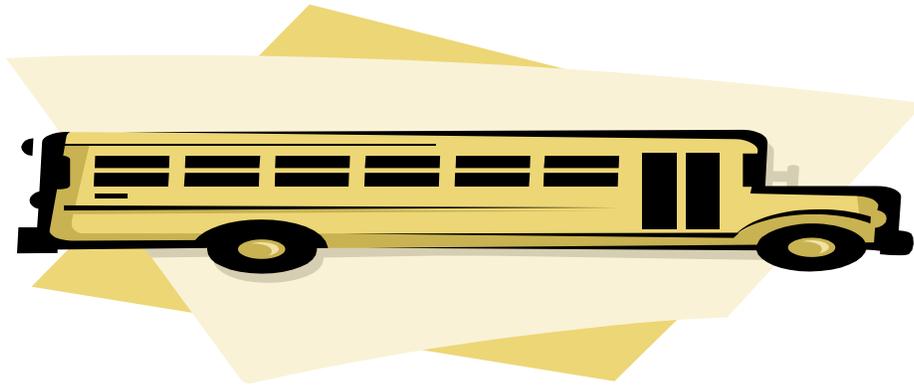


WHAT MAKES THE BUS SYSTEM WORK?



THE PEOPLE

BUS DRIVERS

MECHANICS

MANAGER

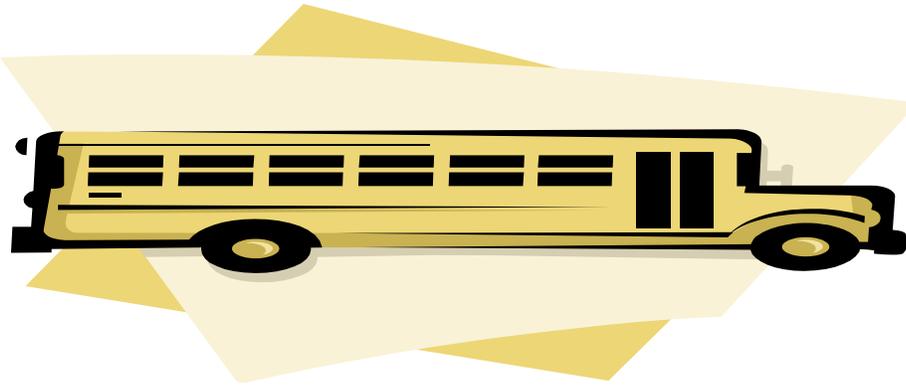
SUPPORT STAFF

THE LOCATION

OWNERSHIP

SERVICE





THE PEOPLE, WHO ARE THEY?



BUS DRIVERS: All the drivers are employees of the schools. They are interviewed, hired and if necessary, fired by school management. They are trained according to department standards, which exceed the state minimum and are covered by a collective bargaining agreement negotiated with the School Committee. Concord has a fairly low turnover, drivers tend to stay for many years and their knowledge of the town is an advantage as the drivers know the roads as well as the students and their families and vice versa.



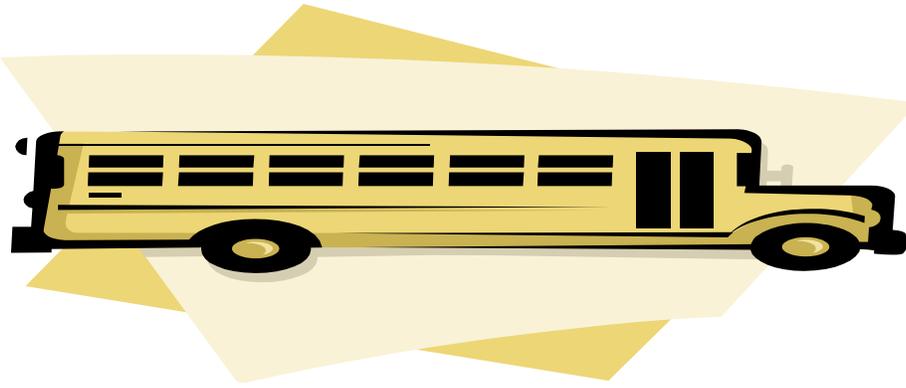
MECHANICS: The Department has two mechanics who are also licensed bus drivers. They perform all routine maintenance and can fill in as substitute drivers when needed. Because they are there on site, most minor repairs and maintenance can be done quickly and does not require sending the buses somewhere else. Major repairs though might require sending the bus to the dealer. There is a total of 36 buses owned by the two systems as well as trucks and other vehicles. The mechanics also service the other vehicles owned by the schools.



MANAGER: The Transportation Manager oversees the department generally and is responsible for designing the bus routes. As of May 2012 a total of 170 separate bus runs were required to transport the students of Concord and Concord-Carlisle as well as our Metco students and Concord residents who attend private schools. Bus routes and drivers schedules are arranged so that very few, mostly those later than 5:30PM, require overtime pay. The manager is also a licensed bus driver.



