Welcome Task Force Members & Guests

A few notes prior to the meeting starting:

Task Force Members please have your camera on, audio muted, and relevant documents available at the beginning of the meeting.

- Welcome to the public who are watching the meeting via Live Streaming.
- If the public has any questions or comments regarding transportation operations, these can be sent via email to Susan Miller at miller_s@cde.state.co.us
- If the public has any questions or comments regarding transportation funding, these can be sent via email to Amy Carman at carman_a@cde.state.co.us
SB 23-094 School Transportation Task Force

September 25, 2023

Virtual Meeting
Dillinger Research and Applied Data Inc (DillingerRAD) is a Connecticut-based woman and veteran led 501(c)3 nonprofit.

DillingerRAD partners with youth-centered organizations in both a facilitation and analysis capacity to address challenges and help achieve goals that foster student success.

DillingerRAD has partnered with multiple state level agencies, work groups, and task forces in support of legislation directly impacting youth.
Overview of Today’s Agenda

1. Agenda Item #1- *Review of Open Meetings/Reports and Code of Ethics*
2. Agenda Item #2- *Design Thinking and Consensus Decision Making*
3. Agenda Item #3- *Review and Finalized Norms and Goals*
4. Agenda Item #4- *Review Task Force Requirements*
5. Agenda Item #5- *Review Task Force Approach*
6. Agenda Item #6- *Level-Set Around Basic Information*
Training for State Boards and Commissions

School Transportation Task Force
September 2023
Open Meetings
Colorado Sunshine Law – Overview

• “All meetings of two or more members of any state public body at which public business is discussed or at which any formal action may be taken are declared to be public meetings open to the public at all times.” Section 23-6-402, C.R.S.

• Formation of public policy happens in the public, not in secret

• Ensures transparency in and public access to government
Colorado Sunshine Law – Who and What is Covered?

• Applies to all boards, committees, commissions, authorities or other advisory, policy-making, rulemaking, or other formally constituted bodies and any public or private entity which has been delegated a governmental decision-making function

• Administrative meetings (such as meetings between staff) are NOT required to be open
Colorado Sunshine Law – Meeting Requirements

Three components under the law

1. Public notice
2. Open meeting
3. Meeting minutes and transparency
• Notification posted in a public space so that everyone knows when and where a meeting is taking place
• Posted at least 24 hours in advance
• Given prior to all meetings
• Agenda information included when possible
Colorado Sunshine Law – Open Meetings

- Meetings of two or more members of a public body where any public business is discussed or formal action taken must be open to the public
  - This can include in person, phone, or electronic meetings

- What is exempt?
  - Social gatherings if discussion of public business is not the purpose
  - Staff communicating logistical information to members
  - Executive sessions
    - Only occur under special circumstances and clearly documented
• Public meetings must be documented, and the public must be able to access the minutes

• Meeting minutes should be posted on the board’s website

• CDE staffer or board director, unless otherwise designated, is responsible for documenting all meetings
Open Records
• CORA (Section 24-72-201, et. seq., C.R.S.) allows citizens to gain access to public records

• Intended to ensure transparency in government affairs

• Public records are required to be available for inspection by members of the public upon request
“Public records” include any writing “made, maintained, or kept by” the state or any agency

- Includes board or commission business emails, meeting minutes, official reports and documents
- Some exceptions, including communications that are personal in nature

Err on the side of considering all communications to be potentially releasable
Code of Ethics Laws
• Public office = public trust
  • “The holding of public office or employment is a public trust, created by the confidence which the electorate reposes in the integrity of public officers. A public officer shall carry out his duties for the benefit of the people of the state.” (Section 24-18-103, C.R.S.)

