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# **UPDATE: Implementation of the New Student Transportation Funding System**

**September, 2014**

Authorizing legislation: RCW 28a.160.1921

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.160.1921>

**K–12 Financial Resources**

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## **Executive Summary**

Implementation of the new student transportation funding system is continuing smoothly. The estimated school district allocation for transportation operations for the 2014–15 school year based on 2013–14 data will be used as the allocation basis for the September 2014 through January 2015 time period. The February allocation will be adjusted to actual reported data from the Spring 2014, Fall 2014 and Winter 2015 reporting periods.

## **Background**

The 2010 Washington State Legislature passed Substitute House Bill 2776, which set the initial implementation date for the new Student Transportation Allocation Reporting System (STARS) as September 1, 2011. The General Instructions for Data Collection and the Detailed Guidance for Data Collection are available on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) website, under “STARS Reference Material” at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/transportation/STARS/default.aspx>. The STARS system requires school districts to submit three reports per school year with the first due at the end of October, the second due February 1 and the third due May 1. The results of the reports are available on OSPI’s website on the STARS page referenced above, under “Quarterly Reports.”

## **Update Status**

Estimated amounts for district transportation allocations for the 2014–15 school year based on data reported for the 2013–14 school year will be used for the September 2014 through January 2015 allocation payments with the adjustments to actual allocation taking place at the end of February.

The regional transportation coordinators will be conducting training on the ridership reporting requirements in September 2014. The most significant addition to the reporting requirements is a fillable form that districts will email to the regional coordinator that provides verification of submitted data. In particular, districts will report the three day count period chosen, the total students transported on those three days, and the middle value day selected for reporting to OSPI via the STARS online reporting system. This will allow the regional coordinators to review the proper selection of the middle value day and provide the auditors with documentation of the count period.

The regional transportation coordinators are in the process of conducting the required reviews of districts with STARS efficiency system ratings less than 90%. There are three variations in the reports: a report formatted in a similar manner to the initial reviews done after the rating release in March of 2013, a report formatted to attempt to identify any operational changes made that resulted in the increase of efficiency rating by those districts less than 90% last year and now above 90%; and a report that reviews the status of districts that continue below 90%.

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