	11	242	5	7			254	70	28%
53	780-792	13	284	8				292	21	7%
54	794-808	15	337	3	24			364	77	21%
57	815-825	11	148	2				150	7	5%
58	300-312	12	288	6	11			305	18	6%
RIA	1163A-1163J	10	411					411		
Wilson F	020-035	16	398	34				432	95	22%
	Out of District Runs	7	10							
1229	Long Term @ No. 29				5					
**FMP all students transported										
TOTAL		**589**	**14320**	**799**	**368**			**15242**	**1930**	

The current version of Trapeze Routing Software used by the district accurately (time and distance) assigns buses to routes using the 60 minute cut off. Routing expediters receive enrollment and address data from the schools and assign pupils to routes. Pupils reported as non-riders by bus drivers are removed from routes. However, the consultant became aware that not all drivers were reporting non-riders. In one case, the PTSI consultant was informed that a 10 minute layover at a bus stop was due to a pupil on the route who was a non-rider and the pick-up/drop-off location was by-passed by the driver. Also the following chart compares First Student actual pupil counts to bus numbers provided by the routing software. Seven routes had actual pupil counts that were 50-75% of the assigned count. These routes would be candidates for re-routing to improve efficiency.

ACS-STUDENT COUNT 5/18/2017

ROUTE	CODE	ACTIVITY	AM TYPE	ELAPSED TIME	LOAD	ACS
25	68	WILSON FOUNDATION ACADEMY-RCSD-REG-OB	P	61	34	34
138	3	NO. 03-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0003	P	53	42	35
179	5	NO. 05-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0005	P	36	38	31
189	5	NO. 05-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0005	P	64	48	41
205	7	NO. 07-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0007	P	56	36	36
224	8	NO. 08-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0008	P	49	24	18
241	9	NO. 09-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0009	P	50	55	40
262	12	NO. 12-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0012	P	67	67	32
271	12	NO. 12-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0012	P	51	37	30
302	58	NO. 58-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0058	P	51	18	15
312	58	NO. 58-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0058	P	50	17	14
318	10	NO. 10-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0010	P	62	21	18
333	15	NO. 15-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0015	P	55	34	32
356	16	NO. 16-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0016	P	54	37	28
364	17	NO. 17-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0017	P	28	21	17
380	19	NO. 19-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0019	P	58	12	8
403	20	NO. 20-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0020	P	49	27	26
410	22	NO. 22-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0022	P	51	21	24
429	23	NO. 23-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0023	P	48	14	14
457	25	NO. 25-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0025	P	45	18	14
471	28	NO. 28-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0028	P	61	32	32
495	29	NO. 29-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0029	P	48	17	14
527	33	NO. 33-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0033	P	54	20	16
552	34	NO. 34-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0034	P	52	30	21
569	35	NO. 35-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0035	P	66	17	15
604	39	NO. 39-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0039	P	39	24	19
627	41	NO. 41-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0041	P	48	25	25
653	42	NO. 42-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0042	P	60	18	17
675	43	NO. 43-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0043	P	50	31	30
697	44	NO. 44-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0044	P	58	16	16
709	45	NO. 45-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0045	P	58	20	19
733	46	NO. 46-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0046	P	48	14	14
753	50	NO. 50-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0050	P	62	35	25
766	52	NO. 52-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0052	P	58	15	10
783	53	NO. 53-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0053	P	42	13	13
804	54	NO. 54-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0054	P	55	15	15
819	57	NO. 57-OE-RCSD-REG-ELEM-0057	P	46	16	8

