

Meeting with Gene Robinson, Transportation Dept. Director and Daniel Gilbreth, Manager, Transportation Operations July 25th 2018

D. Todd Philips and Pippa Mills met with Mr. Gene Robinson and Mr. Daniel Gilbreth to review questions relating to the MMS Bus program and here is a review of their responses....

1. How many children are allowed to ride the bus?

The number of children allowed on a bus is dependent upon grade and whether the bus has lap shoulder belts. Because the District cannot guarantee a specific bus will be sent to Scripps Ranch on a specific date, and because not all buses have the exact same seating configuration (I.e. some have shoulder belts and others do not), the District limits the number of children allowed on the bus manifests to 60 students in order to ensure that all registered children will have a seat no matter which bus is sent to Scripps Ranch. Nevertheless, a bus should hold no more than 56 High School students – 2 per seat – and 64 Middle schoolers as some will be smaller and can comfortably sit 3 to a seat. These numbers have been provided by the bus manufacturer, with input from the California Highway Patrol (CHP), and are based on elementary sized children. Each bus is equipped with a notification indicating how many children may be carried on that particular bus. A bus driver does not count children onto a bus and instead ensures that all students are seated, and the aisle is clear.

2. What happens if more than 60 kids show up?

Children are seated on a first come, first served basis. Once the bus is at capacity, children will have to wait for the next bus or contact their parents for a ride.

3. What should kids do if there is no room on their bus?

No child should be transported without a seat. If the bus is at capacity the child will have to wait for the next bus or contact their parents to arrange for alternative plans. If the bus is leaving from the school site then school staff can assist children. If this happens at a pick-up point, parents are responsible for arranging an alternative ride. It is possible for the District staff (not the bus driver) to check who is riding the bus on a given day, so if a situation arises where children cannot board their allocated bus it is possible for the District to produce a daily manifest and establish who should not have been on the bus that day and prevent the problem from hopefully arising again.

4. Do our children need Bus Evacuation Training?

Bus training is different depending on grade. Middle school children are not required to complete physical evacuation training (jumping from the bus). Abbreviated training will take place at the school site once a year, and will take place in the afternoon before the bus departs the school. This year it is scheduled for March 4, 2019.

5. How do we ensure the correct kids are on the correct buses?

The current Z-pass system does not have the capability to identify that a child is on the right bus or not. The Z-pass system merely identifies if a child is registered for the program and can ride one of the buses. The Z-pass system logs when a registered child boards a bus and the District retains these logs to review if problems arise. Before Z-passes are issued there is no daily record of who is riding the bus. Until Z-passes are issued, the District will assume ALL registered children are riding the buses. After raising safety concerns about what happens if an accident occurs prior to the issuance of the Z-passes, Mr. Gilbreth is working to ensure a list of riders will be provided to the drivers prior to the start of the school year. However, it is not part of the driver's job to check who is on the bus, rather it is their duty to ensure only registered children can board, and that the bus is safe to move with all children seated and the aisles are clear.

Usually the driver will have a list of daily riders but because the MMS bus is unique and because the addition of each child onto the roster effects the pick up and drop off times (adding loading and unloading times) the MMS bus does not have a roster linked to it – generally buses have limited riders on their roster whereas the MMS bus has 60 per bus which would throw off the pickup and drop off times considerably.

6. Why were Z-passes collected 2 weeks before the end of school?

Over recent years there have been different procedures with regard to collecting Z-passes at the end of each year. The procedure for the 2017/18 year should have been for the children to retain their passes to re-use the coming year, 2018-19. However, there was confusion at school sites throughout the District and as a result, MMS students had their passes collected.

Initially, we were hoping to contact families to see if the kids had their passes and then ask Kathleen Tadeusiak to order new cards for new riders and replacement cards for those children who do not have a card from last year. The deadline for ordering new and replacement cards in time for school to start is August 7th. We are working with District Transportation staff to ensure all students registered in the program have their Z-passes during the first week of school.

