


MEMORANDUM

TO: Hoover City Board of Education

FROM: Andy Craig, Superintendent 

DATE: April 17, 2014

SUBJECT: Fee-Based Transportation for Students

During the last eight months, an issue of overriding importance has been discussed and debated: specifically, how to eliminate or minimize the unfunded cost burden in providing student transportation for Hoover City students given the financial challenges facing the district.

During this extended period of time, we considered a number of plans. These included the elimination of student transportation¹ in order to address in full measure the costs of transportation from the general education budget. The discussions have also included various fee-based proposals where either all students would pay the same fee to ride school buses; or where the charge to ride school buses would be structured based on equitable factors.

As these proposals have been analyzed and studied, we have been in close communication with the United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, and the United States Attorney General's Office in Birmingham in order to clearly define the reasons necessitating change in student transportation, but also to set forth how such adjustments would impact various categories of students. In that regard, I have met with Justice Department officials in Washington, D.C., the U.S. Attorney Joyce Vance and her staff, and sent evolving data depending on the fee structure being considered.

The response of the U.S. Justice Department during the process has been invaluable. The questions asked, the data requested and the concerns expressed have enabled us to devise a plan for the 2014-2015 school year that will help us address the financial challenges we are facing and to do so in a manner that will avoid litigation. Avoidance of the cost and delay resulting from litigation was an important consideration.

I am pleased to inform the Board that we have received indication from the Justice Department that they would not likely oppose implementation of the following fee-based structure by Hoover City Schools if implemented as presented during our discussions:

¹ Except for special education students.

	1 Student Rider		2 Student Riders		3+ Student Riders	
	Per Month	Per Day	Per Month Per Rider	Per Day Per Rider	Per Month Per Rider (Max)	Per Day Per Rider (Max)
Non-Poverty Riders	\$40.75	\$ 2.26	\$28.53	\$ 1.59	\$21.40	\$ 1.19
² NSLP Qualified Reduced Riders	\$20.38	\$ 1.13	\$14.27	\$ 0.80	\$10.70	\$ 0.59
NSLP Qualified Free Riders	\$14.88	\$ 0.83	\$10.42	\$ 0.58	\$ 7.82	\$ 0.43

It is important to us and to the Justice Department that we closely monitor the impact of this equitable fee-based plan on each category of students. In this regard, our first order of business, if this plan is approved by the Board, will be to establish a methodology and process to monitor the results of this plan. This will be sent to the Justice Department. Thereafter, during the school year, data collected will be carefully reviewed by us and will be sent to the Justice Department for review and consideration.

If the fee-based transportation plan for Hoover students as set forth in the above chart meets with your approval, we will immediately undertake the nuts and bolts planning, addressing such matters as bus routes, bus stops, and all the other details that can be accomplished now.

After the details of the plan have been crafted, we will submit the plan for approval by the United State District Court.

² NSLP: National Student Lunch Program.