

## **CUTTEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT 2023-2024 TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2013-14, with enactment of the Local Control Funding Formula (“LCFF”), State funding for Home to School (“HTS”) Transportation was established at a fixed amount, in perpetuity, based on the amount of funding each school district received in 2012-13 for both General Education and Special Education transportation. This was accomplished by providing an “add-on” (“Transportation Add-On) to LCFF funding AFTER all other factors, including COLA, were applied to the formula. Consequently, the Transportation Add-On remains fixed.

Prior to 2013-14, the amount of funding provided by the State for Home to School Transportation was insufficient to cover the actual costs. Consequently, most school districts were forced to contribute other unrestricted general fund dollars to the program (“District Contribution to HTS Transportation”). Because the Transportation Add-On did not increase each year, the District Contribution to HTS Transportation grew over time as costs escalated. For the 2021-22 school year, Cutten’s costs for transportation was \$139,479.97 producing a District contribution to HTS Transportation from the unrestricted general fund of \$29,918.98.00 more than the The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) HTS add-on funding of \$53,769.

Due to advocacy efforts by several state-wide organizations representing school district Governing Boards and Administrators, for the first time in more than 10 years, the 2022-23 enacted State Budget included additional funding for HTS Transportation of \$637 million. The funding now allows school districts to receive the greater of the current Transportation Add-On augmented for COLA or 60% of reported transportation costs.

### **CURRENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

Cutten Elementary School District (CESD) currently owns 3 school buses: 2 large transit style buses (1 is 84 passengers, 1 is 65 passengers). These buses traveled a total of 7,500 miles in the 2021-2022 school year. The District currently operates a total of 5 routes for all students (general education and special education students). On average, the district transports students on 44 field trips each year. For 2021-22, the District is transporting an average of 230 students per day. Transportation for General Education students is currently provided for students residing in the boundaries of, and attending, CESD, due to the need to cross busy streets and students living in rural areas within the district boundaries and cannot walk to school.

Transportation for Special Education students is provided for those receiving services at CESD. The District provides reimbursement to parents monthly who opt to transport their own child(ren) receiving Special Education services to and from school for the total miles driven at the standard mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service, and contracts with Local Agencies. Cutten does not charge a fee for transportation for any students

## **PRIORITY FOR TK-6 AND LOW INCOME STUDENTS**

The District will prioritize the transporting of General Education students in Grades TK through 6 and low income students by doing one or all of the following if the buses reach capacity levels:

- Evaluate if additional staff can be hired to add additional routes.
- Establish bus stops at designated locations using criteria established by the California Highway Patrol.
- Require submission of an application to receive General Education transportation service before the beginning of each school year to include home address, school of attendance, grade level and household income level
- Determine the maximum capacity of bus routes (“Route Maximum Capacity”)
- Assign students to routes in the following order until the Route Maximum Capacity is reached:
  - Students residing in households with an income level at or below the “low income” threshold
  - Students in grades TK-6 residing in households with an income level above the “low income” threshold

## **ACCESSIBILITY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND HOMELESS YOUTH**

Students with disabilities will continue to be provided transportation services, when specified in their IEP, in accordance with the current process. This process involves determining whether a student requires transportation, either because of the severity of their disability or because they must attend a school/program other than their school of residence to receive the services they need, and then what level of service they require, either station-to-station or curb-to-curb. Station-to-station is the default level of service in which pickup and drop-off is provided at the student’s school of residence or other centralized location determined by the District.

Curb-to-curb service, whereby the student is picked up and dropped off at the safest location closest to their home, is only provided for students with severe physical disabilities or delay in social, emotional, or cognitive development such that they cannot independently navigate even the minimal distances required for station-to-station transportation. Parents of students qualifying for station-to-station or curb-to-curb service can opt to receive reimbursement for all miles driven in lieu of taking District provided transportation, at the IRS determined rate, to transport their student to and from their school of attendance in their personal vehicle.

Students designated as homeless are identified, monitored, and serviced by the McKinney Vento (MV) Liaison (School Social Worker). The MV Liaison will work with the family to ensure homeless students are transported to and from school. This can be accomplished by providing a free bus pass for the students to use the public bus system or by working with the Transportation Department to provide District transportation on existing bus routes. Parents/guardians may also opt to transport their student(s) and qualify for reimbursement at the IRS determined rate to and from school when bus transportation is not available.

### **FREE TRANSPORTATION FOR UNDUPLICATED PUPILS**

Students receiving either General Education or Special Education transportation service, including Unduplicated Pupils -- defined as students who are low socio-economic, English learners, or foster youth -- will receive District transportation service at no charge.

### **STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

- Certificated and Classified Staff
- Parents/Guardians: Engagement through LCAP meetings and surveys.
- Pupils: Online survey to go out, TBD
- Consultation with Local Air Pollution Control Districts: TBD
- Consultation with Local Air Quality Management Districts: TBD
- Regional Local Transit Authority(ies): TBD

### **ESTIMATED RESULTS**

The CESD is not projected to change in the number of students transported. Enrollment is staying the same or reducing and all students will be given the opportunity to ride the bus if they live within the district boundaries and are on the highway patrol approved bus routes.

Board Approved March 31, 2023