



Volume 7: Friday, August 24, 2018

*“The safety of our students, and the support of the dedicated employees who daily serve to provide them with a superior education, are top priorities for our district. To that end, we are firmly committed to addressing your concerns and ensuring proper compensation, benefits, working conditions, and growth opportunities for our Transportation teammates.” – Dr. R. Stephen Green, Superintendent*

## **SUPERINTENDENT’S TRANSPORTATION SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY**

Over 55 concerns have been shared with Superintendent Green and Interim COO Daniel Drake regarding the Transportation Department. Each concern has been documented, and the Superintendent, sub-committee, and district staff members are working collaboratively to address each one. To date, twenty-two (22) concerns have been addressed, twenty-three (23) are currently in process to be addressed, and thirteen (13) remain to be discussed in greater detail. The following concerns and requests for updates were discussed during our August 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. Some concerns will require time to research; however, all concerns will be addressed in future meetings and newsletters.

### **FINANCE AND HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT:**

#### **Concern: Request for Overview of Benefits**

**Update:** Driver and Monitor benefits encompass three (3) distinct categories: PSERS, TSA 403(b), and Individual 403(b). What follows is an overview of each:

**PSERS:** The **P**ublic **S**chool **E**mployee **R**etirement **S**ystem (PSERS) is a State-administered program. Members who first join PSERS on or after July 1, 2012, will pay a required contribution of \$10 monthly for 9 months – a total annual contribution of \$90. Members who first joined PSERS prior to July 1, 2012, will pay a required contribution of \$4 monthly for 9 months – a total annual contribution of \$36. Upon 30 years of service and 65 years of age, the PSERS retirement benefit is given to qualifying participants. Effective 7/1/2018, the State increased the monthly multiplier from \$15.00 to \$15.25 per month per years of service. (By example: At 30 years: \$15.25 x 12 (months) x 30 (years) = \$5,490 annual retirement benefit.

**Board-Contributed 8% TSA 403(b):** This **T**ax-**S**heltered **A**nnuity (TSA) 403(b) program is a Fidelity-managed, Board-only contribution program that was terminated in 2009 for all employees **except** full-time PSERS employees. All full-time PSERS employees continue to receive an 8% Board-funded contribution with every pay day. **This 8% contribution “vests” immediately to the full-time PSERS employee. (There is no waiting period.)** Full benefits of the TSA 403(b) plan can be withdrawn (without penalty) when the full-time PSERS employee reaches 59.5 years of age or when the full-time PSERS employee leaves the District.

**Individual-Contributed / Board-Matched 2% 403(b):** At the August 6, 2018 Board meeting, the Board approved Amendment No.1 to the 2% 403(b) matching program whereby all PSERS employees were made eligible to participate. In order to receive the 2% match, an employee must meet the following criteria:

- At least five (5) years continuous service to the District (as with all program participants in accordance with the District’s official 2% 403(b) matching program structure and criteria)
- An individual 403(b) account with one (1) of the four (4) Board-approved firms of your choice – Fidelity (a separate non-TSA account is required if using Fidelity), Mass Mutual, VALIC, or Voya.
- A two (2)-year (24 month) commitment to individual (non-Board) contributions.

#### **Special Notes / Next Actions:**

HCM and Fidelity provided workshops and “one-on-one” sessions with employees to answer specific questions regarding their TSA 403(b) and Individual 403(b) plans during the month of June. The next round of workshops and “one-on-one” sessions are being scheduled for the month of September. Should you have issues or concerns that you believe cannot be adequately addressed during these workshops and “one-on-one” sessions, please contact: Ms. Deborah Burns, in the Finance Department, at 678-676-0155, or Fidelity at 1-800-343-0860.

#### **Concern: Request for Overview of Raises and Steps**

**Update: Raises:** The Board-approved 2.5% salary increase, which became effective on July 1, 2018, will appear in the first paycheck of the 2018 -19 School Year (your September 15, 2018 paycheck). In addition to Drivers and Monitors, all categories of employees – **except** Principals, Assistant Principals, Directors, Executive Directors, Chiefs, Regional Superintendents, and all AIC/School-Board office staff – received this same July 1, 2018-effective raise. Employees in the categories listed, will receive a 2.5% salary increase effective January 1, 2019. **Steps:** The new Step Structure will also commence on January 1, 2019. Developed directly from the 2018 Compensation and Classification Study which determined ‘market-rate’ compensation through a comparison of DCSD with five (5) other districts, the new Step Structure will be years-of-experience-based. Individual employees, therefore, will benefit differently based on their year of experience with the District.

**Next Actions:** Additional particulars of the Step Structure will be further defined prior to the January 1, 2019 implementation.

**Concern: Request for Overview of Historical Changes to Base-Hour Standards During the Last Decade**

**Update:** FY08: 7-hour work schedule was the standard; however, there were a few 6-hour employees  
FY09: 6-hour work schedule became the standard  
FY10 - FY 14: 5-hour work schedule became the standard  
FY15 - FY18: 6-hour work schedule became the standard and remains in place today  
FY19 (this school year): 6-hour work schedule continues to be the District standard

**EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION (formerly SPECIAL NEEDS):**

**Concern: Request for Overview and Progress Update**

**Update:** Formed in late May 2018, at the request of the Transportation Sub-Committee and subsequent directive of the Superintendent, the Exceptional Education Sub-Committee exists to develop and implement strategies in answer to concerns directly relating to the District's transportation operations of Exceptional Education students. The 12-member sub-committee – led by Dr. Chezia Calloway, Executive Director of Exceptional Education, and comprised of stakeholders from the following groups: Transportation Supervisors, Parent Mentors, Bus Drivers, and Bus Monitors – has met on May 31<sup>st</sup>, June 20<sup>th</sup>, and July 11<sup>th</sup> to review and discuss the following topics and action items:

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the bus drivers and monitors; **Status: Completed**
- Lack of communication between staff and administration; **Status: Completed (addressed in training, face-to-face meetings with supervisors, and in SOP document.)**
- Access to information and specialized training to best support students with special medical, behavioral, and/or mental health needs; **Status: In process for OLA to review for both Exceptional Education and General Education drivers**
- Evaluate emergency situations, safety protocols, and evacuation plans on Exceptional Education buses; **Status: In process**
- Request for additional bus monitors for field trips; **Status: In process. To be discussed with the divisions of Finance and Operations.**
- Review and update Transportation-related topics within the District's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP); **Status: Completed**
- Review and update Transportation-related topics within the District's Parent Handbook; **Status: In process.**

**Special Notes / Next Actions:**

IEP implementation: Increase from 124 monitors in SY 2017-2018 to 159 monitors in SY 2018-2019. Transportation bills the Exceptional Education Department for the funding of \$4,913,418.00.

Meeting Schedule: The Exceptional Education Sub-Committee is scheduled to meet at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, August 29, 2018 to address remaining concerns and finalize implementation of the following action items: Emergency and Evacuations; Parent Handbook; Bus Monitor scheduling.