2017-18 RANDOM ROUTE STUDENT COUNT

ROUTE	SCHOOL	AM ASSIGNED	11/20/2017 AM COUNT	11/28/2017 AM COUNT	PM ASSIGNED	11/20/2017 PM COUNT	11/28/2017 PM COUNT
138	3	29	24	21	28	24	24
179	5	50	46	52	49	48	51
189	5	53	46	51	56	52	53
205	7	28	20	25	29	23	21
224	8	14	10	10	16	8	10
241	9	37	34	36	38	35	35
262	12	24	22	21	24	23	24
271	12	34	32	31	27	24	23
302	58	15	12	11	15	14	14
312	58	19	12	15	20	14	16
318	10	18	15	15	18	12	12
333	15	31	31	28	31	30	28
356	16	24	23	22	23	21	22
364	17	41	40	41	40	40	40
380	19	23	19	15	24	19	17
403	20	29	31	28	23	30	28
410	22	28	21	20	27	20	20
429	23	15	16	16	20	19	19
457	25	27	21	20	28	22	23
471	28	29	27	27	28	23	26
495	29	14	18	10	27	18	13
527	33	24	22	21	27	28	22
552	34	31	25	22	31	15	21
569	35	16	15	14	20	15	15
604	39	18	14	13	23	15	17
627	41	29	29	27	29	26	28
653	42	16	17	16	19	20	16
675	43	30	30	28	39	39	39
697	44	14	14	11	14	15	9
709	45	16	18	18	18	18	20
733	46	12	14	13	11	13	13
753	50	24	23	22	31	22	31
766	52	11	7	9	14	9	9
783	53	23	20	20	31	20	20
804	54	18	14	11	13	12	15
819	57	19	15	17	14	14	14

The November 2017 Counts show a closer correlation between assigned loads and actual counts by drivers than documented for the spring of the 2016-17 school year. However, only 4 out of 36 buses sampled were being used to near capacity.

Rochester currently uses a routing software, Map Net, which is a Trapeze product. In the spring of 2017, the district considered using a newer version of the software called Trip Spark VEO which uses GPS data to add or remove pupils from routes. Both district owned and private contract buses have GPS installed.

In the Buffalo city School District, routing is facilitated using the Tyler Versa Trans software program. Buffalo's major contractor, First Student uses First View, a secure tracking app that tracks buses in real time. With First View, parents, school officials and transportation staff can see when the route starts, the direction of the bus or an interactive map and the estimated time of stops. Transportation officials can use the technology to evaluate routing efficiency.

After meeting with the district's computer specialists, talking with routing expeditors, examining route maps, riding buses, and conferring with the Transportation Director and Assistant Director, the PTSI consultant is convinced that existing district practices of student placement, childcare location, and student mobility prevent efficient bus routing within the time constraints of the current bell system no matter what routing software is adopted in the future. However a thoughtful option under the Path Forward Plan should result in more efficient routes being designed to neighborhood schools and citywide schools whether the Path Forward is for K-6 neighborhood schools, a managed choice or feeder school program.

Sticking with a Trapeze enhanced software will require less training and shorter lead time. Adoption of a new software program will take 18 months to fully implement.

Recommendation II

Use actual to planned pupil counts to analyze bus capacity using Trip Spark VEO routing software

Recommendation III

If the VEO software does not live up to expectations, the district should consider similar routing programs by Edulog, Trans finder, or Tyler (Versa trans)

9. Bus Maintenance and Replacement

The 90 district-owned buses are maintained at the service center under the direction of Mark Decker, Bus Maintenance Supervisor and 6 mechanics. Staffing numbers meet the consultants' rule of thumb of one mechanic for every fifteen school buses. The service center also maintains food service trucks, building and grounds vehicles, and secondary vehicles.

Using Versa-trans Fleet Vision software, the district achieved an excellent NYS DOT school bus inspection passing record of 98.1% in 2017. See Appendix A. The district contractors, First Student, and Monroe School Transit report similar commendable DOT inspection results.

Historically, the district used to replace 10% of the school bus fleet annually. However in recent years, the school bus replacement schedule has been changed, with no bus purchase in 2015-16 and 2016-17. As a result, the district planned to lease school buses for in the fall of 2017. In the consultant's experience, purchasing buses is less expensive than leasing. A typical lease period is five years (high depreciation) and the lease financing is more expensive than the school district owning the vehicle.

Recommendation IV

The District should return to a school bus replacement schedule of 10 new purchasing schedule as soon as possible.

Many school districts with high transportation aid ratios (90%) use a bus reserve fund to purchase buses using state aid for bus purchase to replenish the fund.

When the PTSI consultant visited the district, the school bus garage had purchased a moveable lift which unlike in-ground lifts that qualify for school building aid,

the expense of the moveable lift is eligible for state transportation aid. Schedule G of the districts transportation aid claim for 2017-18 claim year did not list the expenditure for the jack.

