

Transportation Updates

March 7, 2023



Board of Education End Statements

Academic Excellence

- All students have equitable access to a Douglas County public school that promotes growth in their cognitive, physical, social and emotional needs and builds on their strengths.
- Every student has equitable opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills that will ensure performance at his/her highest individual potential.

Outstanding Educators and Staff

- Quality educators and staff have been recruited, developed, supported, retained and celebrated.

Superintendent Policy EEAA

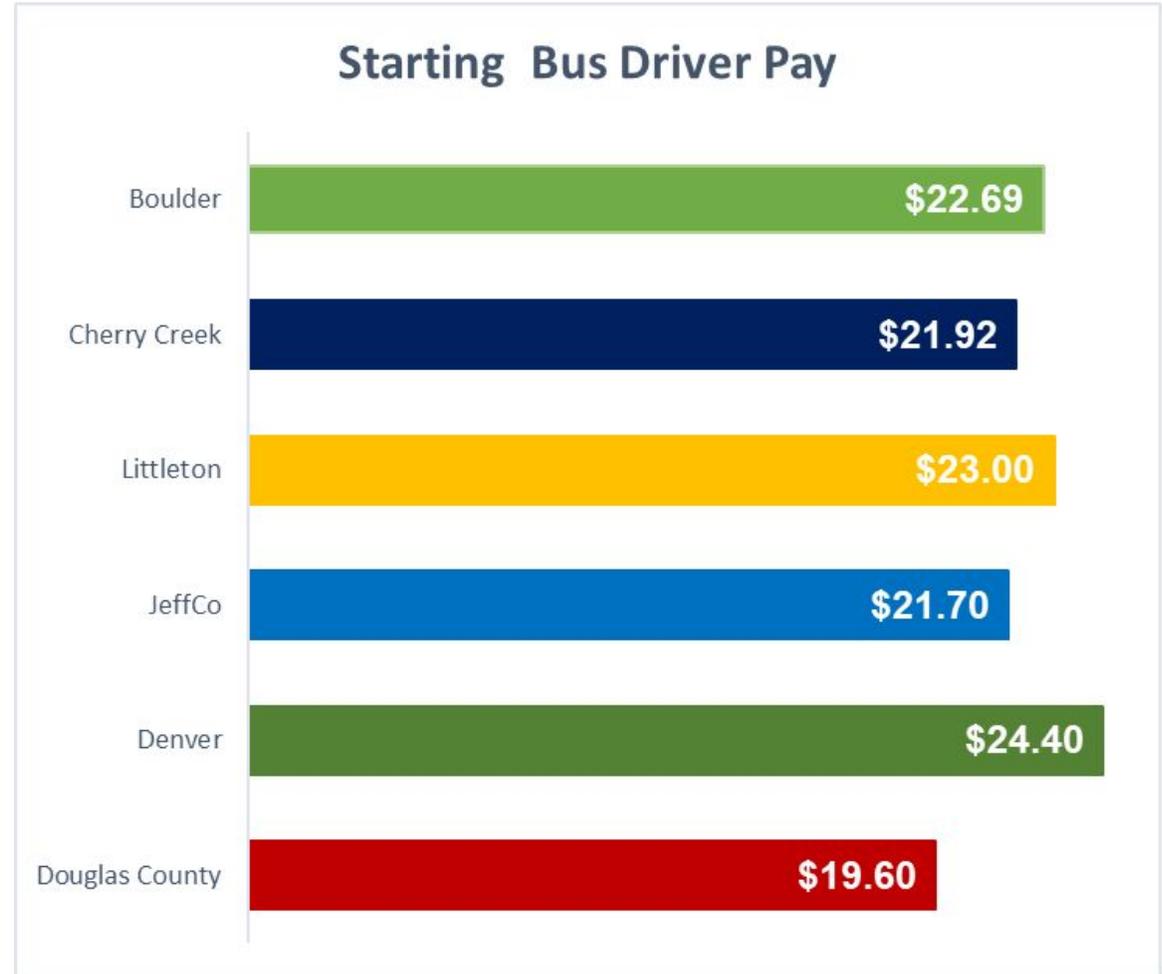
Transportation of Eligible Students

School bus service generally will be provided for elementary school students who live more than one mile from school and for secondary school students who live more than two miles from school, unless extenuating circumstances exist limiting the availability of buses or seats available to transport students.

