

April 2012

the DUTU Newsletter

Attention Trip Drivers

This is just a reminder to fill out the payroll punch information on the upper right of your trip requisition

Transportation is no longer responsible for your punches and can not make adjustments if this information is missing

The information you are required to provide are the actual punch-in before, and punch-out after times for the trip or trips. Any questions Please ask Thanks Jason

Next In-service Meeting
May 11th
E.H.S
7:30 am

Last Day of School
June 4th

Summer School Information
On back page

Reminders & Important Information

General Membership meetings:
April 19th
May 17th
Elgin High
5:30 pm

No School
May 28th
Memorial Day
Paid Holiday

Summer School Pick

Saturday
June 2, 2012
500 Shales Pkwy

Sign up sheet to be posted
Then pick times to be posted

Help Needed:

Someone to fill

By Laws & Legislation
Chair
&
Student Discipline
Chair

Check out our website at www.mydutu.org for blank route sheets, contract, bylaws, constitution, link to IEA and U-46 homepages and even past newsletters. Leave a comment with any suggestions.

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Governing Council Members:

President: Lyle Moseman
Vice President: Donna Frey
Secretary: Brenda DelHotal
Treasurer: Carol Gunn

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Health & Safety: Betty Skyles
Newsletter: Heather Bayer
Website: Jim Burns
Sunshine & Social: Wendy Skornia
Staff Development: Janet Lewandowski
Membership: Tammy Cleary
By Laws & Legislation: Open
Audit: Linda Turnquist
Field Trips: Dan Umbach
Accident Review: Cindy Moseman
Election: Liz Lewis
Benefit Resources:
Student Discipline:
Association Representative (AR): Liz Mole
Grievance: Joe Haubert

BARGAINING TEAM

Jim Burns
Brenda DelHotal
Heather Bayer
Sue Hamm
Jay Niehus
Carol Gunn
Dan Umbach
Lyle Moseman
Donna Frey
Dave Ramis

LABOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Lyle Moseman
Heather Bayer
Donna Frey
Jay Niehus
Brenda DelHotal
Wendy Skornia

List of cards that were or
will be given on behalf
of our union

February 2012

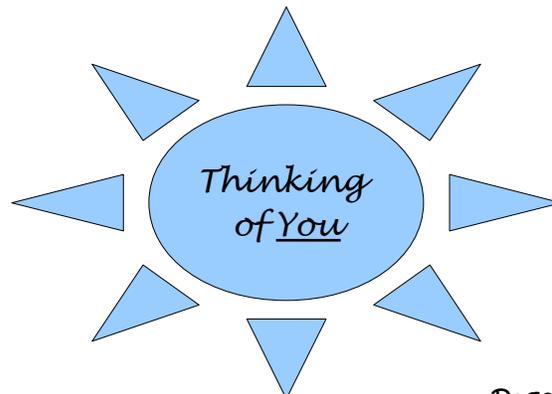
Julie Cermak – Sympathy
Brenda Graf – Get Well
Brandy Petkovic – Get Well
Frank Thompson – Get Well
Jessie Sowers – Get Well
Linda Krefting – Get Well
Carla Vasquez – Get Well
Pam Mathieu – Get Well
Bryan Woods – Get Well
Tina Drohan – Get Well
Zoraida Rodriguez – Sympathy

March 2012

Heather Bayer – Sympathy
Bob Gorlewski – Sympathy

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Mary Follman – Get Well
Mary Ellen Kasavich – Get Well
Denise Bird Sharpe – Get Well
Beth Downs – Get Well
Carla Evans – Get Well
Barb Barwig – Get Well



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In search of the Gold Watch, the Golden Parachute and an Unlimited Streams of Insurance

The DUTU membership meeting recently took place at the Ellis auditorium led by the bargaining committee, our leadership, and reps. from the IEA. Over 100 DUTU members were in attendance. Given the amount of changes school district management wants to implement to our current (but now expired) contract, there are now more questions than answers.

