



Maine School Bus Purchase Program

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November 1, 2017

Learning Objectives

1. Review highlights of Maine school transportation
2. Explain the Maine school bus purchase program
 - What does the program data look like?
 - How are districts put on a list to be considered for a bus purchase?
 - How are bus approval decisions made?

This program supports the Maine DOE Strategic Plan core priority 5: coordinated and effective state support.

Maine School Transportation



A State Program

- School transportation is a state education department program that:
 - Establishes the policies
 - Writes the rules
 - Develops and administers the programs
 - Oversees the safety reports

Transportation is an equalizer in education, providing students from all economic backgrounds with the opportunity to learn and succeed.

Transportation Highlights

- About 80% of Maine students ride the bus
 - Higher than national ridership (50%)
- About 3,000 school buses in service
- About 2,800 school bus drivers
- About 20% of transportation teams are Veterans
- About 140,000 children transported per year
- Maine school buses travel about 30 million miles of rural and urban roads per year

State Collaboration

- Maine Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management
 - Maine Emergency Management Agency
 - Maine Military Authority
- Maine Department of Environmental Protection
 - Clean School Bus Program
- Maine Department of Public Safety
 - Maine State Police
- Maine Department of Secretary of State
 - Bureau of Motor Vehicles

National Collaboration

- U. S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
 - Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
 - **Ensure safest, most efficient trans. system in world**
- Transportation Safety Administration (TSA)
- National Congress on School Transportation (NCST)
 - Sets national specs and procedures every 5 yrs.
 - Maine State Delegation 2015
 - Maine Department of Education, 2 delegates
 - Maine State Police, 2 delegates
 - Maine SAUs, 3 delegates

Resources For School Districts

- Transportation Safety Training program
 - Regional conferences (April and June)
 - State conference (July)
- Transportation Operations Program
 - Software: fleet maintenance, routing analysis, trip tracking, communication, redistricting analysis
 - www.transfinder.com
- School Bus Refurbishment Program
 - Maine Military Authority (a state agency)
- **School Bus Purchase Program** 

