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March 31, 2017

Dr. Ken Cox, Superintendent
Minidoka County Joint School District #331
310 10th Street
Rupert, ID 83350

Dear Superintendent Cox,

Re: Findings of Spot Inspection
Preliminary Financial Audit Report
Appeals Due Date: April 14, 2017

During the State Department of Education, Student Transportation spot inspection conducted on January 30 – February 2, 2017, I rode school bus routes, inspected school buses, and reviewed driver personnel and maintenance records. The following are commendations related to the findings:

- The inspection team reviewed the district's ridership. The district's methodology appears to reconcile to the student transportation ridership report.
- Buses were very clean and well maintained.
- Many inspection discrepancies were corrected prior to the completion of the review.
- Michele Deluna was helpful and courteous in providing all financial information.
- The transportation staff was helpful and courteous throughout the inspection process.

The items listed below are exceptions to Idaho Code, State Board of Education Rules of the Board Governing Education, and rules and regulations adopted by reference, including the Standards for Idaho School Buses and Operations (SISBO). These requirements must be met if the district is to operate a fully approved reimbursable student transportation program.

I rode eight school bus routes, evaluated driver skills and bus stops, and assessed district routing configurations, resulting in a compliance rating of 87%.

While riding bus routes the buses stopped eighteen times at various schools and I observed ten instances of schools without continuous and interactive loading/unloading zone supervision, resulting in a compliance rating of 44%.

"Providing supervision of loading and unloading areas at or near schools during unloading and loading of school buses. School districts shall provide an adequate number of supervisors for the size of the loading area and number of students present and ensure close, continuous and interactive supervision whenever students and/or buses are present in the loading area." Standards for Idaho School Buses & Operations (SISBO) Rule by Reference. (33-1511, Idaho Code; ID APA 08.02.02.150)

Fifteen driver files were reviewed. Driver files did not contain current copies of two in-service training documents. The missing documentation reflects a compliance rating of 97%.

I reviewed the sixty-day and annual inspection records of fifteen buses. Five annual inspection and twenty-four sixty-day inspections were missing or occurred outside the required time frame, resulting in a compliance rating of 80%.

I inspected fifteen school buses, resulting in a compliance rating of 97.48%. All vehicle components inspected may be viewed in the Idaho Bus Utilization System at <https://apps.sde.idaho.gov/ibus> and all deficiencies need to be certified in IBUS as repaired within 30 days of the inspection.

I adjusted the district's 2015-2016 Transportation Reimbursement Claim. The adjustments have been reviewed by the department's financial specialist and resulted in revisions to the district's 2015-2016 Transportation Reimbursement Claim as indicated below.

The first amount reflects the amount reported by the district, then the adjustment amount reflecting in the corrected figure.

Line 1 Bus Drivers	$\$561,400.00 + \$6,781.00 = \$568,181.00$
Line 2 Bus Assistants	$\$84,157.00 + \$5.00 = \$84,162.00$
Line 3 Bus Technicians/Mechanics	$\$99,135.00 + (\$3,444.00) = \$95,691.00$
Line 7 Other Program Staff (Identify)	$\$9,821.00 + (\$6,781.00) = \$3,040.00$
Line 8-85 Life Insurance (Mechanic Only)	$\$329.00 + (\$11.00) = \$318.00$
Line 9-85 Health Insurance (Mechanic Only)	$\$17,515.00 + (\$566.00) = \$16,949.00$
Line 10-50 Physicals/Drug Screening	$\$3,580.00 + (\$90.00) = \$3,490.00$
Line 10-85 Physicals/Drug Screening (Mechanic Only)	$\$115.00 + (\$13.00) = \$102.00$
Line 11-50 Workers Compensation	$\$31,417.00 + \$14.00 = \$31,431.00$

