



NCPTA

North Carolina Pupil
Transportation Association
1621 Pinecrest Rd.
Rocky Mount, NC 27803

President

Binford Sloan, IV
Nash-Rocky Mount
Public Schools

Vice President

Patsy Hudson
Wake County Public Schools

Secretary

Kevin Griffin
Harnett County Schools

Treasurer

Brian Littke
Nash-Rocky Mount
Public Schools

Past President

Vec Dunn
Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Schools

May 4, 2017

Tim Moore
Speaker of the House
North Carolina General Assembly
16 W. Jones Street Room 2304
Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

Dear Speaker Moore:

I am writing this letter on behalf of all public school transportation departments around the state. Our organizational mission is to support the betterment of pupil transportation for all stakeholders.

Recently, the public school systems have been struggling to maintain staff in various positions related to pupil transportation. These positions include bus drivers, bus technicians, routers, and other support roles within the transportation operations. With cutbacks in funding and staffing school districts are limited in their resources to provide prompt service delivery to our school children.

In reviewing comparable positions on the state salary schedules I have observed where our bus technicians are paid on Grades 59, 63, and 65. Pay grade 65 which is a senior level Mechanic III has a range of \$2,596.77 - \$4,460.69. Comparable HVAC mechanics with school districts are compensated on Grades 65, 67, and 69. Pay grade 69 is a HVAC Mechanic III/Supervisor and has a range of \$3,003.44-\$5,262.36. As you are aware, bus technicians are required by law to inspect every school bus in 30 day increments. To do this monthly inspection these technicians have to hold a state license that is renewed every four years. NCPTA requests bus technicians, routers and other administration have their salaries reviewed and adjusted to match similar job functions in state government.

Our school bus drivers also are also compensated at a disadvantage. The salary schedule lists bus drivers on Grade 51 which has a monthly range of \$1,898.40 to \$2,744.80 (based on 40 hr. work week). Over on the state salary scale comparable driving positions such as a youth transportation driver and vehicle operator III range from \$2,179.92-\$3,282 (based on 40 hr. work week) at pay grade GR58. Data collected from NCDPI shows the average bus driver salary is \$13.45 per hour in this state. National surveys report the average starting bus driver salary is \$15.45 per hour. NCPTA requests bus driver wages be increased an average of \$2.00 per hour.

Pupil transportation employees work tirelessly every day for public education to ensure all of our students are safely transported to and from school in a timely manner. As a state that prides itself on supporting education shouldn't this group also receive the recognition it deserves? The continuing bus driver shortage across the state is negatively impacting service delivery to get children to and from school in a timely manner. Just within my district of Nash-Rocky Mount we average 7% of the buses daily without a driver. Our drivers hold multiple jobs to make ends meet, and are forced to choose between which position can bring them the highest compensation. Our school districts have lost several qualified bus technicians to higher paying diesel truck companies that compensate much better.

In closing, our association fully supports recent bills filed HB 540 and HB641 in their entirety. Together these bills will strengthen pupil transportation operations across the state.

I am reaching out to you sir for your insight and support to provide adjustments with these salary requests and adjust to the school bus inspection calendar from 30-42 days.

Sincerely,

Binford Sloan IV, CDPT
President
North Carolina Pupil Transportation Association



NCPTA

North Carolina Pupil
Transportation Association
1621 Pinecrest Rd.
Rocky Mount, NC 27803

President

Binford Sloan, IV
Nash-Rocky Mount
Public Schools

Vice President

Patsy Hudson
Wake County Public Schools

Secretary

Kevin Griffin
Harnett County Schools

Treasurer

Brian Littke
Nash-Rocky Mount
Public Schools

Past President

Vec Dunn
Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Schools

May 4, 2017

Senator Phil Berger
President Pro Tempore
North Carolina General Assembly
16 W. Jones Street Room 2007
Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

Dear Senator Berger:

I am writing this letter on behalf of all public school transportation departments around the state. Our organizational mission is to support the betterment of pupil transportation for all stakeholders.

Recently, the public school systems have been struggling to maintain staff in various positions related to pupil transportation. These positions include bus drivers, bus technicians, routers, and other support roles within the transportation operations. With cutbacks in funding and staffing school districts are limited in their resources to provide prompt service delivery to our school children.

In reviewing comparable positions on the state salary schedules I have observed where our bus technicians are paid on Grades 59, 63, and 65. Pay grade 65 which is a senior level Mechanic III has a range of \$2,596.77 - \$4,460.69. Comparable HVAC mechanics with school districts are compensated on Grades 65, 67, and 69. Pay grade 69 is a HVAC Mechanic III/Supervisor and has a range of \$3,003.44-\$5,262.36. As you are aware, bus technicians are required by law to inspect every school bus in 30 day increments. To do this monthly inspection these technicians have to hold a state license that is renewed every four years. NCPTA requests bus technicians, routers and other administration have their salaries reviewed and adjusted to match similar job functions in state government.

Our school bus drivers also are also compensated at a disadvantage. The salary schedule lists bus drivers on Grade 51 which has a monthly range of \$1,898.40 to \$2,744.80 (based on 40 hr. work week). Over on the state salary scale comparable driving positions such as a youth transportation driver and vehicle operator III range from \$2,179.92-\$3,282 (based on 40 hr. work week) at pay grade GR58. Data collected from NCDPI shows the average bus driver salary is \$13.45 per hour in this state. National surveys report the average starting bus driver salary is \$15.45 per hour. NCPTA requests bus driver wages be increased an average of \$2.00 per hour.