However, we can boil and reduce it down to this; insurance benefits and new hourly requirements to get it, out of district sub-contracting, a five year contract, and packaging of routes and salary adjustments. In other words, if you are a new hire in transportation, don't get to comfortable,

YOUR LIFE is about to CHANGE!

These topics have been discussed privately for well over a year and have gone no where. Keeping a lid on it has been the agreement of bargaining groups and management, until now. It is obvious that a cash-strapped district has a tough job to remain solvent and fiscally responsible to the tax payers. Although the local press reported that the district reached an agreement with the ETA (Elgin Teachers Association) the deal has not been sealed and needs ratification.

As of this writing, DUSA (District U-46 Secretary's Association) met at EHS to hear a litany of similar woes of change to their agreement with the district.

At the time we were hired, we're told that joining the union would be required of us, period. Unions and the concept of collective bargaining are just as much a benefit or convenience to the employer or "management". Prescribed pay rates and benefits negotiated every few years really make it easier for the employer to manage and budget for economic conditions.

When times are good and income streams into the district are healthy, union groups tend to seek more in income and benefits. The reverse is true in times of economic recession as we have seen the past few years. Our salaries are paid from funds received from federal, state and local property taxes. While all of us pay taxes, we are also employees of the community, working in behalf of our children and grandchildren. And when revenue streams go dry, adjustments have to be made through cutting costs, and that means a reduction in programs and services to the customers of U-46, our kids. We do not own the district, its buses, buildings, or properties as individuals, but collectively as taxpayers we do. In that respect we have a voice.

I have said before that the people who work in and out of 500 Shales Parkway all have a different life-story as to why they are driving a school bus, or working as a bus assistant. The biggest draw in coming to work for U-46, not only in transportation, but in the other bargaining groups is the ability to get health insurance. Maybe even more so than the hourly pay rate. There are neighboring districts that pay a much higher hourly rate, but sans insurance benefits.

Insurance means a lot, especially if you are in the AARP age group. Insurance is a high price commodity like gasoline for our cars.

The talk of sub-contracting bus services no matter how large or small, is a threat to the existence of the union, I don't know how else to put it. The fear of someone else coming in working cheaper and stealing work is always troublesome. This is where we need to do a better job of proving our worth, that an in-house group of drivers with a long standing tradition of service and value to the community does not require outsourcing of work. However, some outsourcing of out-of-district routes may help us save costs in fuel and equipment wear and tear. If we think that a private company like Illinois Central or First Student is going to make all our financial woes disappear, we would be sadly mistaken. These are "for-profit" companies, and it's okay to be profitable, making money is what they are about. They also do it by being efficient and more demanding of its employees and may have less tolerance of employee time-off. Outsourcing is neat and tidy and can transfer a lot of operations to the private side, it can reduce headaches, or so they say.

To do that and remain competitive, they have to set salary levels low and most-often without benefit packages. There are people who will drive a bus for less dollars per/hour and could care less if they were in a union or not work.

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There is an undercurrent through all of this that U-46 "management" could care less about its employees and who is behind the wheels of its buses. I would like to think that is not true. Many of our drivers and assistants have children and/or grandchildren in U-46. Many of us are products of U-46, we are also taxpayers who reside in the confines of U-46. We are the next-door neighbors and relatives of the children in our schools. We work in the community but also volunteer in other organizations, community groups and church organizations.

Our life experiences as parents and grandparents allow us to make a difference in the lives of those who travel in our buses. We do have our share of early retirees working, but I know not one person who is getting rich working as a bus driver. In fact many of our drivers actually hold down 2-3 jobs, I am one of those myself. And when I hear a driver tell me they were bored sitting at home, but desperately needed a job with insurance I scratch my head.

