

Transportation Recommendation: Petermann Bus FAQ / Key Employee and Operational Highlights

Why is the District recommending Petermann?

The recommendation is based on overall value, not cost alone. Petermann's proposal provides strong support in several key areas, including daily transportation operations, employee transition, maintenance, technology, compliance, route coverage, and long-term accountability.

Petermann specializes in student transportation. As they stated during the review process, **"This is all we do."** They are experts in public school transportation.

Will current drivers and aides lose the opportunity to continue serving YCSD students?

Qualified current drivers and aides will have the opportunity to transition to Petermann and continue serving YCSD students.

This means students may continue seeing many of the same familiar faces who have safely transported them each day, while the District gains a more structured and accountable transportation management model.

Will drivers and aides remain in SERS?

Yes. Current information indicates that employees who transition to Petermann will remain in SERS.

Employees will continue paying their employee contribution, and Petermann will pay the employer contribution.

What happens to health insurance?

Employees may remain on the District's health benefits for the remainder of the current collective bargaining agreement. After that expiration they will have the opportunity to begin being on Petermann's Insurance.

Employees would continue paying their current 10% share of health insurance. The District and Petermann are working through the final structure to ensure the process is handled correctly.

Will drivers and aides remain union employees?

Yes. Drivers and aides who are currently represented by AFSCME would remain part of the union.

When the current collective bargaining agreement expires, June 30, 2028, employees would have the opportunity to bargain through AFSCME with Petermann, rather than with the District.

What happens to sick and personal leave?

For the remainder of the current collective bargaining agreement, employees would continue receiving the same amount of sick and personal leave going forward.

Accumulated sick leave balances do not transfer to Petermann. The District will need to determine, with legal guidance, whether those balances are banked for future public employment, paid out at an allowable rate, or otherwise handled under the CBA and applicable law.

What is the biggest change for employees?

The biggest operational change is the workday structure.

Under Petermann:

- Employees would be paid for a 6-hour workday
- Employees would work a full 6 hours
- Time worked over 6 hours would be paid for time worked
- Overtime would be calculated weekly, not daily
- Petermann does not use stretch pay
- Drivers who do not work during the summer months may be eligible for unemployment during that period

This creates a more accountable structure while still providing a pathway for current qualified employees to continue working.

What costs are included in Petermann's proposal?

Petermann's proposal includes several items that currently create additional District cost or operational responsibility.

Key highlights include:

- Transportation technology costs are included with the proposal
 - More than \$100,000 in District technology renewal costs would no longer need to be renewed separately
- Maintenance repairs up to \$2,500 per repair included
- Repairs over \$2,500 would be treated as pass-through costs
- Operational management, route coverage, compliance, and daily transportation oversight included

Who owns transportation problems under this model?

Petermann has stated that it will own the daily transportation operation.

This includes:

- Driver coverage
- Attendance/call-off management
- Route coverage
- Student transportation behavior concerns
- Compliance
- Maintenance coordination
- Dispatch and day-to-day operational issues

Major student-impacting issues would still be communicated to the District, but the daily operational ownership would shift to Petermann.

What happens if drivers call off or staffing is short?

Petermann has experience supporting districts during staffing shortages. In a recent transition shared by a reference district, the company brought in outside driver support at no cost to the district to ensure routes were covered.

This type of operational depth is one of the reasons the recommendation is being made.

Will high school busing be restored?

High school transportation will be an immediate priority during transition planning.

The District has asked Petermann to quickly evaluate high school transportation options, including:

- Route structure
- Potential Hub stops
- Eligibility
- Timing
- Staffing needs
- Fleet needs

While the final model will be determined after analysis, the District anticipates implementing at least a targeted high school transportation option with Hub stops for students attending the Youngstown High School and Youngstown Rayen Early Colleges for the 2026–2027 school year, while also evaluating whether full high school transportation can be restored.

Why is outsourcing being recommended instead of continuing the current model?

The current transportation model requires the District to manage significant daily operational challenges, including staffing coverage, attendance issues, route coverage, compliance, maintenance, technology, and contractor coordination.

The recommendation creates one clear point of accountability with a company whose core business is student transportation.

This is not just a vendor change. It is a shift to a more stable, accountable, and professionally managed transportation structure.

What staffing and support structure is included?

Petermann's proposal includes both a local operating team and regional/corporate support structure. The proposed structure includes:

Local YCSD Transportation Support

- General Manager
- Office Administrator / Compliance Coordinator
- Safety and Training Supervisor
- Dispatcher
- Router
- Bus Drivers
- Bus Monitors / Aides
- Maintenance support

Regional and Corporate Support

- Senior Vice President of Operations, Great Lakes Area
- Vice President of Operations / Region Manager
- Regional Manager
- Regional Maintenance Manager
- Safety support
- Employee relations support
- Customer satisfaction monitoring
- Operational trend review
- Audit and compliance support

This structure is intended to provide YCSD with daily local support while also giving the District access to broader transportation expertise, backup support, compliance knowledge, maintenance oversight, and operational accountability.

What did reference districts share?

As part of the review process, District representatives contacted other districts that have worked with Petermann or its parent company during similar transportation transitions.

Feedback received was consistently positive, particularly regarding the transition process and the working relationship after implementation. References shared that:

- The transition was well-organized and well-supported.
- Petermann leadership was actively involved, visible, and responsive.
- Petermann remained present and engaged throughout the startup process.
- Districts with similarly aggressive timelines reported that Petermann understood the urgency and committed the necessary support to make the transition successful.
- References consistently described the relationship as a **partnership**, not simply a vendor contract.
- References emphasized that, even with a lot to accomplish in a short period of time, Petermann ensured the work was completed and transportation service was ready.

This feedback supports the District's confidence that Petermann has the experience, structure, responsiveness, and partnership mindset needed to manage a fast and complex transition.

Bottom Line

The recommendation to partner with Petermann provides:

- A pathway for qualified current drivers and aides to continue serving YCSD students
- Continued SERS participation
- Continued access to District health benefits for the remainder of the CBA
- Continued union representation
- Included transportation technology
- Included maintenance repairs up to \$2,500
- Clearer operational accountability
- Immediate evaluation of high school transportation options
- A more stable structure for students, families, and schools

The goal is simple: **safe, reliable, accountable transportation for YCSD students every day.**