



## Statement on Contract for Yellow Bus Transportation

January 15, 2020

The Board hired a firm to conduct an extensive Request for Bid process, beginning this past summer. Over 30 transportation providers were contacted and four providers submitted bids. First Student's bid, over 5 years, was \$21 million less than the next lowest bid. Since salary increases in October, First Student has hired 111 new drivers and transportation complaints have decreased considerably. About 70% of the 1048 service workers employed by First Student are of color.

At the work session last week, when the District presented on this contract, I requested that the contents of the changes for the contract to be shared with Board members and the public. This was done by last Friday, in compliance with Board policy.

I have thoroughly reviewed all [documents](#) and have seen evidence that changes are evident in this bid, with clear penalties if First Student does not live up to its obligations. In addition to increased wages and drivers, other notable changes include, driver tablets installed on buses to provide turn-by-turn directions and real-time traffic information, enhanced reporting mandates, and improved staffing mandates, which includes increased telephone coverage requirements per terminal location, increased dispatcher requirements per terminal location, and a dedicated training team to improve driver retention.

Last year, I visited several First Student terminals. I saw first-hand the complexity of this vast system. Based on what I experienced and what has come before me in the bid process- a \$21 million savings and the lack of a better-known option to providing transportation for almost 30,000 of our public, charter, and non-public school students- I support, with prudence, a new contract with First Student.

The Board and District must continue to hold First Student accountable for their service and the community must continue to hold us all accountable.

[Click here to view Yellow Bus Transportation Bid Report](#)

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