Those of us who are starting over in life due to the economy are very appreciative to be able to work for U-46 in transportation. We know we will not get a gold watch, and certainly not a "golden parachute" retirement stream as those receive in upper management. We are happy to come and do what's expected of us each day and hopefully more. Many of us have been here nearly a year and are patiently waiting for our first salary increase in hourly rate. We don't complain but wonder when this washes out. Our department could have a total new look in the fall and it will not be pretty. They may be some carving and filleting going on over the summer. There are not a lot of weeks left on the school calendar and perhaps we need to make a statement as the bus drivers, mechanics and assistants of the 11 community school district.

So spring break is past, we took an unpaid week off and thought it all over and still wonder where we are headed. It looks like mediation ahead for us. Stay strong DUTU!

Gary Lichthardt

"Speak Out"

Just a reminder....that we are NOT allowed to park our cars in the subdivision off Maroon Dr. It makes us look bad and we get paid to ride the shuttle. We DON'T need to anger anyone especially during negotiations.

No Name

I want to thank you for electing me to continue as your President for another two years. I have been very busy with union business all over the district. I have met so many people and made many new friends. I continue to learn something new everyday.

With another school year starting to wind down we all start thinking about what we are going to do this summer. I want everyone to know that your Bargaining team and I will continue to work with the districts Bargaining team to come to an agreement we can all be happy with.

As usual I don't mind comments or criticism. You can leave a note in my mailbox or on my time card. I can be seen during most mid-days in the break-room. You can also call me at 847-471-2642. If I don't answer leave a message and I will get back to you. Also, I can be reached by email at lyle.cindy@yahoo.com.

Also, it is a NO NO to cut though on Maroon Dr in your bus. Unless, you have a pick up or drop off.

Anonymous

Thanks Lyle Moseman D.U.T.U President

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"Training Corner"

Happy Spring everyone.

Wow, it's hard to believe that we have put another winter in the over head mirror, and we will be winding down another school year. As all of you know we now have progressive discipline procedures that have been put into place for failure to renew your CDL license or permit promptly, I have enclosed a copy of what has been put into the training manual for all new drivers coming in, for you as a reminder of the procedures that must be done by every driver, every year. I have also enclosed an article THAT I CAME ACROSS THAT MADE ME THINK "Oh my, what would I have done in this driver's seat", I hope it will keep you on the look out for the wild creaCHers that we may encounter that do not want to share the road with big yellow school buses. We have no new laws to let you know about at this time. As always our door is open with any questions.

SHELLY AND JANIS

School Bus Permit Yearly Renewal and CDL renewal

Your CDL will need to be renewed every four (4) years and you may be subject to take the written tests over if you have had a moving violation ticket on your license within that four year period. When you receive a new license you must let the office have a copy for your file. Please see the training department if you need to take the written test over at any time, so we can give you materials to help you study BEFORE you attempt to take the tests. A break or lapse in your license will be subject to the disciplinary action listed below.

Your School Bus Permit will expire one year from the date it was issued. If you were trained at U46 it is test day, if you were trained at another company it was the day you tested and were issued a CDL license. The permit has requirements regulated by the state of Illinois. You must have a two hour refresher class every year on or 60 days before the date of your last class. You must have a yearly physical and drug screen within 60 days of permit expiration date. You must fill out a certification application and with it submit a \$4.00 check or money order made out to the Secretary of State. This process will need to be done every year and if not done within the allotted time frame disciplinary action will be as follows.

- 1st occurrence: Non- Paid time off while waiting for re-certification from the State of Illinois AND a three (3) suspension of Emergency days
- 2nd occurrence: Immediate Recommendation for Termination of Employment due to not meeting employment requirements.

The Secretary of State will send a notice, by mail to the address on your license anytime something is happening with your CDL or re-certification is due. Come see the training office for any questions with any notices you receive and we will guide you in the right direction.

Remember your CDL is your livelihood now and if something goes wrong with it you may not have a job.

Lawrence Township students taken to hospital after turkey smashes through school bus windshield Published: Friday, March 09, 2012. Three school children were treated for minor injuries this morning after their school bus struck a flying turkey on County Route 553, school officials reported.

The bird crashed through the windshield into the crowded bus shortly before 8 am, showering the driver and several Myron L. Powell School students with broken glass.

