



SPONSOR: Sen. Sturgeon & Rep. Bolden
Sens. Brown, Lockman, Lopez, Sokola, Townsend,
Wilson

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
150th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE BILL NO. 166

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO FREE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND TRANSPORTATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

1 Section 1. Amend § 409, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and
2 insertions as shown by underline as follows:

3 § 409. Transportation.

4 (a) The parent of any child enrolled in a district other than the district of residence, or enrolled in a school within
5 the district of residence other than the school in which the child would normally be enrolled based upon the residence of the
6 child's parent or parents, shall be responsible for transporting the child without reimbursement to and from a point on a
7 regular bus route of the receiving district.

8 (b) A child in grades 6 through 12 may use an annual student bus pass under § 2901(c) of this title.

9 Section 2. Amend § 508, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and
10 insertions as shown by underline as follows:

11 § 508. Responsibility for student transportation.

12 (a) The charter school may request to have the school district where the charter school is located transport students
13 residing in that ~~district~~ district, at fair cost, to and from the charter school on the same basis offered to other students
14 attending schools operated by the district, or to receive from the State a payment equal to 70% of the average cost per
15 student of transportation within the vocational district in which the charter school is located and become responsible for the
16 transportation of those students to and from the charter school. ~~In the case of students not residing in the district where the~~
17 ~~charter school is located, the parents of such students shall be responsible for transporting the child without reimbursement~~
18 ~~to and from a point on a regular bus route of the charter school. In lieu of the payment from the State specified above, if~~

19 (b) If a charter school utilizes a contractor for student transportation ~~transportation~~, the charter school shall
20 publically may do any of the following:

21 (1) Publically bid the transportation routes, and the State shall reimburse the charter school for the actual bid
22 costs only if lower than the payment specified above, either alone or with other local education agencies.

23 (2) Negotiate a contract for 1 or more years for contractor payment for school transportation up to the
24 maximum rate under subsection (a) of this section.

25 a. If a transportation contract includes a fuel adjustment provision, the charter school is responsible for
26 increased payments to the contractor.

27 b. If a transportation contract is for multiple years, all of the following apply:

28 1. Funding for the contract is guaranteed by State funds for the first year of the contract.

29 2. Funding for each year after the first year of the contract is a local commitment until the allocation
30 under subsection (a) of this section is determined for that year.

31 (c) A charter school may choose to offer annual student bus passes under § 2901(c) of this title.

32 (d) Notwithstanding the foregoing, any provisions under this section, a student at a charter school shall receive
33 such transportation assistance as is made available to students pursuant to a public school choice program established by
34 this Code provided that such student otherwise meets the eligibility requirements for such assistance.

35 (e) ~~In the event~~ If a charter school chooses to transport students itself, it ~~the charter school~~ shall do so in
36 accordance with all public school transportation safety regulations.

37 (f) Local school districts and charter schools shall cooperate to ensure that the implementation of this chapter does
38 not result in inefficient use of state ~~State~~ appropriations for public school transportation and the State Board shall exercise
39 its authority to approve bus routes so as to avoid such waste.

40 Section 3. Amend § 2901, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and
41 insertions as shown by underline as follows:

42 § 2901. Regulations governing design and operation of school ~~bus~~; buses; annual student bus passes.

43 (c) School districts and charter schools may purchase annual student bus passes from the Delaware Transit
44 Corporation for use on fixed route public transit by students in grades 6 through 12.

45 (1) A school district or charter school must negotiate an agreement with the Delaware Transit Corporation
46 regarding the method of purchasing and tracking bus passes under this subsection.

47 (2) Students may not be directly reimbursed for the cost of public transportation under this subsection.

48 (3) A school district or charter school may not require a student to use public transportation.

49 (4) This subsection does not limit the manner in which schools provide transportation for students under the
50 McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvement Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 11431 through 11435.

51 Section 4. Amend § 2910, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and
52 insertions as shown by underline as follows:

53 § 2910. School bus drivers; drug and alcohol testing.

54 (e) This section does not impose any additional obligations on a school district, charter school, or the Delaware
55 Transit Corporation with a contract under § 2901(c) of this title beyond those obligations otherwise imposed upon the
56 Delaware Transit Corporations under federal and State law.

57 Section 5. Amend § 2911, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and
58 insertions as shown by underline as follows:

59 § 2911. Safety standards for other vehicles.

60 (a) After July 1, 1998, newly purchased and newly leased vehicles with a rated capacity, as defined by the
61 manufacturer, to carry more than 10 passengers in addition to the driver that are used to transport preprimary, ~~primary~~
62 primary, and secondary pupils between home and school or to school-related events shall meet state and federal
63 specifications and safety standards applicable to school buses. Contract charter buses meeting federal DOT standards may
64 be used for field trips.

65 (b) This section does not impose any additional obligations on a school district, charter school, or the Delaware
66 Transit Corporation with a contract under § 2901(c) of this title beyond those obligations otherwise imposed upon the
67 Delaware Transit Corporations under federal and State law.

SYNOPSIS

This Act encourages school districts and charter schools to cooperate to ensure that State appropriations for school transportation are used efficiently by doing the following:

1. Codifies the Department of Education's current practice of establishing a formula, with approval of the State Board of Education, to determine appropriate transportation funds for each school district and charter school and providing a percentage of that amount to the school district and charter school.
2. Permits charter schools to enter into contracts with transportation contractors for multiple years.
3. Permits charter schools to collaborate with other local education agencies to publically bid transportation routes, to establish the safest and most cost-effective bus routes available.
4. Allows school districts and charter schools to purchase and provide annual bus passes for students to use on fixed route public transit to address the short supply of public school bus transportation.

This Act also makes technical corrections to conform existing law to the standards of the Delaware Legislative Drafting Manual.

Author: Senator Sturgeon