

## Talking Points for Nonpublic School Transportation

- Nonpublic school transportation must currently be provided at \$884.00 per student or less. The ceiling has not been raised since the 2007-2008 school year and continues at that figure under the Governor's proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2018.
- Most nonpublic school transportation is provided by private bus companies. Many of the companies either do not bid on a route at \$884.00 or less or have already indicated that they can only bid at a higher rate.
- Without transportation, parents are often unable to get their children to school, even though an aid-in-lieu amount is paid to the parent for \$884.00. Many of these parents work two and three jobs in order to cover the nonpublic school tuition. When a bus route is cancelled because of the bid ceiling, many nonpublic school students are forced to transfer to a public school at greater taxpayer expense. **It is important to note that no public school student is ever denied transportation as a result of the cost.**
- It would be possible to shift money from another Budget account that is over-funded and transfer it to the cost of increasing nonpublic school transportation. Districts and private bus company operators indicate that the reason for their inability to run a route at or below the maximum per-pupil amount is that, in spite of reductions in fuel costs in recent years, drivers' salaries and insurance premiums have increased.

*The effort to increase the ceiling for nonpublic school transportation can be made in various ways including class projects for letter writing and visits to appropriate legislators.*

*Any trips to Trenton made between now and June by individual classes should include an opportunity to speak to legislators about the status of nonpublic school transportation.*