• Avoid conflicts of interest
  • “A member of the board, commission, council, or committee shall not perform an official act which may have a direct economic benefit on a business or other undertaking in which such member has a direct or substantial financial interest.” (Section 24-18-108.5, C.R.S.)
• When conducting business, members are expected to refrain from:
  • Taking actions that serve their personal interests rather than public interests
  • Taking official actions as board members that have a direct financial benefit to them personally or to a program for which they work or serve
• Prohibits votes, not all participation
• Applies to potential conflicts, not just actual conflicts
• Financial interest includes investment, employment
• Prohibits outside employment or compensation “incompatible with the proper discharge of” public duties
  • No gifts, honoraria, or fees/payment that may lead to preferential treatment, impede on independence or impartiality

• Disclose any conflicts of interest at earliest stage possible
  • Refrain from voting, participating in discussions, or attempting to influence other board/commission members
Questions
Design Thinking

Empathize: Clearly articulate the problem you want to solve

Define: Develop a deep understanding of the challenge

Ideate: Brainstorm potential solutions; select and develop your solution

Prototype: Design a prototype (or series of prototypes) to test all or part of your solution

Test: Engage in a continuous short-cycle innovation process to continually improve your design

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning
https://citl.illinois.edu/paradigms/design-thinking
1. **Recommendation is stated.** A facilitator indicates that a ‘proposal’ / ‘matter’ is before the group for a decision and the proposal is clearly stated.

2. **Clarifying Questions.** Questions for clarification are called for and responded to by appropriate parties.

3. **Unresolved Concerns.** Next, concerns are called for. (Eg. “Are there any unresolved concerns about accepting the ‘proposal’ as stated/written?”) If there are, they are responded to. All members engage in discussion to amend, refine or restructure the ‘proposal’ as needed. The group respects the length of time needed to build consensus during a period of unresolved concerns. When concerns are resolved, by virtue of a consensus-built ‘proposal’, the process re-cycles to step 1. If no concerns arise, proceed directly to step 4.

4. **Restate consensus decision and record.** The facilitator states “there being no (further) unresolved concerns, then “x” /proposal has approval and a decision has been made”.

Guidelines for Interaction, Deliberation and Collaboration

- Respect others
- Cameras on whenever possible
- High engagement from all members
- High level of trust with each out
- Assume positive intent
- Collaborate as a team to benefit our students
- Encourage open dialogue
- Respectful dialogue
- Enable every member to have a voice
- Consider other member’s experience and knowledge
- Consider other member’s viewpoints
- Avoid assumptions
- Avoid personal or professional motives
- Provide and review topics in advance
- Establish clear agendas and desired outcomes for each meeting
- Develop clear goals and objectives
- Keep the work task and outcome oriented
- Keep the interests of the task force and the needs of the students at the forefront of the work.
- Keep students at the center of the conversation

Key Norm Areas:
- Decision Making Norm
- Equality of Process
- Conflict Resolution
Goals for Measuring Success

For Students:
(regardless of geographic area, SES, mobility, race, or ethnicity)
- Equitable Access
- Safe Transportation
- Reliable Transportation
- Reasonable Transportation
- More Options

For Drivers:
- Create career pathways
- Strengthen Career Pathways
- Increase Training
- Increase Personnel

For Fleet and Funding:
- Increase Reliability
- Expand Options
- Increase Opportunities
- Increase reimbursement amounts
- Decrease reimbursement time
- Streamline reimbursement process
Break #1

5:00
THE PURPOSE OF THE COLORADO SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION MODERNIZATION TASK FORCE IS TO STUDY THE ISSUES FACING SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS AND USE THE STUDY'S FINDINGS TO DEVELOP AND RECOMMEND POLICIES, LAWS, AND RULES TO IMPROVE PUBLIC SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION ACROSS THE STATE IN ORDER TO BETTER MEET STUDENT NEEDS AND ALLEVIATE BURDENS ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS.
Required Data to Consider

1. **Student Eligibility**, including factors used by school districts and charter schools to determine eligibility for transportation and whether the factors used create barriers for students to attend their school district-assigned neighborhood public school, public school of choice, or career pathways program.

2. **Student Utilization**, including how many eligible students utilize school transportation, whether routes are at capacity, and methodologies used by school districts and charter schools to identify utilization patterns and adjust operations accordingly.