Overview

Challenges of Transportation

- Lack of competitive pay - as with our teachers, our pay is lower than our neighboring districts.
- Labor shortage - there are just not enough drivers (nationwide) to fill openings



Overview

Cost of Transportation

- Transportation is NOT fully funded by the state so districts see a net loss each year; DCSD will lose about \$16 M in 22-23 after state revenue is applied.
- Ridership Fees: DCSD charges a nominal fee for transportation; these fees help offset losses (\$1.1 M); removing fees (which we would like to do at some point) would result in a massive increase in demand when we are unable to meet the demand we have.

Priorities of Transportation

- Special education routes (legal obligation - we transport 1,042 students as part of their IEP)
- General education routes that serve our students in poverty - we have many students who are not able to get to school at all (and do not attend) when routes are cancelled.
- Minimizing cancellations - this means utilizing any and all staff possible.

How Does DCSD Compare? Bus Driver (CDL)

Local Districts	Hourly Salaries		
	Minimum	Mid-point	Maximum
Adams 12	\$21.16	\$26.28	\$31.40
APS	\$21.43	\$26.07	\$30.71
CCSD	\$21.92	\$27.06	\$32.20
Littleton	\$23.00	\$28.76	\$34.52
DPS	\$24.42	\$27.06	\$29.69
JeffCO	\$21.70	\$25.19	\$28.67
Mean	\$22.27	\$26.74	\$31.20
Range	\$21.16	\$27.84	\$34.52
DCSD	\$19.60	\$25.01	\$30.42
% difference	-12.0%	-6.5%	-2.5%

Driver (Non-CDL)

	Hourly Salaries		
Local Districts	Minimum	Mid-point	Maximum
Adams 12	\$19.11	\$23.74	\$28.37
APS	\$18.49	\$22.56	\$26.63
CCSD	\$17.68	\$21.83	\$25.97
DPS	\$18.89	\$19.07	\$19.26
Jeffco	\$19.60	\$23.09	\$26.57
Littleton	\$21.24	\$26.56	\$31.88
Mean	\$19.17	\$22.81	\$26.45
Range	\$17.68	\$24.78	\$31.88
DCSD	\$17.55	\$22.37	\$27.18
% difference	-8.4%	-1.9%	2.8%

