

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW TO ADDRESS OVER-CROWDED BUSES

October 12, 2015

Introduction

The DeKalb County School District's (DCSD) Transportation Department transports approximately 60,000 students daily. As of October 11, 2015, the department has a bus driver allotment of 878 drivers of which 822 positions are "actively" engaged in providing daily bus transportation support for 803 routes. The District has a total school bus fleet of 1,009 school buses with an average age of 10.1 years. The District maintains a minimum of 950 schools buses, to include 100 spares, to ensure bus availability to support the District's daily transportation operations. The DeKalb County School District follows the industry standard of three students per seat for grades K-5 and two students per seat for grades 6-12.

Analysis/ Findings

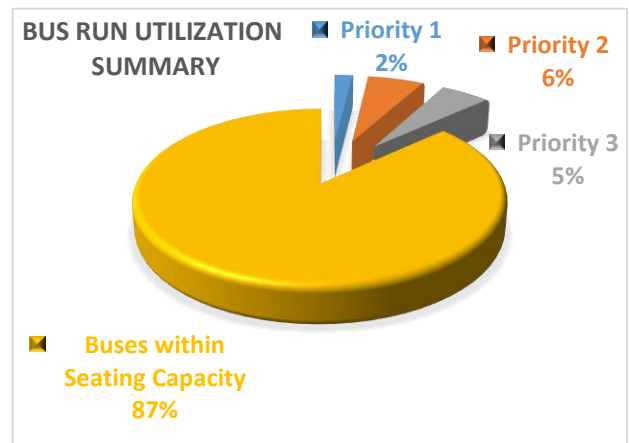
The Transportation Department conducted a capacity/utilization analysis of all bus routes and identified bus runs over capacity by one or more students. Based upon this internal analysis, approximately 13 percent of the total 1,485 school bus runs are over-crowded at this time. As of October 11, 2015, there are 196 bus runs identified as being over-crowded. However, this does not imply that all over-crowded school bus runs have students standing while the bus is in motion. The following prioritization strategy is being utilized to address these issues in the short-term:

- Priority #1: More than 16 students over bus capacity
- Priority #2: Between 6 and 15 students over bus capacity
- Priority #3: Less than 6 students over bus capacity

Short-Term Strategy

The District's short-term strategy focuses on resolving all over-crowded runs no later than October 23, 2015. The following key actions will be taken over the next several days:

- Continue to validate ridership in collaboration with schools and Transportation staff
- Balance loads and reassign students to new bus runs as appropriate
- Where load balancing is not feasible, additional drivers and/or double runs will be utilized
- Partner with school bus transportation service vendors as a supplemental resource to address overcrowding
- Effectively communicate student route changes to all impacted stakeholders prior to implementation



Long-Term Strategy

The District will continue to further develop a comprehensive long term strategy (3 to 5 years) to balance student ridership across the District. This long term strategy will consider the following key areas as we seek to build additional capacity to ensure scalability and accommodate future growth:

- Conduct a thorough analysis of the Transportation management structure and operations to enhance the District's school bus service delivery
- Significantly reduce the annual employee turnover rate by hiring and retaining a larger pool of highly qualified school bus drivers and monitors
- Improve internal and external communications with all stakeholders
- Purchase additional buses in accordance with the District's school bus replacement cycle
- Determine annual funding requirements for long term sustainability