

USW Local 8751 - District 4

Boston School Bus Drivers' Union
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James Folk

General Manager, Transdev Services, Inc.
35 Freeport Way
Dorchester, MA 02122

October 19, 2020

Dr. Brenda Cassellius

Superintendent, Boston Public Schools
Bolling Building, 2300 Washington St.
Roxbury, MA 02119

RE: Adult Monitor Attendants on Every School Bus for COVID-19 Safety

Dear Mr. Folk and Dr. Cassellius:

Since the commencement on October 1, 2020, of school bus transportation for High In-Person Priority (HIPP) students, **you have forced many of our members, against their and our Union's adamant objections and under coercion and threat of discipline, to pick up students during this pandemic emergency WITHOUT an adult MONITOR** to attend and supervise the life or death bus safety protocols of mask wearing, physical distancing, hand sanitizing, air ventilation, etc. These egregious violations of pandemic Health & Safety guidelines, proper Labor / Management relations, and the science of childhood behavior come in an environment of known, current COVID-19 positive cases and quarantines among bus drivers, monitors, mechanics, teachers, parents and our families.

Throughout the summer and September – through meetings with Union officers: press conferences; a video Public Service Announcement; in lengthy and detailed impact bargaining about Emergency COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures; at the drivers' Annual Route Bid, etc. – you and your managers assured parents, children, drivers, monitors and their Unions that as an essential priority, **“Bus monitors will ensure masks are used properly and social distancing is maintained. Monitors and drivers will be equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment at all times.”** - “How will BPS ensure the safety of my child(ren) on the bus?” <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/8308>

In fact, in the evening of September 30, 2020, hours before October 1st's punch-in at the yards, BPS's Fleet and Compliance Manager assured the parties that BPS hiring to ensure bus safety had resulted in “576 active bus monitors on the roster”, more than enough to provide one monitor for every bus route leaving the yards in the morning. Attorney Hayes further clarified that no more would BPS be shuffling monitors between routes and trips, which widens circles of contact, nor requiring that particular student's IEPs determine a monitor in this unprecedented health and safety challenge for school bus transportation. “The driver and monitor will be working one-on-one as a Team all day,” Hayes said.

To the contrary, when Union officers arrived at the bus yards on the mornings of October 1st and 2nd with the primary, good faith objective of assisting operations by helping to hook up drivers with monitors - who in BPS and Transdev's negligent rush had not even been introduced nor informed who was riding with whom - they were threatened by Transdev and BPS management and City of Boston attorneys with legal action for drivers waiting a few minutes for expected monitors. **MANY DRIVERS**

Unity! ¡Unidad!



Inité! Unidade!

were then and have been every day since **THREATENED WITH DISCIPLINE** if they do not leave the yard and pick up students **WITHOUT** an adult **MONITOR** for safety.

As the surging pandemic pushes Boston's neighborhoods into red-hot zones by every authorities' estimations of the day and shifting "thresholds", and BPS is nevertheless pushing ahead with its ill-advised plan to potentially double HIPP student load capacity on the busses this Thursday, October 22nd, adding prekindergarten through 3rd grade to the load next week, **it is critical to public health and information transparency that Transdev and BPS answer the following questions:**

- 1. How many active bus monitors are today in the employ of BPS?**
- 2. How many bus routes do you plan to operate beginning Thursday, October 22nd and Thursday, October 29th ?**
- 3. How many routes and trips have had no monitor each school day since October 1, 2020?**
- 4. Do Transdev and its BPS client plan to continue to wrongly and dangerously threaten drivers with discipline if they do not pick up students without a bus monitor?**

Sincerely,



Grievance Committee, USW Local 8751



Treasurer, USW Local 8751



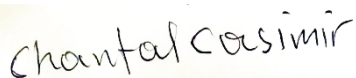
Financial Secretary, USW Local 8751



Recording Secretary, USW Local 8751



Chief Shop Steward, USW Local 8751



Guide, USW Local 8751



Shop Steward, USW Local 8751



President, USW Local 8751



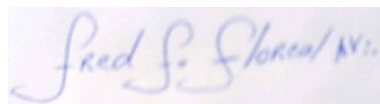
Vide President, USW Local 8751



Grievance Committee Chair, USW Local 8751



United Steelworkers District 4,
Staff Representative



Trustee, USW Local 8751