If the payment for the jack ($35,506) was made before July 1, 2017, the aid claim needs to be amended to include the expenditure. If the expenditure were made after July 1, 2017, the expenditure for the lift need to be included in the 2018-19 state aid claim.

(Purchase Order #2017004870)

Recommendation V

The Rochester School District aid claim should include the expenditure for the moveable school bus lift.

Commendation I

The Rochester City School District is commended for outstanding bus maintenance standards and practices.

10. Transportation Program Operation Labor Costs

Rochester shares a driver shortage with many districts in the state and nation. As a result, driver salaries (and bus attendant salaries) are competitive with compensation provided in other metropolitan areas. In fact, First Student pays a premium for drivers working in the city compared to those working in suburban and rural areas. The city school district drivers and bus attendants are provided fringe benefits including retirement and health insurance as incentives. Contract bus drivers employed by Monroe School Transportation and First Student are eligible for unemployment benefits in the summer and vacation periods.

Drivers working for Monroe School Transportation can earn as much as $22.00 per hour and senior drivers working for First Student make $21.47 per hour. Drivers employed by the city earn between $15.11 and $34.32 per hour with the median salary for 2016-17 being 18.13.

School bus attendants working for contractors earn $9.75 to $16.55 per hour. Bus attendants working for the city district have a median salary of 14.92 per hour. In summary, the wages paid by the district are comparable to those paid by the district's

contractors.

The expense of the transportation supervisor's office was $649,486 for 2015-16 or 0.92% of the total transportation expense of $70,910,244. In 2016-17, the expense of supervision fell to 0.84% of total expense.

Commendation II

The Rochester City District is commended on effective and cost effective management of the District's pupil transportation program.

11. District Policies and Procedures Related to Service and Costs

The largest driver of per pupil costs in the Rochester City School District is the combination of administrative practices which makes it impossible to fill buses to near capacity. The following administrative practices result in buses carrying, on average, 26 pupils per route:

1. Limiting route time to 60 minutes.
2. Allowing pupils who move to continue attending zone elementary schools.
3. Allowing childcare/babysitter locations to be anywhere in the city.

Practices 2 and 3 result in routes to zone schools being indistinguishable from routes serving city wide schools.

The following chart provides cost information for the transportation programs of the state's six largest school districts. Per pupil costs are the best measure of cost effectiveness of pupil transportation programs.

Rochester's costs are significantly higher than average for comparable city districts. Most school districts restrict transportation to attendance zones. Rochester does not fill school buses to capacity because of the short time between school start and dismissal times and the high percentage of pupils being transported across attendance zone lines. This inefficiency is reflected in the cost of transportation.

Large Upstate City School Districts 2015-16 Cost per-pupil

District	*Trans. Expense*	*# of Pupils*	*Cost per Pupil*
Albany	$7,487,228	6,774	$1,105
Buffalo	$50,644,716	39,362	$1,287
Syracuse	21,710,91	14,156	$1,534
Rochester	$70,910,244	29,644	$2,392
Yonkers	$33,667,853	19,332	$1,742

Transportation Expense 2016-2017 Per-Pupil Costs

Large City School Districts

District	# of Pupils DO Buses	# of Pupils Contracts	# of Pupils Public Service	Total Pupils Transportation	Total Costs	Cost per-pupil
Albany	0	3,516	2,817	6,333	8,316,983	1,313
Buffalo	0	28,852	10,450	39,302	37,694,741	1,315
Syracuse	105	9,743	4,625	14,473	22,191,752	1,533
Rochester	854	22,006	7,744	30,604	73,901,928	2,415
Yonkers	0	12,273	5,792	18,065	32,590,690	1,804

The per-pupil costs are similar to those of the prior year with Rochester being highest of the large upstate city districts.

Public Service Transportation

Large City School Districts

Upstate New York (Does not include summer school)

District	$ Public Service 2016-2017 Expense	# of Pupils	Public Service Cost per-pupil
Albany	1,305,292	2,817	463
Buffalo	7,831,425	10,450	749
Syracuse	1,999,203	4,625	432
Rochester	10,849,000	7,744	1,401
Yonkers	866,840	5,792	150

It should be noted Rochester's per-pupil expense for transit bus service is almost twice as expensive as Buffalo and three times more expensive than Syracuse. (See Recommendation I on page 7 of this report.)