While no one was seriously injured, the incident left driver and kids very shaken.

"Fortunately several staff members on their way to work saw what happened and stopped to help calm the kids," Superintendent John Saporito said. "Everyone was shaken up pretty badly, but otherwise OK. We are just very grateful that no one was hurt."

Saporito also commended the driver for maintaining control of the bus and the situation following the accident. Wild turkeys are a common sight along South Jersey's rural highways, and can weigh in excess of 20 pounds.

The turkey did not survive the collision.

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"The challenge" We are counting down the final days of the school year. Thanks to everyone who did their best to show up everyday and drive their routes. And a BIG thanks to those who showed up and drove their routes and other peoples routes. Without your help our obligation of transporting students in our district could NOT of been fulfilled. Which would of made bargaining more difficult then what it already has been. We have MAJOR challenges ahead of us. We lost several employees this year to, among other things, misconduct and 15 more due to being rified (reduction in force). We need to pull together more then ever. We are in a VERY serious situation right now. Make sure you know who your AR is and that they have your current telephone number in case we need to get a hold of you over the summer for current updates and information. No one knows what the future holds for us but it is IMPERATIVE WE ALL STICK TOGETHER!!!! Lets finish this school year STRONG and prepare ourselves for coming back STRONG in the fall!! I hope everybody has a strong finish to the school year and a GREAT summer!!!!

Thanks for all your help!!
Sincerely Dave Ramis, your fellow union member
and DEDICATED bargaining team member.

Summer Celebration 2112

Hello DUTU Members,

Summer will soon be upon us and with it comes opportunities for us to show our U-46 community that we not only work and pay taxes here but that we also care for the children and enjoy living and participating in our communities. Streamwood will be having their yearly parade for their **Summer Celebration**.

The Summer Celebration will again be a three-day family oriented event and is held at Hoosier Grove Park. The parade Chairmen have sent me an application for our transportation members to participate. Each year they choose a theme and participants are asked to use this theme for their submission.

This year's theme is '**Hometown Pride**'.

A few years ago several drivers and assistants decorated a bus for this event when the theme was 'Farming' and it was lots of fun. We gave the bus a face, straw hat, arms, bandana, bales of hay and a basket of fruit. It turned out great and was a big hit. Photos of our entry were on display at the U-46 administration building. But, more importantly, we not only won for 'Most Unusual', we had a great time, there was a lot of camaraderie and we had an opportunity to show that we do care about the community and the children we transport.

If anyone would be interested in participating in the planning, building and walking in parade, then please contact me.

Though this would all first have to be approved by management and because of the difficulty in coordinating the operation, I would first need to know who might be interested in participating before we could take the appropriate steps. The application is due by June 1.

Thanks
Liz Mole'

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Runaway Spending: Private Contractors Increase the Cost of School Student Transportation Services in Pennsylvania

Authors:

Mark Price

Stephen Herzenberg

Publication Date:

March 13, 2012

Executive Summary

This study examines the cost of transportation services for Pennsylvania's school districts, focusing especially on the impact on costs of contracting out. Using data from the Pennsylvania Department of Education from 1986 to 2008, the study statistically analyzes total costs, the costs to the state, and the costs to local school districts. On average 72% of transportation services were contracted out by Pennsylvania school districts in 2008, up from 62% in 1986.

In analyzing school district transportation costs, we control for the impact on costs of school district enrollment, fuel costs, spending for transportation of special education students, and the wealth and income of the school district. We find that:

- Contracting out significantly increases total costs. For example, if the "typical" district (with enrollment and other variables equal to the average for all districts) shifts from contracting out none of its transportation services to contracting out for all of its services, costs increase an estimated \$223,861 (in 2008 dollars).
- Contracting out also increases costs to the state, in part because the state reimburses contracted transportation services at a higher rate than district self-provided services. In the typical district, increasing contracting out from zero to 100% increases costs to the state by \$231,903.
- For local school districts, there is no statistically significant difference (at the 5% level) between what they pay for transportation services when they contract out versus when they self-provide transportation—in effect, the more generous state reimbursement of contracting out compensates for the increase in total costs.