3. **Driver Staffing Levels**, including staffing required to cover routes, driver pay rates, hours of operation, vacations, and whether and how school districts and charter schools contract with public transportation providers or alternative transportation providers to satisfy school transportation needs.

4. **Fleet Diversification**, including the types of buses or vehicles used to satisfy school transportation needs and costs associated with each type of bus and vehicle used and including for each type of bus and vehicle used, electrification options, fuel costs, maintenance costs, purchase prices, resale values, and salvage values.

5. **Service Gaps**, including identifying discrepancies between eligible students and utilization, and causes of those discrepancies.
Required Recommendations for Final Report

1. **Simplified reimbursement process** for school districts
2. **Sustainable funding mechanisms** to meet school transportation needs
3. **Transportation innovation fund** to support creation of new/innovative transportation solutions
4. **Facilitating partnerships** among organizations to meet transportation needs in cost effective way
5. **Pathways and talent pipelines** for transportation providers and logistics careers
6. **Competitive salaries and benefits** to recruit and retain drivers
7. **Legislation or rules that improve transportation** *(including recommendations that will not exacerbate the marginalization of communities through separation while protecting public funds with clear accountability and transparency)*
Project Plan

Task Force Meeting Schedule

Sept ‘23

Task Force Meeting #1
Introductions & Level Setting

Task Force Meeting #2
Student Eligibility and Utilizations

Task Force Meeting #3
Service Gaps & Funding

Task Force Meeting #4
Transportation Staffing

Task Force Meeting #5
Transportation Fleet

Task Force Meeting #6
Finalizing Recommendations

Task Force Meeting #7
Reviewing Report*

Pre-reads and additional supporting documents will be sent out ahead of each Task Force Meeting

Subcommittees may be formed and meet outside of regular Task Force Meetings

Additional activities may be required of Task Force members between regular Task Force Meetings

*Work Group must Endorse Report

Student/Parent survey will be distributed and district level eligibility/utilization data will be gathered and analyzed
22 of the 27 Task Force Members Completed the Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Barrier</th>
<th># of Respondents</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driver Shortages</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>91%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation Funding Levels</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>68%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service/Route Gaps</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver Retention</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation Funding Process</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>41%</td>
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</table>

Additional barriers that had fewer respondents: District Type, Student Eligibility, Student Utilization, Socioeconomic Status, Fleet Size, Fleet Maintenance, Process to License New Drivers, District Priorities, Legal Barriers, Statutory Barriers
Break #2

5:00
There are ~882,500 students attending public schools in Colorado. However, only ~316,800 students are scheduled to be transported.

Number of students transported:
- Average ~1,700
- High ~35,500 (Denver)
- Low 0
- Median ~250

1927 Schools in Colorado:
- 1116 elementary
- 289 middle school
- 522 high schools

Other Schools:
- 264 Charters (126,947 students)
- 97 Innovation Schools (43,811 students)
- 38 Online Schools (26,637 students)
Of 179 Districts

- 108 are small rural (less than 1,000 students)
- 46 are rural (less than 6,500 students)

These 154 districts comprise 86% of the districts but just 17.8% of total student population (157,854 combined)

Total PK-12 count- 883,264

- Total FRL count- 354,966
  - 40.2% minority statewide
  - Average 44.6%
  - Median 44.8%
  - Max- 87.6% (Sheridan 2)
  - Min- 3.1%

- Total Minority count- 430,751
  - 49% minority statewide
  - Average 37%
  - Median 31%
  - Max- 92% (Center 26 JT)
  - Min- 0%

http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/colorado-education-facts-and-figures
Colorado Department of Education Facts and Figures
# of Students per District (SY2223)

- **Small Rural <1000**
- **Rural 1,001 to 6,500**
- **Outlying Town 6,501 to 15,000**
- **Urban/Suburban 15,001 to 40,000**
- **Denver Metro 40,001 to 80,000**