12. Proposed Cost Proposals

During planning for 2018-19 school year, several proposals were considered. The decision was made to continue current service model.

See resource charts on following pages.

2016-17 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS TIME SCHEDULE

1.25.17

Expanded Day Schools Early
HOURS: 7:30-3:00 (7.5 hrs)

	# of Buses	
8	18	
9	21	All Transported
23	11	
34	13	
45	15	
46	13	
	91	

Expanded Day Schools Late
HOURS: 9:00-4:30 (7.5 hrs)

	# of Buses		
3	18	(2 pm buses)	
10	15	All transported	
17	18	All transported	
22	18	transported/displaced	
29	8	(2 pm buses)	
41	17	(3 pm buses)	
44	9	(2 pm buses)	
	103		12

Remaining Early Schools
HOURS: 7:30-2:00

	# of Buses	
1	12	
12	26	
15	11	all transported/displaced
20	11	
25	11	
33	23	
43	17	
50	19	
53	13	
57	11	
Wilson Foundation	16	
RIA	10	All transported
	180	

Remaining Late Schools
HOURS: 9:00-3:30

	# of Buses		
2	10		
4	11	(5 am buses)	
5	15		
7	18	transported/displaced	
16	18	transported/displaced	
19	10		
28	22		
35	18		
39	17		
42	16		
52	11		
54	15		
58	12		
	193		13

1.5 hours in between runs - especially in the afternoons due to excessive loading time at some schools.

2017-18 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS TIME SCHEDULE -3

Early Schools
HOURS: 7:30-2:30 (7 hrs)

	# of Buses	
3	18	
8	18	
9	21	All Transported
10	15	All transported
12	26	
15	11	all transported/displaced
17	18	All transported
20	11	
22	18	all transported/displaced
23	11	
25	11	
29	8	
33	23	
34	13	
41	17	
44	9	
45	15	
46	13	
	276	

Late Schools
HOURS: 9:00-4:00 (7hrs)

	# of Buses	
2	10	
4	11	(5 am buses)
5	15	
7	18	all transported/displaced
16	18	all transported/displaced
19	10	
28	22	
35	18	
39	17	
42	16	
43	17	
50	19	
52	11	
53	13	
54	15	
57	11	
58	12	
RIA	10	All transported
Wilson Foundation	16	
	279	

1.5 hours in between runs - especially in the afternoons due to excessive loading time at some schools.

2017-18 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS TIME SCHEDULE PROPOSAL COST

3.10.17

ROUTE BREAKDOWN:

SY 2016-17 CURRENT	SY 2017-18 Proposal 1	SY 2017-18 Proposal 2	SY 2017-18 Proposal 3
258 Combinations (516 Singles)	261 Combinations (522 Singles)	168 Combinations (336 Singles)	276 Combinations (552 Singles)
54 Singles (uncombinable)	33 Singles (uncombinable)	219 Singles (uncombinable)	3 Singles (uncombinable)
312 Drivers Needed	294 Drivers Needed	**387 Drivers Needed**	279 Drivers Needed
	18 Drivers Less	**75 Additional**	**33 Drivers Less**

COST BREAKDOWN:

2017-18 Cost - CURRENT Structure		Cost Per Rt	Cost Per Day	Cost Per Year
# of Single Routes - Uncombinable	54	$ 279	$ 15,066	$ 2,742,012
# of Combined Routes	258	$ 371	$ 95,718	$ 17,420,676
Total				**$ 20,162,688**

2017-18 Cost - Proposal 1		Cost Per Rt	Cost Per Day	Cost Per Year
# of Single Routes - Uncombinable	33	$ 279	$ 9,207	$ 1,675,674
# of Combined Routes	261	$ 371	$ 96,831	$ 17,623,242
Total				**$ 19,298,916**
This proposal moves No. 3 & No. 17 to early and No. 34 & No. 46 to late.				
SAVINGS FOR 2017-18 SERVICE				**$ (863,772)**