In addition to the state's more generous reimbursement for contracted transportation services, decisions to contract out are also driven in some cases by the lump sum that districts receive up front for selling their bus fleet. Contractors also reportedly "low ball" their prices when bidding for new contracts—i.e., promise lower costs than actually result. Analysis of a sub-sample of 29 districts that privatized transportation services between 1992 and 2001 reveals that these districts experienced a 26% increase in total transportation costs in the five years after contracting out compared to a 6% increase in the five years before contracting out. Most of the jump in costs took place in the first year after privatization. Despite higher costs, districts may not revert to self-provided services because the state's more generous reimbursement of contractor services absorbs the increase. In addition, once districts sell their bus fleet, reverting back to self-provided services is impeded by the up-front cost of repurchasing a fleet. Lastly, school officials may be reluctant to publicize the increase in costs due to privatization.

Contracting out substantially increases state spending on transportation services. We estimate that if all districts switched to the self-supply of transportation services, total spending on student transportation services would fall by \$78.3 million dollars with all of the cost savings accruing to the state.

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Why does contracting out cost more than self-providing transportation services? While this requires further study, the general answer is that private contractors do not provide efficiencies sufficient to compensate for increases in costs associated with contracting out. These increases include contractor profits, the higher salaries of private contractors at the managerial and executive level, and the cost to school districts of monitoring contractors. Contracting can also be expensive because of lack of competition within the private industry in some areas. In addition, once a contract is in place, switching contractors or in-sourcing services may be disruptive, create managerial headaches, or impose financial transition costs. These transition costs give current contractors leverage when charging for unanticipated additional services or bargaining over contract renewal terms. These reasons that privatization costs more than self-providing services are not unique to the school bus transportation industry but arise with a wide range of privatized services. A quote in response to a Joint State Government Commission survey provides an illustration of how private contracting can raise costs (the full quote is in the conclusion to this report):

“...we purchased 3 mini-buses (1 with a wheelchair lift) and 4 minivans. Before...we were contracting 21 minivans that were transporting the same amount of students. We have saved over \$200,000 per year in expenses by running a more efficient bus fleet.... [We] believe we can add to savings in areas such as extra-curricular transportation and field trip transportation.”

At a time when the state is scouring the entire budget for cost savings, in-sourcing school transportation services represents a significant saving opportunity. To move in this direction, the state should lower the subsidy for contracted services to the subsidy for self-provided transportation services. Savings could be used to reverse some of the recent cuts to the state's basic education subsidy. The state should also provide technical assistance to districts to re-evaluate their transportation services, and low-interest loans to assist with the purchase of new school buses. The Pennsylvania Association of School Board Officials (PASBO) could provide the technical assistance, supporting contracting in when it would lead to large savings, promoting the spread of best transportation practices when districts self-provide, and providing districts that continue to contract out with the expertise to bargain better contract terms. Through PASBO or a stand-alone entity, the commonwealth could also create its own non-profit transportation services provider that submits bids in response to district requests for proposals. This innovative option would directly address the lack of competition in the industry and also overcome the challenge with purchasing new buses, since the commonwealth bus company would have its own buses.

This article was provided by
Liz Mole

Do you know who your DUTU A.R. is?

A.R.'s are DUTU members who are willing to help get out information to DUTU members about important association business. Each A.R. has a list of members they are to remain in contact with to distribute information from our governing council and leadership, IEA-NEA as well as take the pulse of DUTU members on matters of importance that have an impact on our work. From time to time, we will get information out to you regarding people running for political office, or ask that you call your local legislator on legislation and laws that have an impact on us.

Liz Mole'-Daren is responsible for our DUTU A.R.'s. YOU should be receiving periodic information in your mailbox, or direct personal contact from an A.R. It is important work and we need your vital information such as email addresses, and the best way to contact you.

Please help us help you help us help you! Seriously!