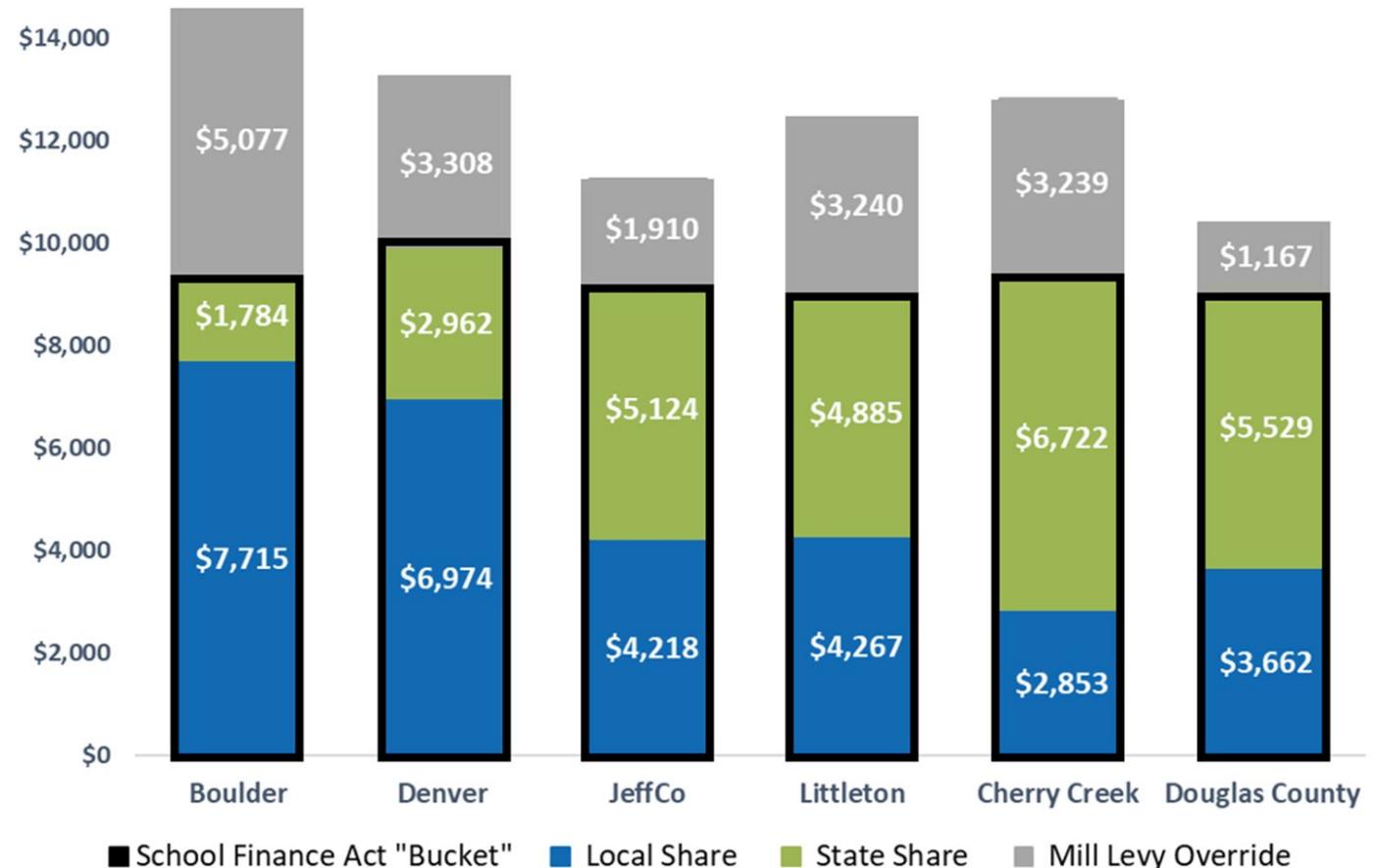
Transportation Education Assistant

	Hourly Salaries		
Local Districts	Minimum	Mid-point	Maximum
Adams 12	\$18.35	\$22.80	\$27.24
APS	\$16.35	\$19.95	\$23.55
CCSD	\$16.74	\$20.67	\$24.59
Littleton	\$17.72	\$22.16	\$26.60
DPS	\$20.00	\$22.26	\$24.51
JeffCO	\$17.16	\$19.80	\$22.44
Mean	\$17.72	\$21.27	\$24.82
Range	\$16.35	\$21.80	\$27.24
DCSD (Increased \$1.06 1-1-23)	\$17.11	\$20.96	\$24.80
% difference	-3.44%	-1.46%	-0.09%

Why is DCSD at a Competitive Disadvantage?

- DCSD's Local Mill Levy Override is \$2,000 per student less than our nearest competitor (for employees).
- As a direct result our average driver and Transportation Education Assistant salaries are less and not competitive.

