

State budget policy tough on districts that have problems in transporting students to charter and private schools

Never mind the complexities of student transportation routing. Never mind the difficulties in hiring bus drivers. Never mind the transportation needs of school district students. The state will be imposing gargantuan fines on school districts that are unable to meet specified time limits. These unreasonable penalizing terms come in the same time frame as universal vouchers.

School districts are burdened with transporting students to charters and privates without any control over the start and end time of the school day and calendar of them. The charters and privates are now in the catbird seat in making demands on the constitutionally-required public school districts.

Non-compliance with the obligation to transport students to charters and privates according to HB33 is “five consecutive school days or ten days within the school year, in which a bus arrives more than 30 minutes late to school, students are picked up more than 30 minutes late after the school day ends, the bus doesn’t arrive at all to pick-up students or the district doesn’t comply with any other transportation requirements”.

HB33 requires the Department of Education to, on the fifth instance of non-compliance, to withhold 100% of the district’s total daily transportation funds. The “fine” proceeds are divided among the parents of the private or the charters affected.

Is this war on public school districts or what? Is the common school system being treated as an enemy of the state? What are state officials thinking? Are they thinking?