

The Buses are Here!... The Buses are Here!

We have had an exciting week in WUSD with the arrival of the first new buses, which were funded through the Health & Safety Bond. In total, the district will be taking receipt of 19 new buses over the course of the next month or so.

The majority of the new buses carry 77 passengers and are considered conventional in design (they have a hood in the front). We selected these buses due to the fact that they are the most fuel efficient and reliable on the market. An added benefit will be that with one consistent bus model, maintenance and repairs will be made much easier. Our certified diesel mechanic will be trained on all aspects of this bus model and will be able to stock fewer parts due to consistency of design.

Although the new buses are designed with many new features which make operation safer for drivers and students, there are three components I would like to further highlight.

The first component is a “child check system”. The system is designed in a manner which requires the bus driver to walk the aisle all of the way to the back of the bus, checking for sleeping students, prior to leaving the bus. If a certain button at the back of the bus is not pushed prior to the driver leaving the vehicle the horn will sound and the headlights will flash, alerting the driver (or others) that the bus was not checked for students.

A second feature is that each bus is outfitted with four security cameras, which are designed to cover all internal portions of the bus. The addition of this camera system reduces disciplinary issues on the bus, but also documents any potential issues which might occur.

A final component is an upgraded a/c system. Over the years, when temperatures can reach as high as 115 degrees, we have received reports from parents of students who would suffer heat related issues due to, in some cases, hour long+ bus rides. The normal a/c systems which are put on buses are designed for regions of the country which do not exceed 90 degrees. As we all know we can have many days during the spring, summer and fall which might exceed this temperature range. The upgraded a/c system should keep the buses cool for both our students and drivers, again, enhancing safety for all involved.

As a final note, we will be holding a “Bus Open House” at Hassayampa Elementary School on Thursday, April 13, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. for all who are interested. Refreshments will be served so please put this time on your calendar!