

FIRSTstudent **Transportation Update**

Lincoln County School District Board Meeting General Session, January 13, 2025

Date: January 7, 2025

Dear: LCSD School Board & Transportation Leadership,

Happy New Year, 2026! After a rough end to 2025 dealing with flooding and wind damage throughout the county, we are back in the saddle to transport our students to their destinations.



Driver staffing

We are working diligently to increase the applicant flow through recruiting campaigns.

- FY 26 Wages: \$23.12 – \$27.91
- Hiring Bonuses of \$3500 for CDL S/P endorsed drivers
- Hiring Bonuses of \$2000 for non-CDL S/P endorsed drivers
- Paid Training
- \$500 Employee Referral Bonus

The data on the left represents current driver availability and route count as of 01/07/2026. Over the winter break, we were able to replace one of the borrowed drivers. One of the LOA drivers resigned for health reasons and we hired two experienced drivers who transferred from Sandy, OR and Kansas.

Route Count (current)	63
GenEd	41
SpEd	13
Type 10	9
Driver Staffing Goal	63
Drivers Assigned to a Route	53
Cover Drivers	6
Borrowed Drivers	3
Total Drivers On Hand <small>Excluding staff or borrowed drivers</small>	57
CDL	46
Type 10	7
Borrowed Drivers	3
Casual Drivers (limited route availability)	(7)
Over/(Short) for Route Coverage	-6
Drivers in Training/Testing	4
Apps as of 12/22/2025	5
Permit Pending	19
Total # in Training (Classroom)	1
Behind-the-Wheel Training	2
Leave/Unavailable	3



Recruiting

- Our current recruiting efforts include the distribution of flyers and online advertisements with the various employment websites. We have a healthy pipeline, and many candidates are still in the process of obtaining their learner's permits. We frequently reach out to the candidates to check in with them and find out if they need help with any of their pre-hire tasks.
- Not many of our current employees are interested in extra work which means that our intentions to have recruiters sitting at the Worksource offices in Newport and Lincoln City are only

Contact Darleen Van Riper, Location Manager, at 503-708-7609 with questions.

sporadically met. While past data suggests that we have not had recruiting traction at Worksource, recruiter reports make it clear that job seekers do appreciate the opportunity to speak with someone. We will continue to send folks to the various Worksource locations.



Customer issues/ resolutions

- **Driver Shortage:**
 - Our pipeline currently has 13 CDL and 6 van driver candidates. Our hope is that they all pass their qualification requirements and that we can put them all through training asap, so we can send the remaining borrowed drivers home and uncombine a few of the routes that have heavy loads
 - We implemented several strategies, including expanded online recruiting through Indeed, Craigslist, and WorkAtFirst.com, as well as local advertising in Oregon Coast Today to reach a broader audience. Additional initiatives include paid CDL training, referral and sign-on incentives.
 - First Student implemented an employee survey platform (Peakon) that allows them to anonymously give their feedback on management and alignment with our company goals. Based on the comments, management is scored; the goal is to provide our employees with an opportunity to share their opinions, so management can build an action plan to show that we hear their voices.
- **High Student Load Counts**
 - FirstAlt continues to be a viable solution for students with special needs, and HELP students. At this point, we are working with a family on HWY 229 that is particularly affected by the closure, as they cannot catch their regular bus to Siletz Valley School. The five affected students are currently being picked up at 530AM and don't get home until 12 hours later. The family appreciates all we are doing to assist them and get their students to school and from school; however, we are continuing to find a better option for these children as the 12-hour days are strenuous on them.



Noteworthy Successes

- Over the last few weeks, the driver shortage in Waldport has significantly decreased. We only have one OOT driver left and even she will be replaced soon with a new CDL driver. This will allow us to move the borrowed driver to the East-West areas as there is the greatest need.
- With the increase in drivers our ability to shift drivers into areas of high needs, we are also able to look at routes with high load counts and how we can help alleviate overcrowding. Until this point, we could only drive full routes and deal with the behaviors associated with these routes. By spreading out the students, we can decrease load counts and behaviors.



Technology Updates

- On January 5, 2026, First Student launched a new centralized billing process that will help us communicate our location finances with the Regional Finance Managers on a weekly basis. This will give us a more frequent insight into finances throughout the month. Even though the billing

templates are now combined into one spread sheet, we will still be able to provide you with the documents needed to process your district-internal finances.

- Along with the changes in billing, our payroll processes are also changing. We will start using centralized HALO Operations that will make entering and tracking of payments more transparent and accessible. In addition, our processes to request off-cycle payouts will also be replaced By HALO Operations; this process is simplified and eliminates redundancy and extra steps.



Latest news

- Yaquina View Elementary School Dismissal Bus Line-up. On January 5th, we started a new bus lineup to assist the school's end-of-day process. So far, there have been a few issues that involve parent pick-up vehicles, as they are currently not being held back until buses are in place. We will continue to work with the school to make the bus line up as safe and efficient as possible.



Important dates

- January 19-Martin Luther King Day
- January 24-Make-Up Holiday Celebration due to the Flood & Wont-out
- January 26-Records Day: No School