7. How do we ensure kids are riding on the right bus?

Because the Z-pass only logs the presence of a registered rider and does not confirm the student is on the right bus, students with a Z-pass can technically ride any bus. Although drivers should ensure that every rider has a Z-pass, it is District policy that a driver will not leave any child at a pick-up point whether they have a Z-pass or not. If a child tries to board the bus in the afternoon without a Z-pass, the driver can ask the child to go and obtain a temporary pass from the office before boarding and can refuse to take a child as long as the bus is at the MMS school site. If they are collecting from Dingeman, EBS or Swan Lake the drivers will transport a child to MMS without a Z-pass to ensure children are not left on the street unsupervised. The only way to establish if children are riding the wrong bus would be to review the Z-pass logs at the District offices and then compare that daily list to the registered manifest for each bus route. This would only happen if repeated overcrowding

problems occur. Unfortunately, there is no way to prevent children riding the wrong bus apart from changing the schedule to have both buses leave and arrive at Dingeman at the same time.

8. To help prevent kids using the late Dingeman bus to get to school and then board the early Dingeman bus home, could 2 buses pick-up at Dingeman simulataneously and then go to EBS/Swan Lake on their 2nd rounds?

Yes. This would be the only way to prevent kids going on the wrong Dingeman bus. This would however change boarding times for both the late Dingeman bus and the EBS bus routes.

Schedules can be changed at any time and requires 3 weeks to take effect. Decision will be put to the board as to whether this change takes effect for the 2018/19 school year or the 2019/20 year or at all. Both Mr. Robinson and Mr. Gilbreth were in favor of changing the late Dingeman and EBS schedules.

9. Can/should the Committee contact parents of children known to ride the wrong bus?

As the MMS bus committee is in contact with and acts as a liaison with parents on behalf of the District, it would be appropriate for us to contact families who are riding the wrong bus.

10. What is the District policy for returning riders who have unpaid accounts?

It is District policy not to re-schedule returning riders who have unpaid accounts. However, the District no longer sends the account to a collection agency following the introduction of the Primary Education Fair Debt Collection Act earlier this year.

11. What happens in case of accident?

Every bus has a radio and will contact District Dispatch in case of an accident. If CHP is dispatched/called to the accident site, CHP officers will log the names of every rider and every rider will be given a card with information and contact details about the accident. If care is given at the scene or a rider is transported to the hospital, the District will contact parents directly. When Z-passes are used, the District will have a list of who is on the bus that day. However, if a child is allowed to ride the bus without a pass or has a temporary pass there would be no record at the District level that they were on the bus and the driver would not be expected to make a note of who or how many additional riders there were that day. Prior to the issuance of Z-passes, there is no record apart from the registered manifest held at the District and with the SRBC.

12. Do kids need temporary passes?

Temporary passes are not required or needed. The driver will allow all children to ride the bus for the first week and then the 2nd week of school will be instructed that all children should have a Z-pass. As previously mentioned, Mr. Gilbreth has agreed to provide the drivers with a manifest for the first week so there is at least a record of who should be on the bus during that first week.

13. Is there a standard travel pathway for each route?

Driving instructions are given to drivers each week. These are merely suggestions and there are no set routes. Drivers decide on the route and should know it before picking up children. It was noted that each bus is fitted with a GPS system to log exactly where the bus goes and can be reviewed if problems arise or if there are problems with regularly delayed buses etc.

14. How are pick-up/drop-off times calculated?

The pick-up and drop-off times were originally requested by the SRBC's predecessor committee and have remained that way since the inception of each bus stop. Times can be modified, and we advised that if changes needed to be made to ensure more punctual pick-up/drop-off then the District should make necessary changes and the SRBC will communicate such to the parents. GPS records are often used to see if there is a consistent problem with routes and it is very helpful to let the District know if buses are more than 10 minutes late. Times quoted are departure times and families need to ensure they are at the stop at least 10 minutes prior to the stated departure time for each stop.

15. Do we need to log and report times at the start of school year?

The District will not look at GPS logs unless late buses are reported so it is important to let them know when buses are consistently more than 10 minutes late. It is not necessary to log the buses arrival and departure times specifically at the start of the year but the times do need to be monitored throughout the year. The SRBC should work to ensure that we have at least one committee member or bus family member monitoring each route throughout the year.

16. What do we do if students report problems to parents – eg: driver using phone?

Communication with the District is key. Report any problems and the District will deal with the problem as best they can. With over 400 drivers there is always room for improvement. If we have more cases where a driver is using their smartphone while driving, it must be reported and will be investigated immediately by the District.