**Fall Route Reviews & Strategies for Maintaining Updated TIMS Data**

TIMS Webinar – Sept 2023

Most LEAs tend to be over assigned on AM\PM Runs but many of these students do not actually ride the bus. This is typically due to students, parents or schools over-requesting Bus Stops… “just in case they ride” or “because they rode last year” or even because the district failed ask about ridership before school started. Some TIMS Staff have been told “just assign all the KI, 6th Grade and 9th Grade” and we’ll sort it out after the first few weeks of school. Even the best districts, with clear stop request procedures and where deadlines are properly enforced, there is always need for extensive cleanup and self-auditing of bus routes after the first few weeks of school.

Over requests by students can be a challenge to clean up as Drivers are often hesitant to provide delete lists as they fear their daily hours could be reduced… other drivers may not want to provide deletes lists so they are not assigned any additional students to transport… while school staff may want to keep a seat reserved for a student for the 1 or 2 days a month they may ride the bus.

It is important that Transportation Directors and TIMS Staff effectively communicate the need to maintain accurate ridership information and requests for All Students. We cannot guess or assume ridership as most LEAs are experiencing a driver shortage and require accurate information to properly plan Bus Routes with a reduced bus fleet. If there are only 400 students riding on a given day, TIMS should not show 600 students assigned bus routes. Transportation Departments should strive to always have the most current and correct information available within the routing system.

With Student Headcounts scheduled for the end of September, you have a great opportunity to collect accurate Ridership Info so you can update TIMS to reflect reality as well as gather correct student headcount information for DPI State Reporting.

There are many ways to approach getting Fall Updates from Drivers. Some of the best LEAs get regular\weekly\monthly updates from Drivers and maintain good accuracy in TIMS throughout the year. This allows staff to use TIMS to solve real problems related to over-capacity buses, late runs, early pickup times or to explore solutions to losing drivers during the year.

To get the most out of any routing system, the first and most important pieces of information to have is a proper list of bus riders for AM and PM. In the end, we are only as good as our sloppy data.

Final methods and approaches to Fall Updates will vary by county, depending on what will work best for each school system. From an old-fashioned or small county approach with lots of printouts or handwritten driver updates… to using Master Spreadsheets of updated Ridership Data that can be backloaded into TIMS and PowerSchool… we can help you get the most out of TIMS in a variety of ways.

1. Providing Data and Information to Schools\Drivers for Updates
2. Getting Updated Information back into TIMS and\or PowerSchool

TIMS Passenger Lists – Alphabetical or By Stop Order

* Schools and Drivers needs to complete AM and PM Reviews\Updates.
* Cross off Students who do not ride, AM and\or PM
* Note any new students or stops not on the routes that need added in TIMS
* Some students may have slipped through the cracks

Managing and Documenting Removals in TIMS

* TIMS Staff can remove\deassign students from stops based on driver feedback
* As Students are removed, some counties code them in TIMS as
  + “R” for Removed or “DD” for Driver Delete, etc.
* A spreadsheet of R Students or DD Students can then be created out of TIMS

Updating Yes’s to No’s in PowerSchool

* With a spreadsheet of Students to Remove, there is a way to change Y to N within PowerSchool
* May need proper permissions and\or have to work with your PS Coordinator on how to do this
* Step by Step Instructions are available.
* If the number of student removals are small, you can manually switch Yes to No in PowerSchool
* Updating Yes\No Codes in PowerSchool is important so you do not get any “False Requests” and end up reassigning the same non-riders back to bus routes

Example Reports and Passenger Lists from TIMS, Strategies from Success

* Printed Passenger Lists
  + Passenger List by Stop Order – with Stop Locations, Best for Drivers
  + Stops List by Stop Order - with Passengers per Stop
  + Passenger List – in Alphabetical Order – Best for School Staff or Others
* Various Spreadsheet Options
  + Master Lists per School – All Students or only Bus Riders
  + Spreadsheet Passenger Lists with Checkboxes for Yes\No Ride
  + New Columns can be added for school staff to properly identify riders
  + Updated Info can then be used to backload Yes\No into PowerSchool and\or TIMS