

North Carolina Pupil



Transportation Association

**Transportation Advisory Group**  
**Meeting Agenda**  
**December 3, 2010**

- 1. Welcome** - Don Byrnes welcomed the group and thanked Jay Temple & Gary Buie for hosting the meeting and making lunch arrangements.
- 2. Introduction of Attendees** - there were 39 attendees representing 27 counties, NCDPI & NCDMV.
- 3. Ground Rules for Meetings** - were discussed.
- 4. Update on Physical Standards** - this was a carry over agenda item from the last meeting. Don Byrnes introduced the discussion with the background that this was discussed and nearly implemented years ago, but was stopped because of concerns from the NC Attorney Generals Office. Many other states are already conducting these tests, and the potential liability concerns are serious. Don Johnson from NCDMV couldn't find any information on the original plan after searching documents in his office. After further discussion, Don Byrnes asked for a vote of those attending whether to continue discussions on the subject. The vote suggested further discussion was needed. Don formed a committee to meet and study the subject and report back at the next meeting. The committee is listed below :

Rhonda Fleming - Forsyth County - Chair  
Eric Eaker - Lincoln County  
Scott Denton - Durham Public Schools  
Will Thomas - McDowell County  
Al Miller - Cumberland County  
Derek Graham - NCDPI  
Don Johnson - NCDMV

#### **4b. DOT Medical Cards for Activity Bus Drivers Operating Out of**

**NC** - this issue surfaced a few days before the meeting and was added to the agenda. There still seems to be some confusion regarding whether an activity bus driver needs a DOT medical card to legally operate out of the state of NC. Don Byrnes made the group aware of correspondence from 1999 that clearly indicates, in an opinion from the NC Attorney General's Office that this is not required. Derek Graham also sent a memo in 2001 that discussed this issue. Copies of these are attached for your information. Don Johnson indicated that the DMV web site will be corrected to show the correct information.

**5. Substitute Items Not Original Equipment** - this was a carry over item from the last meeting. Derek Graham was asked if an LEA could substitute replacement parts and equipment when repairing buses that was different than what was original equipment. The example was a county that didn't need heated mirrors would like to replace mirrors with non heated types. Derek indicated that his staff hasn't discussed this yet, but would try to have an opinion at the next meeting. Don Byrnes offered a possible solution that would require the requesting county to put their request in writing to Derek for an opinion.

**6. Budget Update & Status** - Derek Graham brought the group up to date on the status of budget discussions. He indicated that it was early in this process and that the only action has been cuts recommended by NCDPI to the legislature, as requested by the governor. It's too early to know what the final numbers will be, but interested parties should try to stay informed and make their legislators aware of their concerns. Derek indicated that even though the replacement buses were cut significantly, all the 20 year old buses will be replaced on schedule.

**7. Legislative Update/Issues** - Scott Denton discussed with the group legislative issues and concerns. The NCPTA continues to partner with the NCASA on items of legislative interest. Scott will try to formulate a document that will list concerns and share with everyone so each person will have the same items to discuss. Three items that will be on the list will be : 1} Tort Claim Settlement and not passing down this responsibility to the LEA's ; 2} Don't continue to cut school bus replacements ; 3} Don't continue to cut school bus operating costs.

**8. NCPTA Update** - Charles McDowell discussed plans for the summer conference with the group. As was sent out earlier by Jerry Wynne, the Asheville site & dates are set. The trade show will be held on the grounds of the conference center. More information will be distributed as the date approaches.

**9. Bus Inspector Certification Program** - Derek Graham told the group that the program has progressed well and there are currently over 350 certified inspectors.

**10. Yellow School Bus Champions** - Derek Graham played a version of the programs made available from the School Bus Council. These programs are available in different lengths and are great tools that can be used to show the importance of school bus transportation from budget, safety, and environmental issues.

**11. Equipment/Warranty/Service Issues** - there were brief discussions regarding the continued problems with warranty and parts. Time prevented in depth examination of these issues.

**12. Next Meeting Date & Location** - the next meeting date was tentatively set for March 18, 2011 in Davidson County.