Background Information - Student Distribution
# Background Information - Student Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural Designations</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th># Districts</th>
<th># Students</th>
<th>Proportion of Students</th>
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<tr>
<td>Small Rural</td>
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<td>108</td>
<td>37,765</td>
<td>4.28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
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<td>120,089</td>
<td>13.60%</td>
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<td>Outlying Town</td>
<td>6,501 to 15,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>84,466</td>
<td>9.56%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban/Suburban</td>
<td>15,001 to 40,000</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>337,111</td>
<td>38.17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denver Metro</td>
<td>40,001 to 88,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>280,762</td>
<td>31.79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>na</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>23,071</td>
<td>2.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>186</td>
<td>883,264</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
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</table>
Background Information - Minority Distribution

% Students Minority (SY2223)

- 0 to 22%
- 23 to 40%
- 41 to 63%
- 64 to 93%
## Background Information - Minority Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural Designations</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th># Districts</th>
<th># Students Minority</th>
<th># Students Total</th>
<th>% Students Minority</th>
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<td>13,293</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
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<td>54,604</td>
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<td>44,224</td>
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<td>52.36%</td>
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<td>169,520</td>
<td>337,111</td>
<td>50.29%</td>
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<td>Denver Metro</td>
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<td>138,581</td>
<td>280,762</td>
<td>49.36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>na</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10,529</td>
<td>23,071</td>
<td>45.64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>186</td>
<td>430,751</td>
<td>883,264</td>
<td>48.77%</td>
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*% Students Minority = proportion of students who live in each geographic designation who are a minority*
Background Information- FRL Distribution

% Students Receiving FRL (SY2223)
- 3 to 23%
- 24 to 41%
- 42 to 59%
- 60 to 88%
- Suppressed
### Background Information - FRL Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural Designations</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th># Districts</th>
<th># Students FRL</th>
<th># Students Total</th>
<th>% Students FRL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Rural</td>
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<td>108</td>
<td>17,038</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
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<td>48,221</td>
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<td>40.15%</td>
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<td>33,346</td>
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<td>39.48%</td>
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<td>144,106</td>
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<td>42.75%</td>
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<td>Denver Metro</td>
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<td>102,599</td>
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<td>36.54%</td>
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<td>7,254</td>
<td>23,071</td>
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<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>186</strong></td>
<td><strong>352,564</strong></td>
<td><strong>883,264</strong></td>
<td><strong>39.92%</strong></td>
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*% Students FRL = proportion of students who live in each geographic designation who are receiving FRL*
Background Information - Drivers

Current job postings on the CDE website for bus drivers had starting pay ranges of ~$19-$24 per hour. (salaries are often lower than those offered by the area’s public transit)

If an individual was hired at $24 per hour and had a 35 hour contract for the school year (~180 days or 36 weeks), that would work out to a yearly salary of $30,240.

Forbes estimated the average cost of living in Colorado to be ~$46,000 per year.

- After COVID many older drivers across the state left due to health concerns.
- Split-Shift schedule turns some potential applicants away.
- Federal health requirements to obtain a commercial driver’s license (CDL) are stringent.

Common Sense Institute, Roadblocks in Getting Kids to School
Background Information- Fleet and Funding

SY 2021-2022

Mileage:
- Total traveled ~46,133,300
- Average ~249,400
- High ~3,621,300 (Jefferson)
- Low 0
- Median ~92,800

Expenditures:
- Total expenses ~290,293,000
- Average ~1,569,200
- High ~29,506,700 (Denver)
- Low 0
- Median ~198,800

Entitlement
- Total entitlement- 61,980,700
- Average ~514,900
- High ~8,728,700 (Jefferson)
- Low 0
- Median ~86,000

State Guidelines
Up to the district but general guidelines are
- Elementary School= 1 miles
- Middle School = 2 miles
- High School = 2.5 miles
What questions does this information bring up for you?

Does this information make you reconsider your priorities for the work?

What does this information make you want to know more about?

How does this information make you think we should approach the work?
Next Steps

Task Force Meeting #2: Student Eligibility and Utilization

- Input on Data Collection
- Input on Relevant Content and Resources
- Accountability for Meeting Prep
Thank You!!

Our next meeting is December 11, 2023, 10AM - 1PM