Comparative Per Pupil Revenue (22-23)



**Numbers reflect the 2022-2023 School Year, post 2022 election*

Impacts to Transportation

Reduced Staffing

Route Consolidations

Route Cancellations

Increased Special Education Routes Provided by Third Parties

Reduction of Busing for Field Trips

Reduced Staffing

	Budgeted Positions	Filled Positions	Vacancies
Bus Driver (CDL)	213	135	78
Driver (Non-CDL)	20	4	16
Transportation Education Assistant	85	52	33

Only 60% of positions on buses are filled.*

Leaves of Absence (LOA), Workers Comp (WC), Scheduled Sick Days, and Unscheduled Call-ins further reduce staffing.

*2% of routes have been cancelled.

Route Consolidations

	2020-2021 Routes	2021-2022 Routes	2022-2023 Routes
General Education	100	82	69
Special Education	73	57	51
Total	173	139	120

The number of routes has been reduced 31% through consolidations in the past three years in order to continue running routes approximately one mile from elementary schools and two miles from middle and high schools..

Routes are now at maximum capacity, have longer distances to bus stops, and are longer rides.

Route Cancellations

Three routes were permanently cancelled prior to this school year. Factors considered included the age and number of students riding, distance to school, and roadways students would need to cross. Phone calls and notifications were sent to all affected families.

Routes for students with special needs have not been cancelled.

2% of routes have been cancelled this school year for either for the entire day or just the morning or afternoon. 3-5 routes per day typically need to be cancelled due to the shortage of drivers and TEAs. The ability to rotate cancelled routes is currently being negotiated with the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU).

Reasons for cancelling a route include:

- The route does not currently have an assigned driver.

- The driver is reassigned as a driver or TEA to a special education route due to a vacancy.

- The driver is on LOA, WC, a scheduled sick day, or calls in that day.

Transportation staff makes every effort to reassign drivers and central staff daily to fill vacancies, including three daily calls starting at 5:00 AM to confirm call ins, identify substitutes, reassign drivers and staff, and send Smart Tag notifications to families of cancellations. Since January 10, 2023, over 250 temporary reassignments have been made, including central staff and from one terminal to another.

Increased Special Education Routes by Third Parties

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Number of Students Transported	124	236	285

The number of students with special needs transported by third party companies has more than doubled in the last three years.

One reason for this increase is the lack of District drivers and TEAs to provide these routes. While all third party companies meet all District and CDE requirements, the preference is to transport as many students as possible in-house to provide flexibility and save costs.

The cost for third party transportation averages \$3,821 per student per month. If Transportation was fully staffed, approximately 100 students currently transported by third party companies could be transported in-house.

Reduction of Busing for Field Trips

Fewer drivers are available for field trips during the weekdays due to the need for as many drivers as possible to drive morning, mid-day, and afternoon routes. Drivers may drive a maximum of 10 hours after 8 consecutive hours off duty. The priority of daily routes and the rules governing allowed driving hours limit the availability of drivers for field trips after hours during weekdays.

Busing for trips is provided for Stone Canyon Outdoor EdVentures, Before and After School during non teaching days and breaks, and Athletics and Activities mostly during weekends.

Strategies to Improve Staffing

Increase pay for drivers and provide compensation incentives through ATU negotiations

Improve advertising and recruiting

- Banners on buses parked on government property and at stores, employees distributing flyers, Facebook, job fairs, retirement communities

Hire a recruiter specialized in the transportation sector

Continue to focus on Climate and Culture

- Enhancing breakrooms, providing free bus rides to students of Transportation employees to and from school, providing lunches, snacks, anniversary cards and pins for years of service, years of service jackets at 5, 10, 15 and 20 years, hoodies, monthly BBQ and potluck to celebrate birthdays, employee appreciation, safety week and awards, and driver appreciation week, bus decorating and costume contests with giveaways, coffee carts at each terminal, peer support group to assist families

Strategies to Reduce Route Cancellations

Increase pay for drivers and provide compensation incentives through ATU negotiations and implement the other strategies to improve staffing

- The goal is to help reduce vacancies and route cancellations
- Understanding that additional dollars invested take away from our ability to invest in our entire workforce and have ripple effects on other employee groups.