Pupil transportation employees work tirelessly every day for public education to ensure all of our students are safely transported to and from school in a timely manner. As a state that prides itself on supporting education shouldn't this group also receive the recognition it deserves? The continuing bus driver shortage across the state is negatively impacting service delivery to get children to and from school in a timely manner. Just within my district of Nash-Rocky Mount we average 7% of the buses daily without a driver. Our drivers hold multiple jobs to make ends meet, and are forced to choose between which position can bring them the highest compensation. Our school districts have lost several qualified bus technicians to higher paying diesel truck companies that compensate much better.

In closing, our association fully supports recent bills filed HB 540 and HB641 in their entirety. Together these bills will strengthen pupil transportation operations across the state.

I am reaching out to you sir for your insight and support to provide adjustments with these salary requests and adjust to the school bus inspection calendar from 30-42 days.

Sincerely,

Binford Sloan IV, CDPT
President
North Carolina Pupil Transportation Association



NCPTA

North Carolina Pupil
Transportation Association
1621 Pinecrest Rd.
Rocky Mount, NC 27803

President

Binford Sloan, IV
Nash-Rocky Mount
Public Schools

Vice President

Patsy Hudson
Wake County Public Schools

Secretary

Kevin Griffin
Harnett County Schools

Treasurer

Brian Littke
Nash-Rocky Mount
Public Schools

Past President

Vec Dunn
Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Schools

March 17, 2017

Rick Horner
Senator, District 11
North Carolina General Assembly
16 W. Jones Street Room 2106
Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

Tom McInnis
Senator, District 25
North Carolina General Assembly
300 N. Salisbury Street, Room 620
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

John A. Torbett
Representative, District 108
North Carolina General Assembly
300 N. Salisbury Street, Room 538
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

Dear Honorable Members of the Legislature:

I am writing this letter as a follow-up to discussions that have been held with you in regards to compensation for public school bus drivers and school bus technicians. Our North Carolina Pupil Transportation Association (NCPTA) Advisory Council has endorsed their support to improve pupil transportation across all school districts in the state. Association members Scott Denton of Durham Public Schools and Don Byrnes of our association have helped spearhead this effort.

Recently, the public school systems have been struggling to maintain staff in various positions related to pupil transportation. These positions include bus drivers, bus technicians, routers, and other support roles within the transportation operations. With cutbacks in funding and staffing school districts are limited in their resources to provide prompt service delivery to our school children. Attached to this letter are several sources of data that will show our valued staff members deserve higher compensation levels.

In regards to the bus drivers, data provided by NCDPI show that the average hourly rate of pay across the state is currently \$13.45. The school districts reported total daily compensation of \$798,227.64 for bus drivers in October, 2016. A recent nationwide survey conducted in November 2016 by School Bus Fleet Magazine shows that the average starting hourly rate for drivers is \$15.51. This figure is \$2.06 higher per hour than our state average for all bus drivers. NCPTA is proposing the North Carolina General Assembly increase average hourly wages for all public school bus drivers by \$2.00. This would equate to an increase in funding of approximately \$118,654.16 per day and \$21,951,019.60 per school year (185 day calendar). We feel this needed compensation will support higher standards in our educational system and attract more professionals.

Our bus technicians also are falling behind in compensation as well. State salary scales from NCDPI show that a bus technician I (Grade 59) start at \$12.24 per hour; a bus technician II (Grade 63) start at \$14.00 per hour; and a bus technician III (Grade 65) start at \$14.98 per hour. Comparable HVAC mechanics with NC school districts are compensated on Grades 65, 67, and 69. Pay grade 69 is a HVAC Mechanic III/Supervisor and has a starting hourly rate of \$17.32. Data obtained from the State Office of Human Resources also paints a picture of other similar positions receiving higher levels of compensation in state government. A recent national survey conducted by School Bus Fleet Magazine in March of 2016 reports the average starting pay for school bus technicians is now \$17.96 per hour. NCPTA is proposing that the North Carolina General Assembly increase average hourly wages for all levels of school bus technicians by \$2.00. We feel this needed compensation will support higher standards in our educational system and attract more professionals.

Pupil transportation employees work tirelessly every day for public education to ensure all of our students are safely transported to and from school in a timely manner. The continuing bus driver shortage across the state is negatively impacting service delivery to get children to and from school in a timely manner. Just within my district of Nash-Rocky Mount we average 7% of the buses daily without a driver. Our drivers hold multiple jobs to make ends meet, and are forced to choose between which position can bring them the highest compensation. There has also been a bus technician II position open in my school district for 10 months now without any qualified applicants due to a low salary range. We have lost several qualified technicians to higher paying diesel truck companies that compensate much better.

Our association is reaching out to you gentlemen for your leadership and support to provide adjustments with the salary schedules for these groups of employees. I appreciate the opportunity to talk about the issues and will pledge my assistance any way possible. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Binford Sloan IV". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Binford Sloan IV, CDPT
President
North Carolina Pupil Transportation Association
Director of Transportation
Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools
252-462-2480 office
252-908-3272 cell