2017-18 Cost - Proposal 2		Cost Per Rt	Cost Per Day	Cost Per Year
# of Single Routes - Uncombinable	219	$ 279	$ 61,101	$ 11,120,382
# of Combined Routes	168	$ 371	$ 62,328	$ 11,343,696
Total				**$ 22,464,078**
This proposal moves all Expanded Days to same schedule.				
INCREASE FOR 2017-18 SERVICE				**$ 2,301,390**

2017-18 Cost - Proposal 3		Cost Per Rt	Cost Per Day	Cost Per Year
# of Single Routes - Uncombinable	3	$ 279	$ 837	$ 152,334
# of Combined Routes	276	$ 371	$ 102,396	$ 18,636,072
Total				**$ 18,788,406**
This proposal creates 7 hour days for all schools - 2 tiers				
INCREASE FOR 2017-18 SERVICE				**$ (1,374,282)**

Based on 182 school days

13. Community (Neighborhood) Schools

The Superintendent and Board of Education are considering as 1 of 3 options in Path Forward, community elementary schools serving neighborhoods operating on a flexible schedule beginning about 7am and providing after school activities and child care. While the cost of extended day programs will depend on the actual schedules adopted, the neighborhood school concept will allow the district to route buses to be utilized closer to capacity. Buses serving neighborhood schools could easily serve 2 children to a seat or 40 per route. The savings per year by reducing 567 routes to 382 is estimated to be $35,560 per route x 185 routes or $6,578,600 a year. By careful planning, that money or number of routes would at least partially offset the cost of transporting an extended day elementary school schedule. This recommendation is based on the data and structure of the current district program configuration at the time of this study. Over time this recommendation should be re-assessed to determine its current viability.

Recommendation VI

Rochester Board of Education should consider adoption of a neighborhood elementary schools policy to promote potential increased efficiency and cost effective transportation, with the exception of licensed day care centers.

14. Observations at School Sites and Visits

- Buses at Kodak Park Elementary School encroach Ridge Road in the p.m. A wider entrance to the bus lot would allow more buses to fit in the lot.
- Kodak Park School Staff report dissatisfaction with 4:30 p.m. dismissal.
- The High School Principal reports that transportation is not an issue at East High.
- School 3 Middle School kids have to leave early to get to sports sites.
- Staff complains that the district has not provided sufficient lead time for changed bell schedules.
- A Board of education member asked for more community stops (less door to door).
- The family picnic is a great way to communicate with parents
- Summer school transportation planning is efficient and timely.
- School 15, per trip is 1 hour in duration with 10 minutes waiting for parents to present children for loading

- School 28 p.m. route starts in the Henry Hudson parking lot with a safety problem. Bus arriving at 3:26 p.m. encounter children walking through the bus parking lot to reach buses parked 3 wide in the lot and one row on Humbolt Street. (Pupils should not be released from the school before the 3:30 p.m. bell dismissal time.)
- Likewise at the Creekside School, special education pupils are leaving the school for buses that are staying for a 3:15 p.m. bell time.

15. Special Education Transportation

Pupils with IEPs are transported by both the school district and Monroe School Transportation on smaller buses operated by a school bus driver and bus attendant. Monroe School Transportation had start-up problems at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year due to a driver and vehicle shortage and communication problems between the district and the company. Last minute placements of special education pupils result in short lead times to make transportation arrangements. Also, overly restrictive conditions (in the opinion of the Senior Management Consultant) in IEPs lead to the need for more yellow buses than necessary. Examples of restrictive conditions include:

- Limiting 3 pupils to a bus
- Requiring the bus to wait up to 1 hour at the PM dismissal for the pupil to leave the building
- Specifying yellow bus service for some pupils who are of high school age who would and could ride Regional Transit Buses

The consultant was assured by the district's special education staff the IEPs are reviewed annually and children are placed in the least restrictive environment.

Recommendation VII

A review of overly restrictive conditions in IEPs should be performed in Phase III of this study.

16. RCSD Path Forward

The Board of Education asked for an analysis of enrollment, demographics, managed choice, neighborhood schools, placement zones and regional schools. The Path Forward Plan was developed as a long range plan with annual updates. Three options which are being considered have implications for transportation.