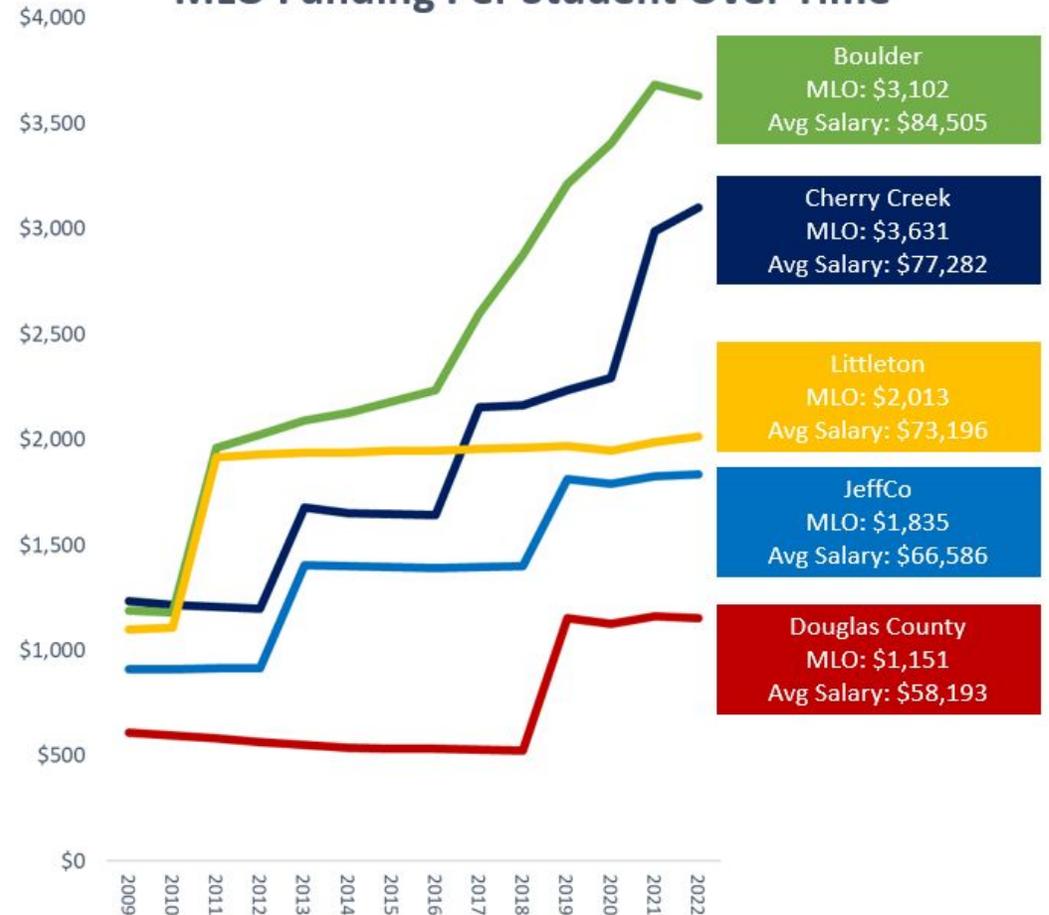
Continue to request volunteer drivers to drive other routes instead of their normal route in order to rotate General Education route cancellations

Negotiate with the ATU to increase flexibility in route assignments

Why is an MLO Still Desperately Needed?

- The School Finance Act (in theory) increases funding by inflation each year for all districts - this is being used to fund our increases.
- ***Every district will receive additional funding due to inflation and offer similar increases.***
- Funding due to inflation will help us give our staff inflationary increases, however, it will not help us compete with other districts.
- ***Cherry Creek's MLO is still about \$2000 per student more than DCSD's MLO.*** We are off from Littleton and JeffCo by about \$1,000 per student. For our 62,000 students that is proportionally about a **\$64-\$124M gap!**

MLO Funding Per Student Over Time





Questions