Maine School Bus Purchase Program

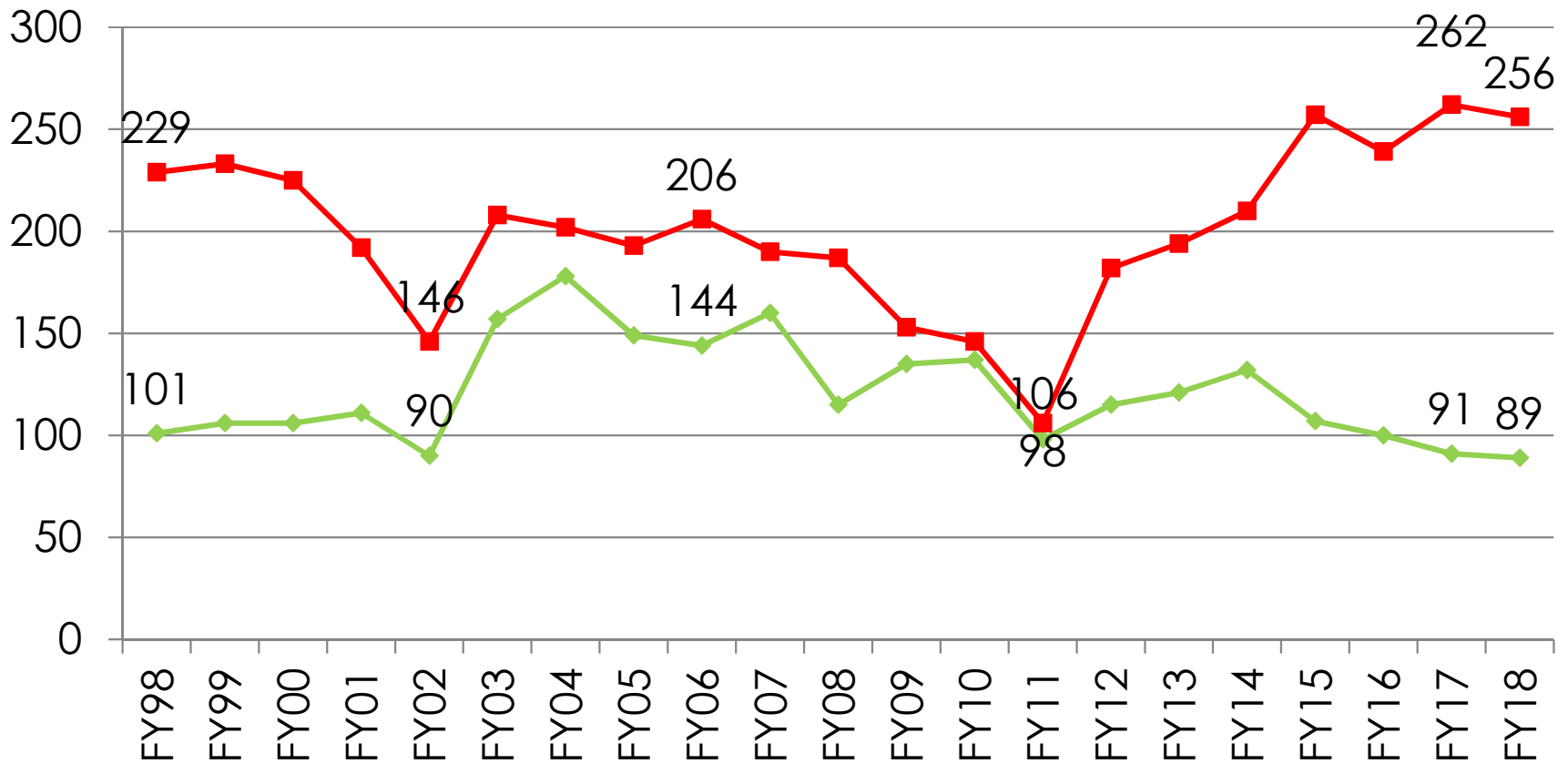


Program Purpose

- The purpose of the Maine School Bus Purchase Program is to achieve the most equitable distribution of limited dollars to maintain a modern safe fleet of school buses and respond to emergency special bus needs