The Path Forward Steering Committee is creating a 10 year Educational and Facilities Master Plan under leadership of Deputy Superintendent Lawrence “Bo” Wright working with six design teams. Mike Schmidt, Chief of Operations, is co-chair of the District Team. Maria Mello-Dupre the Director of Transportation is a member of the School Design Team whose charge is to build a vision for high school design, middle grade level configuration, feeder patterns, and neighborhood alignment. They are working on generating three models for consideration:

1. A ”fixed” managed choice option
2. Neighborhood schools
3. Feeder schools

Chief of Operations Schmidt is a co-convener of the Demographics/Assignment/Data Team formed to provide information for the Path Forward Plan efforts.

17. Fixed Managed Choice

The managed choice which exists in the Rochester City School District is undesirable because it is not consistent with policy. Two-thirds of elementary children attend schools outside of their reginal zone. Route maps for regional elementary schools are indistinguishable from city-wide schools due to placement practices for children who move and are not reassigned to their new zone school. Also, parents are allowed to choose babysitters outside of the zone and the district practice is to provide to and from school transportation the child care location.

Recommendation VIII

Place children who move from zone to zone in a school located in the new zone of residence.

Recommendation VIII

Except for licensed Day Care Centers, limit transportation to and from baby sitters located in the zone of residence.

Recommendation IX

Arrange bell times of elementary schools on a two tiered schedule as proposed for 2017-18 Elementary Schools time Schedule 3

18. Neighborhood Schools (K-6 Option)

Whenever feasible, place children in the elementary school closest to their residence. Provide transportation to all children in pre-K – 2 from home to school and return. Provide transportation to children in Grades 3 – 6 to and from community bus stops (either corner or midblock stops).

A neighborhood school model could require students to change schools after moving to a different neighborhood. Although this may be disruptive to students, it maximizes the cost efficiencies of transportation. This decision has historically been made by Building Principals rather than being an established administrative practice.

19. Feeder Routes

Pair elementary schools with high schools located nearby. (Example: School 33 with East High). This option is much like managed choice 3 except the school district is making the paired school selections rather than the parents. This model is used in Dallas and Cobb County, Georgia.

20. Estimated Potential Cost Implications of the three options

"Fixed" managed choice	Savings of $1.37 Million
Neighborhood Schools	Savings of $6.58 Million
Feeder Schools	Savings are determined by the pairing of schools

21. Additional Cost of Transporting all Children

The following costs assume that K – 6 pupils can be accommodated on existing yellow buses and the State Aid penalty is calculated using the non-allowable pupil decimal for yellow bus transportations. The costs for transporting an additional 1,253 (7-12) pupils assumes the use of $3 daily RTS passes for 182 days.

Grade Level	Additional Cost	State Aid Penalty
K – 6	$0	$1.7 Million
7 – 12	$ 684,000	$ 684,000

Recommendation X

Transport all K-6 pupils and those 7-12 pupils living more than 1.5 miles from school.

Appendix A

NYS DOT Bus Inspection
System Operation Profile
2016-17

NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY | Department of Transportation

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

MATTHEW J. DRISCOLL
Commissioner

Cathy Calhoun
Chief of Staff

May 15, 2017

OPERATOR ID 2999

ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
131 WEST BROAD ST
ROCHESTER NY 14614

Dear Motor Carrier:

Enclosed is the annual New York State Department of Transportation Bus Inspection System Operator Profile that summarizes the results of vehicle inspections performed on your fleet by the Department during the last State Fiscal Year (April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017). For regular inspections, the profile identifies the number and percentage of vehicles that passed or were placed Out-of-Service (OOS) due to one or more OOS defects. It is the Department's continued goal to have all operators pass at least 90% of their scheduled safety inspections. The current statewide average OOS rate is 5.2%.

We would like to congratulate those operators who have achieved the goal of a 90% or greater pass rate. Your commendable performance indicates a strong dedication to safety and a commitment to sound maintenance standards and practices.

