



# Memorandum

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TO : To the members of the House and Senate Interim Committees on Education

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FROM : Richard Wilson, Assistant Director for Research Services

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DATE : August 12, 2014

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SUBJECT : K-12 Student Transportation Survey per ACT 1288 of 2013

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PROJECT #: 14-005

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## The Purpose of this Report

**ACT 1288 of 2013** required the Arkansas Department of Education and the Bureau of Legislative Research to jointly conduct a survey of all Arkansas school districts in order to collect information associated with the school bus operations within the state of Arkansas. General information was collected by a web-based survey during the spring and summer of 2013 that included bus routes, bus capacities, route miles and an assessment of the students that actually ride the bus. Among the questions in the survey, the primary focus was targeted toward the issue of student daily travel time by the following request:

"The longest period of time traveled one-way for a student on each route".

This question was included pursuant to discussions that took place during the Regular Session of 2013 that inquired about the amount of time Arkansas students are on the bus each day and whether a time limit should be imposed. In addition, if such a time limit were imposed, what would be the district and statewide fiscal impact of the limitation?

## Methodology

Act 1288 required all Arkansas school districts to report the transportation information to the Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation (a Division of the Arkansas Department of Education) and, in turn, required the division to make the information available to the Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR). The BLR was then mandated to provide a report for the purpose of compilation and presentation to the Committees on Education for their consideration in the 2014 adequacy study.

All school districts complied and responded to the survey by July 15, 2014. The information was provided to the division where it was cleaned and organized into a conventional data set. The BLR then ran the data through common statistical procedures in order to provide the results to the Committees.

## Results

Act 1288 specifically required the survey to collect replies to 13 questions associated with student transportation data or the related costs of time-limited options in district transportation service provisions.

The Act and the reply summary are attached to this memorandum.

1 State of Arkansas  
2 89th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2013  
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As Engrossed: H3/28/13

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 2095

5 By: Representative Murdock  
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## For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE REPORTING AND REVIEW OF DATA  
9 AND INFORMATION TO ASSIST THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN  
10 DETERMINING WHETHER TO ESTABLISH A MAXIMUM STUDENT  
11 TRANSPORTATION TIME; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
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### Subtitle

14 TO REQUIRE THE REPORTING AND REVIEW OF  
15 DATA AND INFORMATION TO ASSIST THE  
16 GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN DETERMINING WHETHER  
17 TO ESTABLISH A MAXIMUM STUDENT  
18 TRANSPORTATION TIME.  
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22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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24 SECTION 1. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. DO NOT CODIFY.

25 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

26 (1) It is the duty of the State of Arkansas to provide a  
27 general, suitable, and efficient system of free public schools to the  
28 children of the state under Arkansas Constitution Article 14, § 1;

29 (2) The General Assembly is obligated to ensure the provision of  
30 an adequate and equitable system of education;

31 (3) Some Arkansas public school students, including some  
32 prekindergarten students, travel two (2) hours or more each way to and from  
33 school on a school bus;

34 (4) Research has shown that lengthy student transportation  
35 times:

36 (A) Impact the physical, emotional, and mental well-being



1 of students;

2 (B) Affect achievement levels;

3 (C) Reduce student time with parents at home;

4 (D) Limit opportunities to participate in after-school  
5 programs, extracurricular activities, and athletics; and

6 (E) May be linked to increased incidences of childhood  
7 asthma from exposure to bus fumes; and

8 (5) Student transportation times should be limited in a cost-  
9 efficient manner; and

10 (6) A study of student transportation times in Arkansas school  
11 districts should be conducted to determine the current costs related to  
12 school bus route times and of the costs related to proposed state maximums  
13 for student transportation time.

14 (b)(1) By July 1, 2014, all school districts shall report to the  
15 Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation in the  
16 manner prescribed by the division:

17 (A) For the school year 2013-2014, the following data for  
18 each regularly scheduled bus route to transport students to and from school:

19 (i) Number of school buses;

20 (ii) Type or size of school bus;

21 (iii) Linear route miles;

22 (iv) Number of students transported;

23 (v) The time of day each bus route begins; and

24 (vi) The longest period of time traveled one-way for  
25 a student on each route;

26 (vii) The average bus driver's salary for the school  
27 district; and

28 (viii) The average monthly payment for a bus  
29 financed over a ten-year period; and

30 (B) The changes required and the cost of the changes, if  
31 any, to implement the following maximum amount of time to transport a student  
32 to or from school:

33 (i) In the 2014-2015 school year, ninety (90)  
34 minutes;

35 (ii) In the 2015-2016 school year, eighty (80)  
36 minutes;

1 (iii) In the 2016-2017 school year, seventy (70)  
2 minutes;

3 (iv) In the 2017-2018 school year, sixty (60)  
4 minutes; and

5 (v) In the 2018-2019 school year, fifty (50)  
6 minutes.

7 (2) Each school district is encouraged to provide additional  
8 comments or information concerning the feasibility of implementing the  
9 maximum route times.

10 (c)(1) The division shall make the information received from school  
11 districts under this act available to the House Committee on Education and  
12 the Senate Committee on Education through the Bureau of Legislative Research.

13 (2) The bureau, with the cooperation of the division, shall  
14 prepare and present to the House Committee on Education and the Senate  
15 Committee on Education a report on the information and data collected under  
16 this act for consideration in the 2014 adequacy study.

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/s/Murdock

APPROVED: 04/16/2013

# **BUS SURVEY REQUIRED BY ACT 1288 of 2013**

<b>LINE</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>OBS</b>	<b>DATA</b>
19	# Buses	238	Sum = 5,360
20	Bus Size	5,297	Mean = 67.93
21	Miles	5,321	Mean = 45.31
22	Riders	5,336	Mean = 48.46
23	1st P/U	5,147	Mean = 6:51am
26	\$\$\$ Driver	181	Mean = \$9,794
28	Payment	46	Mean = \$1,591
33	< 90	106	Sum = \$2.687m
35	< 80	110	Sum = \$5.008m
1	< 70	112	Sum = \$10.055m
3	< 60	124	Sum = \$18.578m
5	< 50	130	Sum = \$25.182m

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## **TIME ON THE BUS**

"The longest period of time traveled one-way for a student on each route"

Observations = 5,355

All answers are in minutes :

Range      3 to 167              Mean = 49.4              Standard Deviation = 21.57

Median = 47                      Mode = 45              Skew = 0.78

25 to 75 Percentiles = 35 to 60