Note: Districts are responsible for school bus maintenance

Program Data – SAU Applications and State Approvals

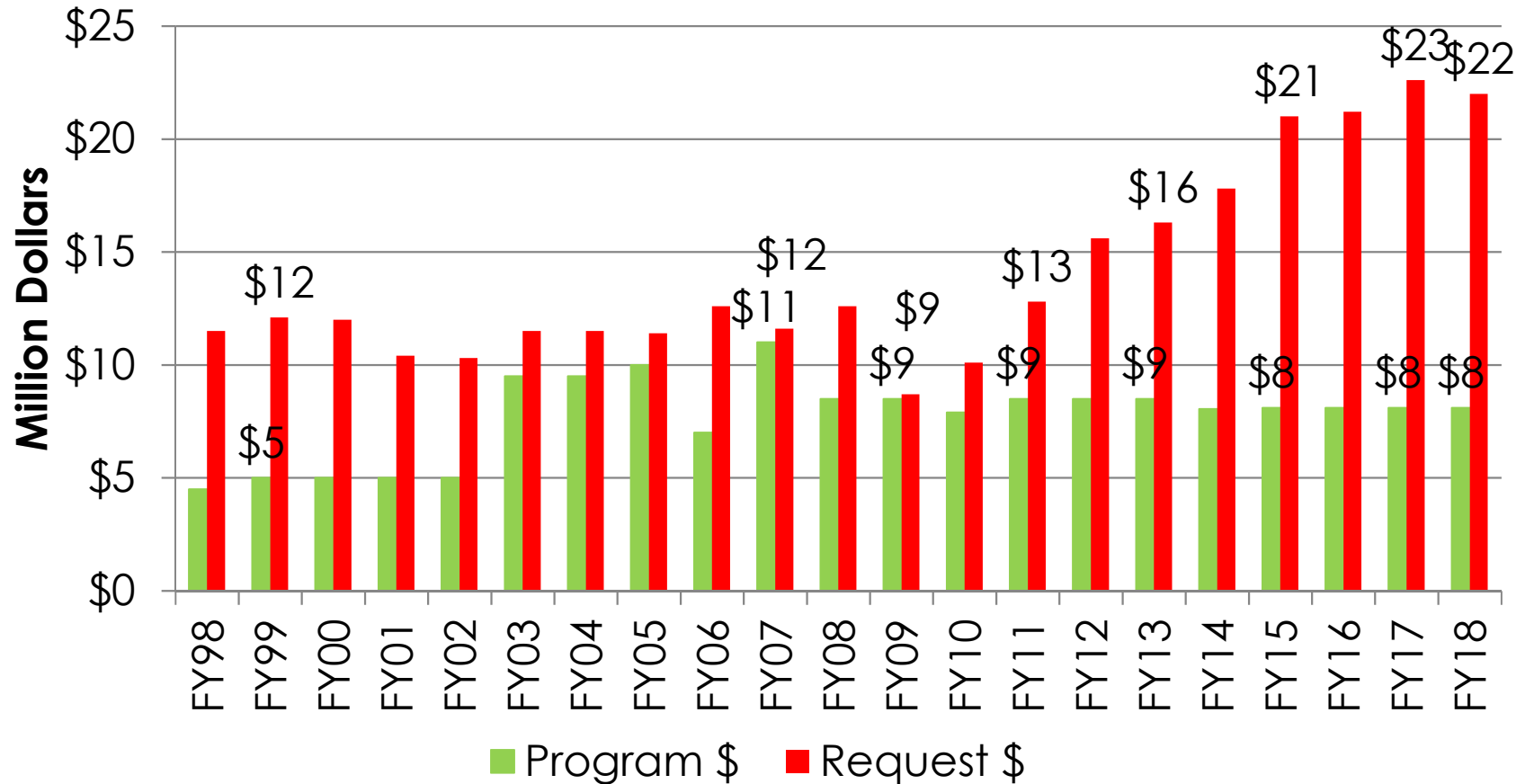


Note: FY03-FY05 includes federal funds

◆ Approvals ■ Requests

Program Data


– State Dollars and SAU Bus Request Dollars



NOTE: FY03 – FY05 includes federal funds

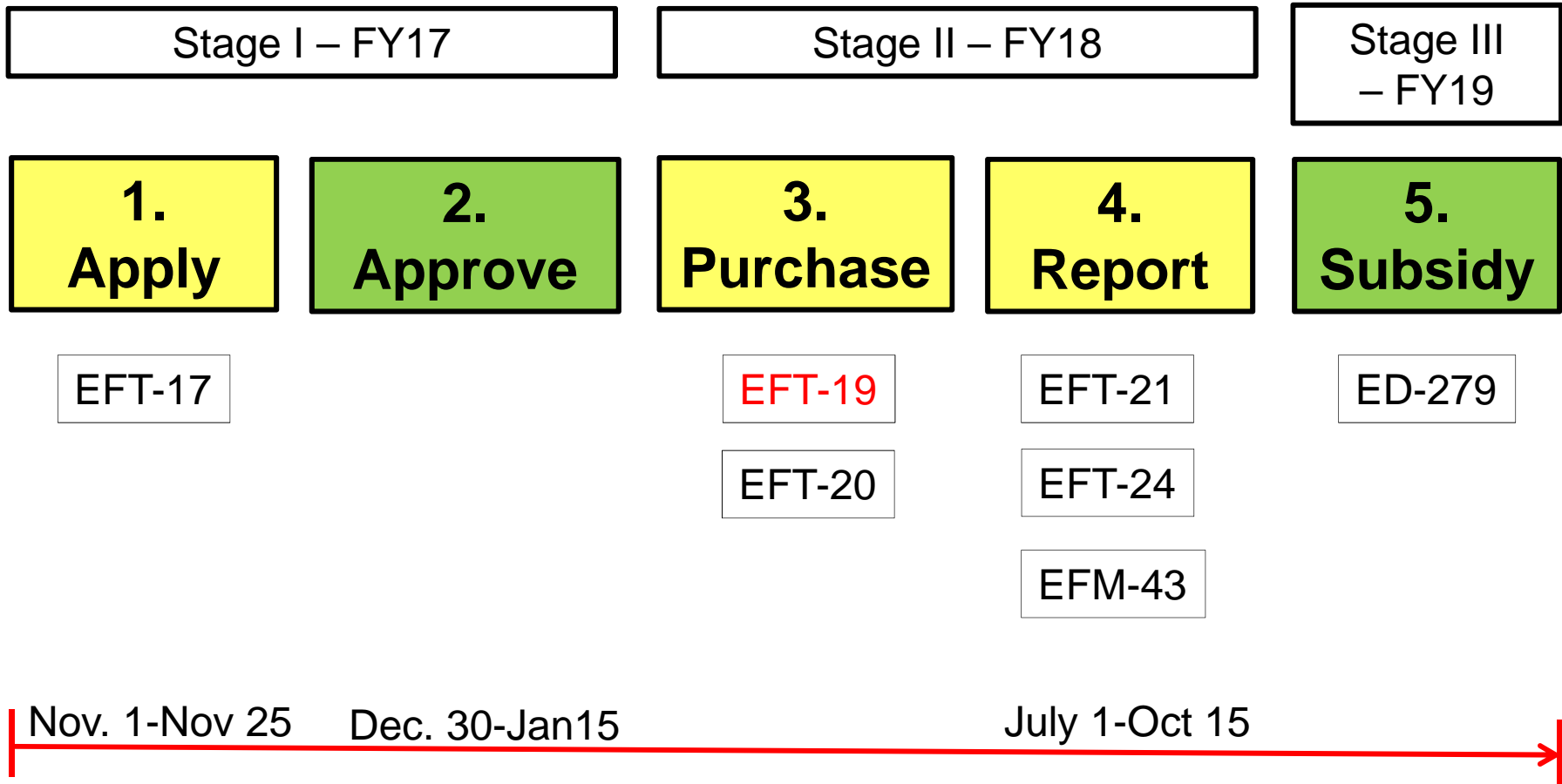
Program Cycle

– 3 Stages and 5 Steps Per Cycle

- Stage I 
 - 1. Application Nov. 1 – Nov. 25 (EFT-17)
 - 2. Approval (Dec. 30 to Jan. 15)
- Stage II
 - 3. **Purchase** (EFT-20) or cancel a bus (EFT-19)
 - 4. Transportation reports
- Stage III
 - 5. Subsidy begins (ED 279)

Program Cycle (cont.)



– 3 Stages and 5 Steps Over 3 Years



Program Cycle (cont.)

– Different Stages Occur Each FY



	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
	Stage II	Stage III					
	Stage I	Stage II	Stage III				
		Stage I	Stage II	Stage III			
Cycle FY16			Stage I	Stage II	Stage III		
Cycle FY17				Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	
Cycle FY18					Stage I	Stage II	Stage III
						Stage I	Stage II

Types of Program Applications

– Two (2) Types

- 1. “**Bus replacement**” application
 - Replace an existing bus lost due to **emergency**
 - Replace an existing bus near the **end** of useful life
 - Add a new bus to the district fleet and remove the existing bus from service (sale or parts)
- 2. “**Addition to fleet**” application
 - Respond to unique district situations
 - Add a new bus to the district fleet **without** taking an existing bus out of service

Minimum Program Qualifications

– “Bus Replacement” (A)

- Passenger Vans
 - Shall have **seven (7) years** useful life **and** accumulated 100,000 miles (replace van with bus)
- Type C school buses
 - Shall have **ten (10) years** useful life **and** accumulated 125,000 miles
- Type D school buses
 - Shall have **fourteen (14) years** useful life **and** accumulated 245,000 miles (effective 09/16/17)

