

2ND QUARTER STAM NEWS

Special points of interest:

- Welcome
- Driver Shortage
- Convention and Trade Show
- SBDI Course
- Lawsuits

Welcome to the second issue of the Newsletter of 2021 from the STAM office. We are re-generating the newsletter to share the accomplishments of the group over the last 3 months and trying to keep everyone informed of the many tasks being worked on. Hopefully you continue to find these informative.

Once again, the last 3 months were anything but boring for everyone. We saw DESE finally set opening dates for schools. Although it was a phased in start, it was still a good sign for all of our members that provide transportation services. They also reached out to us for a list of districts who did not pay for the end of the fiscal 2021 school year. They were using the data to identify districts that claimed they could not get transportation for their students as a reason for not meeting opening dates. Also, with DESE dropping the seating restrictions allowing full capacity on buses, everyone was able to work with their districts to meet the demand for transporting students. A great job by everyone!



Driver Shortage

With schools opening up, a problem everyone has been dealing with for years is now visible to all to see. The problem is hiring school bus drivers to keep up with the demand. There were many reasons the problem existed, but one thing was clear, it was not the problem of any available jobs. With the Federal Unemployment supplement of \$300 extra a

week, many people decided to stay home with the extra money, giving them more income than working. STAM participated in many interviews highlighting this to the press as well as school districts. To help bring in additional staff, STAM took on the major task of advertising on social media targeting certain demographics including retirees and young

mothers, to name a few, in hopes of bringing candidates to our members.

The campaign resulted in thousands of clicks leading candidates to schoolbus.org where STAM member companies are listed that have open positions. The driver shortages are not unique to Massachusetts, which is why David Strong,

STAM President, was asked to participate in an NSTA presentation on how the problem is being addressed here as well as in other states. Many thanks to David, for stepping up and taking care of this, as well as keeping STAM a valuable member of NSTA.

Convention and Trade Show



School Transportation Association of Massachusetts
47th Annual Convention & Trade Show



Sea Crest Beach Hotel, Old Silver Beach, North Falmouth, MA

July 25 - 28, 2021
Sea Crest Beach Hotel
Old Silver Beach on Cape Cod

Plans are well under way for STAM's 47th Annual Convention and Trade show. I'm sure everyone is excited to finally get together and discuss the many obstacles we still need to overcome. The speakers are lined up to hopefully provide some valuable information for all who attend. The speakers for Monday are Sgt. Gary Cederquist from the State Police, Gretchen Daley from the RMV, Matt Poirier from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration with Margaret Rohanna filling the afternoon up with valuable information for all the SBDI's in attendance. Also on Monday will be the Annual STAMBLE golf tournament to start the day

and to end it the popular clam-bake dinner.

Tuesday starts with our traditional Trade Show. We hope everyone will come out to support the many vendors in attendance. Margaret Rohanna will once again be providing our members with information they will need to train new drivers. Our guest speaker for lunch will be Colleen Ogilvie, Acting Registrar, who will give an update on everything Registry and, with her team, answer questions. The afternoon will kick off with Shenan Pellegrini from CFP Law Group and will discuss worker compensation issues from the past year and moving forward. Pat Gipps, well known to all our members

from USI/Future Comp Insurance, will conduct a safety training session which should be an informative session for all. While Pat is conducting her safety training, Joe Ambash who has spoken at our convention in the past, will conduct a round table on employment law with all owners.

Wednesday will be the STAM Annual Meeting with the election of the officers for the Association followed by the STAM Annual Workers Comp meeting.

SBDI Course

Even with state restrictions in place, we were able to run two successful SBDI courses in the month of April. Both courses were full with 25 people attending each class.

With the state of emergency lifted, we are now able to conduct full SBDI courses. We currently have an opportunity for anyone wanting to be a new School Bus Driver instructor scheduled for September 10 – September 12. Registration is open on the STAM website schoolbus.org.



Lawsuits

The two lawsuits regarding payment from School Districts for School Bus services rendered continue to slowly wind their way thru the courts. In one of the lawsuits the judge did not allow the city's request to dismiss the lawsuit and will hear the case.