Support Staff: The secretary handles the paper work and handles customer relations. The latter includes working directly with parents and students to find lost items, determine the correct bus stop etc.



THE OTHER PARTS OF THE SYSTEM HOW IMPORTANT ARE THEY?

LOCATION

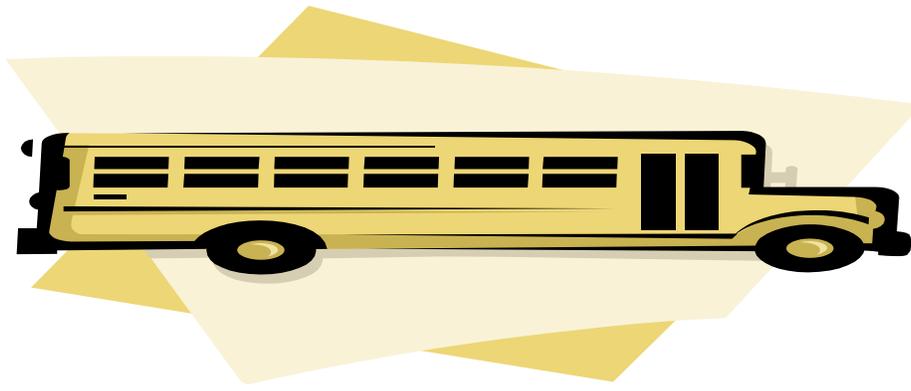
Currently the school buses are parked on the CCHS grounds. There is a maintenance building which includes 3 bays and a fuel pump in close proximity to the bus parking area. There is also a small (modular) building which houses office space as well as a day/work room and rest room facilities. Bus drivers are able to park their own cars nearby. Because of the close proximity of the key parts of the system there is very little extra driving or gas consumption. In its present location, the bus department is fairly secure from vandalism. In the event that maintaining the present location is no longer possible, it will be important to consider finding a new site which could be similarly arranged.

OWNERSHIP

The buses are purchased directly by the schools according to their specifications which may change depending on what type of vehicle is required. Since the buses are school property the incentive to keep them in good shape is strong, drivers take great pride in their buses and are responsible for keeping them clean. The buses are used primarily for transporting students to and from school and for the field trips and trips for “away” games which are all part of normal school activity. They are also available to the Town in the case of an emergency such as a fire which might require the evacuation of a large number of people.

SERVICE

Because the buses are owned by the schools, Concord is able to offer more busing services to more students than is done in many neighboring communities. Concord has many narrow streets which have no sidewalks and which now carry a great deal of traffic. Students who live on these streets are taken by bus even though they live within the mileage limit for which the state will reimburse. In other towns, a fee is usually charged if this service is offered at all. The safety of students is the primary concern. Where students do walk, a crossing guard is provided at the elementary schools. Kindergarten students are bused separately.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

POINTS TO CONSIDER

We must have school buses and whether they continue to be owned by the School systems or outsourced, the costs of busing, are ultimately paid for by the taxpayers.

Even if we decide to outsource the buses, they and their drivers will need to be accommodated somewhere. The further the buses are from the area where they needed the more expensive they will be to operate and the likelihood of bus delays will be greater. While construction of the high school is going on, we may well need to put up with less than optimum conditions but the buses must continue to roll.

THE QUESTIONS BEFORE US

How important is it to keep the degree of service we have now?

Concord offers a greater degree of service than is actually required by the Commonwealth. School systems which use a private bus company do not offer the same degree of service as we do. Fees are usually charged for any bus service which is over and beyond what is required by State law.

Are we willing to pay a contractor to retain our current level of service or do we wish to ask parents to pay a fee for "extra" service.?

If we can't keep the buses in their present location how willing are we to make a capital investment in other land and to build new facilities?

If the transportation staff are no longer employees of the Town, how will this affect the relationship of the transportation department to the schools as a whole?

If we switch to a private contractor, the Town would have no future post-employment obligations beyond those for persons who are already vested* but would this offset the increases in costs of using a private for-profit service?

**Post Employment Benefits for Transportation Employees*

As of May 3rd, 2012 there were 32 bus drivers enrolled in the pension system. Of those, 11 had vested (ten years creditable service).

Eligibility for post-employment health coverage requires that the retiree be receiving or be eligible to receive a public pension. The spouse of the retiree is also eligible for health insurance coverage. At age 65, retirees eligible for Medicare MUST sign up for Medicare Part B, but prior to age 65 (or if not Medicare eligible either directly or through a spouse) the retiree is eligible to remain on the active-employee plan.

The years of service of those vested as of May 3, 2012 ranged from 11 years to 39 years.