



District proposes purchase of 4 new buses

The OA district is proposing to purchase three new 65-passenger buses, as well as one new 30-passenger bus, replacing two 60-passenger vehicles, one 65-passenger bus, and one 30-passenger bus. The district plans to use Bond Anticipation Notes (BANS) for these purchases.

Total estimated cost is \$385,000.

The district attempts to replace buses on a 10-year cycle, or at a time when maintenance and repair reach a point where it's most cost effective to

purchase new.

The following buses would be replaced by new vehicles: *Bus No. 206 (2000 Freightliner) has 129,715 miles; Bus No. 207 (2000 Freightliner) has 120,722 miles; Bus No. 208 (2001 Freightliner) has 132,958 miles; and, Bus No. 211 (2001 Freightliner) has 134,198 miles.*

These buses would then be taken off their regular routes and would be used by the district as backup buses.

Four buses currently being used

as backups (they were removed from regular routes in previous years) would be offered to the OA maintenance department for use, or would be taken to auction.

Those buses are: *Bus No. 196 (1998 International) has 152,383 miles; Bus No. 197 (1998 International) has 167,073 miles; Bus No. 199 (1998 International) has 159,461 miles; and, Bus No. 200 (1999 International) has 159,406 miles.*

OA plans to purchase 5th bus to shorten use cycle

As part of its general operating budget for the 2009-10 academic year, the OA district is also proposing to purchase one new 66-passenger bus.

This bus, however, would not be purchased through the use of Bond Anticipation Notes (BANS), but instead would be paid for from the district's existing operating budget.

This plan would go into effect with an approved OA budget. The reason for this approach is twofold.

"In general, we're working to shorten the replacement cycle of our bus fleet," said Dr. Bill Russell, OA superintendent of schools.

"It's currently at 10 years, and

by purchasing a fifth bus, we would be working toward implementing a nine-year replacement cycle."

Tony Quaranta, OA director of transportation, said that while a one-year difference may not look like much on paper, it's significant on the road, and in the garage.

"It immediately lowers our maintenance costs, and by improving our fuel mileage, it immediately lowers our operating costs," Quaranta said. He said that new buses are in the vicinity of 45 percent more fuel efficient than those they replace.

"Most of our old buses - the ones we're proposing to remove from the duty

of transporting children, get about 5 mpg and don't have the environment-friendly technology available in the new buses.

"New buses also get approximately 9 mpg," Quaranta added, "and for a school district which purchases nearly 100,000 gallons of diesel fuel each year, that's significant."

Another reason the OA district plans to purchase a fifth bus through this approach is that by paying cash, rather than bonding, OA will receive state transportation aid over a five-year span in the amount of 80 percent of the total purchase price of the vehicle, without ever paying interest.