You may have noticed that the crawler-sign in the driver room is promoting the MyDUTU website. We want to start posting information more frequently and more quickly on important matters, social events, contracts and more....so keep an eye open and watch www.mydutu.org in the future.

Again, Please help us help you help us help you!

Gary Lichthardt

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GO to 2 by Uncle Buck

As stand-by drivers, we get to drive a lot of different buses, BIG, SMALL and the EXTRA-SMALL Chevy-Vans. Each bus is different in personality and how it handles on the open road. You develop a sixth sense in knowing how a bus should handle from steering to braking to the sounds of the diesel engines to the rattles and noises that give a bus character.

The bus gets its personality from the regular driver and were often amused and amazed and sometimes disgusted what we encounter when we climb aboard ship. A year ago I was in the process of training with Shelly Sadowski who was explaining the "do's and don'ts" and what is expected from all drivers when it comes to vehicle maintenance and safety. Shelly is an excellent trainer as is Janis Thompson.

Some drivers like to set up camp in a bus. I mean their bus. For a tall fellow like me, I often have to clear out what's behind the seat to get leg-room so I can push the seat back. Often, I graciously take out the trash and empty the waste baskets which vary in size and content. I have come to discover most trash comes from the drivers and not our students. Some buses don't have waste receptacles. A simple plastic grocery bag is often used. But I have seen everything from cardboard boxes to kitty-litter containers used for trash. The worst waste basket of the year award goes to Bus # * * *. A waste basket mounted under the dash board strapped with a bungee chord. Good place to keep it and certainly not stuffed in the handrail. However, It was loaded. I mean filled to the top with half-filled 20 oz. Pepsi bottles, and Dunkin Donut latte cups with fermented juices and molds growing in the bottom of the basket, YUCK! Then I look for the pre-trip book in the storage box on the side, only to find another three half-filled bottles of soda.

Many waste baskets are breeding grounds for bacteria and would provide a good source for growing mold cultures in an EHS biology class. It would be nice if everyone used trash can liners. Recycle and use those leftover plastic bags from Target or Walgreens. I always carry a few with me, they're great for vomit too.

How often do you disinfect your bus? Handrails, seats, window glass, steering wheel and dash board can be unhealthy areas. Then there is that dirty and mangled broom that often is crammed in the seats and often touched by the kids. People sneeze and spread disease. There is nothing anti-microbial on a school bus. Disinfectant wipes are available in the dispatch office at "base" at no cost to the drivers. I have no problem in getting a container and placing it on the bus and leaving it on the drivers seat so they get the message, "Your bus is a pig-pen".

Stand-by drivers are not "guest" drivers. When they are filling-in on a route, they become the captain of the ship and responsible for the operation of the equipment and the safety and welfare of the students. We have no problem with writing up buses that need repairs or in need of a good cleaning. And I don't mind sweeping a bus.

We're taught in training that seats should be maintained and free of graffiti and punctures. Then there is normal wear that occurs in our aging fleet that should not be taken for granted. Write it up! It's up to Gordy to decide if it will get repaired. Don't ignore glaring problems or look the other way, we have to be responsible and accountable to the "customers" we service. As a team of bus drivers and assistants, we should have the same common goals and expectations when it comes to school bus maintenance.

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SUMMER SCHOOL INFORMATION (As of Now)

Elementary Summer Intervention

June 11th – July 19th

No Go July 4th & 5th

Monday – Thursday

8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Sites: Heritage, Hillcrest, Lincoln, Nature Ridge

Student information due to Transportation by April 27th

Middle School Intervention

not scheduled at this time

High School Bridge –

not scheduled at this time

High School & Middle School Recovery

June 11th – July 2nd

July 5th – July 26th

No Go July 4th

Monday – Thursday

7:15 am – 1:30 pm

Sites: South Elgin High, Kenyon Woods Middle

Special Ed (In District) – ESY

June 14th – July 18th

No Go July 4th

Monday – Thursday

8:00 am – 11:30 am

Site: Liberty