

Questions And Answers to FirstLine Student Transportation RFP

(as received between 5:00 PM on April 12, 2013 and 5:00 PM, April 16, 2013)

1. Durham Drivers (Recovery School District) are Teamster Union Members. Are the current Drivers for the Charter Schools also members of the Teamsters?

FirstLine Schools is aware that Durham has a relationship with a union(s) but I don't know which one(s) or the details thereof. FirstLine currently has a contract with Durham. Some of the charters on the list of schools to service currently use other providers and FirstLine Schools is not aware of the nature of their relationships to their drivers.

2. Is there a current provider, including vehicles and facility, that is for sale?

FirstLine Schools is not currently aware of a student transportation company/vendor that is for sale. There are however several vendors in the area that we expect will have assets not in use for the 2013-2014 academic year. Therefore, should a proposer need additional assets in the geographic region, it may be possible to access use of those assets through an agreement between the two parties.

3. Is the total number of route buses equal to 69? Which would consist of 22 single tier, 42 double tier, and 5 special education (wheel chair accessible) or are the 5 Special Education buses a part of the 42 double tier routes?

FirstLine Schools estimates the need for 5 wheelchair buses. That number is NOT included in my estimate of 22 single- and 42-double tiers. Those 64 buses are regular education home-to-school. The five special education buses, in addition to the 22 single- and 42-double tier buses, all combined, result in the total need of 69 buses.

4. Who does the routing right now for your buses? Are they using any routing software? Please specify the name of the routing software if available.

FirstLine provides our own routing services. We have TransFinder software and a part-time staff router.

5. You specified the number of hours for single and double-tiered routes. Do those times begin at the first stop and end at the last stop or do they include some amount of time for pre and post trip inspections and deadhead time? If so, please provide the amount of time included for:
 - Pre and post trip and
 - Deadhead

The number of hours given for average single and double tiered routes are gate-to-gate times based on the assumption that the Bus Yard (gate) is centrally located in New Orleans (near the intersection of Chef Menteur and Downman), equally distant from extent of the parish. No deadhead time was included in this estimate as we expect the Proposer to run routes on schedule but leave it up to the Proposer to design a system that ensures stops are made at the scheduled time, including the 1st stop. Similarly, the Proposer can design their own system for

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conducting pre- and post- trip inspections on their buses and FirstLine is in no position to mandate how that work is completed.

6. What are your expectations related to:

a. Dedicated contractor personnel to answer phones

FirstLine expects the transportation provider to staff an effective Dispatch operation anytime any of our students might be on any of your buses, from the time of the 1st stop on the earliest route in the morning through the time the last student is dropped off at the last stop of the latest route each evening. It is FirstLine's expectation that during this time parents and school staff will be able to speak to somebody at the transportation provider who will be able to provide real-time answers, such as updated stop times for buses running late or verification that a particular student is currently on a particular bus.

b. Field level supervision from contractor (e.g. Contractor personnel at the schools to meet with SOMs)

FirstLine expects high quality customer service. It is up to the transportation provider to provide the necessary management and support to their drivers to ensure consistent high quality service. The transportation provider may accomplish this with field supervisors, fleet or bus captains, account managers, or any other system that ensures regular, quality communication with all stakeholders (primarily the schools and the SOMs) as well as quick response to, and resolution of, any service interruptions. Supervisor staff should be made available to meet with school personnel as necessary to maintain a good relationship with each school.

c. Any other special considerations for dedicated contractor personnel?

FirstLine would like to have a single lead point-of-contact for accountability across the entire contract, a high level manager with the necessary authority to represent the entire contractual relationship. This person does not need to be dedicated to FirstLine but must be available as necessary to maintain a good relationship with FirstLine.

7. Please confirm the number of school days for the 2013 – 2014 academic year.

195 school days, which consists of 180 regular school days and 15 summer school days. FirstLine Schools will need less routes for summer school.

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8. Do you expect to use monitors on non special education routes? If so, how many?

I do not foresee the need for monitors on non-special-education routes as I am expecting the drivers to be trained with the skills necessary to manage their buses. There may be rare incidents when an extra adult would be necessary those arrangements will be temporary.

9. Will FirstLine Schools be using more than one vendor to accomplish the goals of this RFP?

FirstLine intends to award this contract to one vendor. However, as given on page 5, FirstLine reserves the right to award to more than one Proposer. For example, it may be more operationally feasible to use one provider for home-to-school and a different provider for some field-trips in order to avoid the same unit needing to be in two places at the same time. Or, for another example, one provider may not have enough wheelchair-accessible buses to meet a change in student population and another provider may be contracted for that service.