

The contract for Athletics and Field Trip Transportation will expire at the end of the current school year. The district recently issued a two-year bid for these services on October 2, 2017, replicating the existing specifications under the current contract. The bid opening for these services was on October 27, 2017 and no bids were received.

As a result, and in connection with the district's stated plans to conduct a feasibility analysis of providing all or an expanded student transportation (as reference, see FY18 Budget Book, page 16 and FY17 Budget Book, page 15) the district has determined that it is both financial and operational advantageous to acquire (lease) thirteen 71-passenger school buses to provide a share of the district's big bus transportation services and fully conduct athletic transportation services for the district.

This will be accomplished through reducing the number of contracted buses with Durham School Services next year by ten buses (savings \$768,700), reallocating existing athletics transportation costs (\$163,800), and conducting the additional charter school transportation with these routes (\$76,870) yielding \$1,008,670 in savings to fund the lease of thirteen buses (10 operating and three spares), drivers, fuel, maintenance, support staff, and ancillary costs within this existing budget. The district will align routes in a manner that these ten buses will provide all morning routing as needed by the district and will be scheduled in a way that allows them to complete at least one afternoon tier run and then be available for athletic transportation as needed. This model can be accomplished at no added cost to the district budget for next year but through a reallocation of transportation funds already existing in the budget.

By the end of FY19, the district Administration will complete its analysis of whether to expand self-operation of transportation services and forward its recommendation to the School Committee for inclusion in FY20 and FY21 budget planning, as well as for proper equipment, staffing, and bid planning. This will then allow a full year of planning for the FY21 school year, upon expiration of the existing transportation contracts.

In order to accomplish the needed services for next year, the Administration is requesting authorization by the School Committee to enter into contracts for the lease of 71 passenger buses for a term of up to five years.