Operators who have a passing rate of less than 90%, it is requested that your organization examine the enclosed profile inspection data and immediately update your maintenance program in order to achieve the Department's stated goal. Your Regional Bus Inspection Program Supervisor is available to review the actions being taken and provide assistance, if necessary to address any needed changes.

For those operators whose OOS rate is 25% or greater and fall under the Department's enforcement program, you will be contacted shortly to address your unacceptable poor performance. Actions may include civil penalties, unannounced vehicle inspections, denial of B & C privileges, compliance reviews or other regulatory enforcement.

Please visit https://www.dot.ny.gov/divisions/operating/osss/bus for program updates.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Scotto, Acting Director
Passenger Carrier Safety Bureau

Enclosures

cc: Regional Bus Program Supervisor

4/17/17 NYS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PAGE 1
BUS INSPECTION SYSTEM
OPERATOR PROFILE

****
* OPERATOR # *
* 2999 *
* OOS 1.9 % *
* PM 81.3 % *
****

PROFILE PERIOD: 2016-04-01 THRU 2017-03-31
INSPECTION PERIOD: 2016-04-04 THRU 2017-03-31

REGION : 04

TYPE(S) OF SERVICE: 1

ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
131 WEST BROAD ST
ROCHESTER NY 14614-

B+C PRIVILEGE CODE = GRANT

****
RESULTS OF REGULAR INSPECTIONS
****

INSP. SUMMARY		TOTAL	PASS	PCT
REGULAR	(TYPE 1)	108	106	98.1 %
REINSPECT	(TYPE 2)	4	4	100.0 %
INITIAL	(TYPE 9)	0	0	0.0 %
CRIT ITEM	(TYPE 0)	100	98	98.0 %
TOTAL OF TYPES 0,1,2,9		212		
			PCT OF TOTAL 0,1,2,9	
ACCIDENT	(TYPE 3)	0		0.0 %
TEMP. OOS	(TYPE 4)	0		0.0 %
PERM. OOS	(TYPE 5)	2		0.9 %
FLEET	(TYPE 6)	0		0.0 %
NON-PRESENT	(TYPE 7)	0		0.0 %
OTHER	(TYPE 8)	0		0.0 %
TOTAL OF TYPES 3-8		2		

REGULAR INSPECTION DATA	TOT	PCT
TOTAL INSP:	208	
TOTAL INSP PASSED:	204	98.1 %
TOTAL INSP W/"A" DEFECT:	4	1.9 %
TOTAL INSP W/"B" DEFECT:	3	1.4 %
TOTAL INSP W/"C" DEFECT:	0	0.0 %
TOTAL INSP W/A, B, OR C:	6	2.9 %
TOTAL INSP W/NO DEFECTS:	202	97.1 %
TOTAL INSP OOS W/A DEFECT:	4	1.9 %
TOTAL INSP OOS:	4	1.9 %

DEFECT DATA	
TOTAL DEFECTS:	9
TOTAL "A" DEFECTS:	4
TOTAL "B" DEFECTS:	5
TOTAL "C" DEFECTS:	0
TOTAL "OTHER" DEFECTS:	0
TOTAL HWY OPN PROHIBITED:	0
AVERAGE DEFECTS/INSP:	0.0
AVERAGE "A" DEFECTS/INSP:	0.0
AVERAGE "B" DEFECTS/INSP:	0.0
AVERAGE "C" DEFECTS/INSP:	0.0

DEFECT SUMMARY - REGULAR INSPECTIONS

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL
	"A" DEFECTS:	
27.02	LUGS, WHEEL BOLTS, NUTS OR STUDS	1
39.01	BRAKE LINES/HOSES/CONNECTIONS	1
40.01	BRAKE SYSTEM VALVE(S)/TANKS	1
40.03	CHAMBERS/PUSH RODS/SLACK ADJUSTERS	1
	"B" DEFECTS:	
13.02	WASHER	1
22.00	WINDOWS	2
28.00	TIRES	1
48.00	ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS	1
	"INSPECTION POINTS NOT COUNTED AS DEFECTS"	
52.08	ROAD TEST/BRAKE TEST NOT PERFORMED DUE TO ROAD CONDITION	27
52.09	ROAD TEST/BRAKE TEST NOT PERFORMED DUE TO VEHICLE CONDITION	4