

Talking Points-Please contact me at [Darleen.vanriper@firstgroup.com](mailto:Darleen.vanriper@firstgroup.com) with any comments or questions

**1. Getting Ready for SY 2022/2023**

Since August 15, 2022, all First Student employees were busy getting ready for the new school year. It all started with our Kick-off meeting, during which Dr. Gray talked about her gratitude and respect for our school bus drivers and the preparations for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of LCSD. She also encouraged our employees to remember that our kids are just that...kids who need our support in having a great start to the school day that then ends in one with a big smile.

Part of our preparations also included the annual PBIS refresher that was followed by the kick-off of our monthly “Coffee Talks.” Every month, we will schedule a Coffee Talk where drivers have the opportunity to get together and talk about topics of the trade, share best safety practices, and discuss student management strategies.

Bus Olympics are activities that our drivers need to complete in order to be signed off as ready for the new school year. Activities include taking the bus through the mirror grid to adjust all seven of their mirrors, learning & practicing chaining of the buses, cleaning & sanitizing of their vehicle, and completing a composite of their assigned asset (just like we do when we rent a car).

**2. FirstActs & Synergy**

Towards the end of the summer, Kelly Beaudry, Vince Dye, Andrea Musick and Darleen Van Riper met to discuss how FirstActs and Synergy could be best utilized to make the process work more effectively on the driver-side as well as at the school level. The idea of moving away from FirstActs and exclusively using Synergy for Behavior Management Reports was discussed; however, there are many factors that would need to be considered, such as training the drivers on how to use the new system and marrying the MTSS Workflow application with our DriverHub tablets (currently not an option). Since we did not have the time to test or implement this option, we agreed to start by giving Darleen Van Riper access to MTSS, so she can enter Major Referrals, to streamline this process and allow for timelier responses.

**3. Driver/Candidate Comparison Report (as of 08/03/2022)**

	8/3/2022		9/5/2022	
Lincoln County Bus Routes	73	Driver Shortage	73	Driver Shortage
Drivers on hand (as of 09/05/2022, LOA excluded)	54	19	50	23
Out of Town Drivers	0	19	0	23
Routes not currently serviced (combos)	18	1	15	8
<b>Other Considerations:</b>				
Cover Drivers positions not staffed	5	24	5	28
Route Monitor positions not staffed	4		7	
Drivers on LOA/FMLA/WC (Regular & Casual)	0		5	
Casual Drivers with limited availability	12		13	
LCSD & FS Staff (1 & 9) Available to Drive	10		10	

*Please note that this information is subject to frequent changes.*

As the data shows, we lost four drivers and three monitors. These resignations all came in during the last few weeks, which made planning for the new school year a challenge. Reasons for employees leaving the company include relocation and health issues. “Better Job Opportunities” is a close third.

In order to cover the open routes, we have reached out to other First Student Locations; however, the driver shortage is a harsh reality for the entire nation, and , so far, we have not been lucky. We also reached out to “retirees” and “recent resignees” to see if they would be able to help out the community by staying on until we can train new drivers...again, no luck, so far. Our go-to option is having FS and LCSD staff on the routes.

To begin the school year we have the following staff cover routes: Kim Bolden, ALM (N32); Sheila Morris, LSM (W77); Donald Ayarza, SN (W70); Brenda Porter, Dispatcher (SN3); Karen Howard, Dispatcher (W78); Mari Cruz, Tech (E55); Dave Pearson, Tech (W75); Annette Brooks-Flatt, LCSD Staff (W71); and Darleen Van Riper, LM (W76). Fortunately, we have two candidates testing this week which will relieve Annette, so she can go back to working for Rich full-time. The next driver will relieve one of our Toledo Dispatchers. For this week, our Payroll Manager, Mona Miller will dispatch out of the main office, while Lisa will woman the north office.

Athletic Trips and Fieldtrips are also filling up the schedule which is always a juggle of drivers. Majalise Tolan assists us with communications of trip priorities. What we cannot cover with our drivers, we try to either combine or refer to Type 20 usage. Many coaches have their Type 20 certificates, so they can help by driving their activity vehicles. If that doesn't work, we outsource to receiving locations...and we are off to another adventure!