

September 25, 2019

Dear Robbinsdale Area Schools Families,

As the school year is now in full swing, First Student would like to address some of the concerns and challenges the students, families, and staff of Robbinsdale Area Schools have faced with transportation. We want to begin by stating the first few weeks of service are not what your community expects of us -- or we expect of ourselves. We understand, appreciate and share the frustration felt by all parties. Our full focus is working with your district to establish the highest standard of transportation service for the parents and students of Robbinsdale Area Schools (RAS), providing for the safe and-on time transportation of all students. We appreciate being an integral part of your community.

There is currently a nationwide shortage of commercial and school bus drivers. First Student has felt the impact of this shortage across the state of Minnesota and our Robbinsdale location. Because of our dedication to safety, including 50+ hours of in-classroom and behind-wheel-training coupled with astringent background checks, we are working hard to ensure the pipeline of applications remains steady throughout the school year. We understand that this shortage impacts families and schools and have responded to our discussions with your district leaders by taking the following steps to minimize its impact:

- **More efficient bus routing**
  - All bus routes continue to be reviewed with the district to consolidate where possible.
  - Fewer buses on the road means that students may have a slightly longer ride and buses will be closer to capacity.
- **Driver support from surrounding communities**
  - We continue working with surrounding First Student locations to provide drivers who cover open routes for Robbinsdale Area Schools.
  - All of our drivers are fully trained and professionally certified. Since drivers may not be from this area, we are working to ensure they have proper route training.
- **Continuous recruiting efforts**
  - First Student will continue to host career fairs, open houses, online job postings, and other events to recruit new employees.
  - Information on our competitive wages and bonuses, as well as methods to apply if interested, is included in the attached flyer.

To improve the communication of route timing with parents and families, First Student is launching a new bus tracking application that will take the place of MyStop, called FirstView. The FirstView platform allows for real-time updates from your district transportation office and schools, which means you will receive more reliable information pertaining to your student's bus ride. We anticipate the app will be available for download and use in November. Additional updates will be communicated in the weeks ahead.

Again, First Student is committed to providing the safest school transportation available and we appreciate the trust you place in us to transport your students. Our goal is to continue working with RAS staff to improve the service we provide and reduce delays. Thank you for your continued support and patience as we work through these challenges.

Respectfully,

First Student Management Team