Line 11-85 Workers Compensation (Mechanic Only)	$\$5,696.00 + (\$197.00) = \$5,499.00$
Line 12-85 FICA (Mechanic Only)	$\$7,373.00 + (\$238.00) = \$7,135.00$
Line 13-85 PERSI (Mechanic Only)	$\$11,222.00 + (\$362.00) = \$10,860.00$
Line 14-85 PERSI Sick Leave (Mechanic Only)	$\$1,150.00 + (\$37.00) = \$1,113.00$
Line 15-85 Other (Identify) – (Mechanic Only)	$\$0.00 + \$240.00 = \$240.00$
Line 18-50 Contracted Repairs/Maintenance	$\$0.00 + \$3,498.00 = \$3,498.00$
Line 18-85 Contracted Repairs/Maintenance (Bus Specific)	$\$24,678.00 + \$54.00 = \$24,732.00$
Line 19 Utilities in Bus Garage	$\$19,811.00 + (\$1,368.00) = \$18,443.00$
Line 21-85 Training and Travel Expense (SDE Specific)	$\$1,285.00 + \$2,555.00 = \$3,840.00$
Line 23 Fuel in Yellow School Buses	$\$139,070.00 + \$552.00 = \$139,622.00$
Line 26-50 Shop Materials and Parts	$\$13,034.00 + (\$4,535.00) = \$8,499.00$
Line 26-85 Shop Materials and Parts (Bus Specific)	$\$119,404.00 + \$1.00 = \$119,405.00$
Line 30 Hand Tools	$\$1,200.00 + \$252.00 = \$1,452.00$
Line 20 Computer Bus Routing Software	$\$11,920.00 + (\$320.00) = \$11,600.00$
Line 46 Prior Year Adjustment	$\$0.00 + \$100.00 = \$100.00$
To/From School (R)	556,146 miles added not previously claimed

You can review the detailed audit report in IBUS at <https://apps.sde.idaho.gov/ibus>.

The above operational findings are open to appropriate differences of opinion. I welcome your comments and expressions of concern. Resolution inquiries related to any of the operational findings detailed above should be directed to Doug Scott (ddscott@sde.idaho.gov), Transportation Director, at (208) 332-6851 and any financial findings detailed above should be directed to Alexandra McCann (amccann@sde.idaho.gov), Financial Specialist, Sr., at (208) 332-6832.

Based on observations, Student Transportation believes the following recommendations will strengthen your student transportation program, if implemented:

- The district should conduct a training session for all school bus drivers, covering the items noted, pertaining to driver skills and routing configuration.
- The SDE acknowledges that in compliance with 33-1501 through 33-1512, Idaho code, the local board of trustees has established a set of written policies governing the student transportation system. However, the SDE recommends the local board of trustees review their written policies governing the student transportation system to insure that these policies meet the needs of the district as well as Idaho Code, specifically policy regarding Supervision at the Schools. (For a minimum list see SISBO page 47).
- The district shall track all school bus training each fiscal year. All experienced school bus drivers will complete at least ten (10) hours refresher each fiscal school year. At least three (3) hours of pre service training shall be provided before school begins in the fall. In addition, at least three (3) in service training sessions shall be provided during the school year.
- Sixty-day inspections should be scheduled on a less than sixty day rotation prior to the start of the school year.
- The transportation supervisor and business manager should continue to work cooperatively in reviewing all student transportation expenditures on a monthly basis. A copy of the current reimbursable/non-reimbursable matrix is available to the transportation supervisor and the business manager by accessing the SDE website at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/student-transportation/index.html>. The reimbursement matrix should be referenced prior to filing for annual reimbursements, since the matrix is periodically revised.
- The district should note report due dates and notify SDE well in advance if they will not be able to meet them.
- The district should design a tracking document for the School Bus Trainer that supports their certification.

In conclusion, although certain operational items have been identified as needing or requiring improvement, these items should not overshadow the positive aspects of the district's student transportation operational program. The commendations listed at the beginning of this report affirm the inspection team's assessment of the district's effort to manage an efficient student transportation program that ensures student safety.

I would like to thank administrative and transportation personnel for their cooperation during my visit.

Sincerely,



Brent Mahannah
Regional Specialist, Student Transportation

cc: Alicia Bywater, Transportation Director
Michelle Deluna, Business Manager
Bonnie Heins, School Board Chair