NOTE: qualification is shown in NEO vehicle inventory under “replacement eligibility”

Minimum Program Qualifications

– “ Bus Replacement” (emergency) (A)

- A “bus replacement” emergency situation occurs when a bus is damaged beyond economic repair due to:
 1. Accidents
 2. Fire
 3. Vandalism or
 4. Other [total] losses

NOTE: to qualify districts must meet 1 of the 4 emergency qualifications

Minimum Program Qualifications – “Addition To Fleet” (unique) (B)

- An “addition to fleet” unique situation occurs when a district needs:
 1. Buses equipped to transport the **handicapped**
 2. Buses to accommodate increased **enrollment**
 3. Buses for non-critical **special purposes**
 4. Buses to replace **contracted services** (emergency)
 5. Buses to replace **contracted services** (planned)

NOTE: to qualify districts must meet 1 of the 5 addition to fleet qualifications

How Are Buses Put On A List To Be Considered For A Bus Purchase?

- A district must submit an **application** for a new bus
 - School Bus Purchase Request (form EFT-17)
 - “Bus replacement”
 - “Addition to fleet”
 - The forms are located in NEO Transportation
- Applications are received by the state annually
 - Open date: November 1
 - Close date: November 25
 - Emergency requests are open all year

How Are Buses Put On A List To Be Considered For A Bus Purchase? (cont.)

Vehicle Inventory and New Bus Request

SAU Name:
 Status:

B
[Bus Request for Addition To Fleet](#)
 *This is for state subsidy approval only

Show 50 entries

VIN	LVN	Make	Vehicle Type	Bus Type	Capacity	Model Year	Mileage	Status	Replacement Eligibility	Navigation
1BAKGCKA16F233929	33	Blue Bird	School Bus	C	77	2006	186365	In Service	Yes	Select Link
1D4GP45R56B562517	26	Other	Minivan		7	2006	207214	In Service	Yes	Select Link
1BAANCPA0YF089707	09	Blue Bird	School Bus	D	84	1999	218195	In Service	No	EFT-17 Request Replacement
1BAANCPA6YF093518	17	Blue Bird	School Bus	D	84	2000	216803	In Service	No	EFT-16 Emergency Replacement
1BAANCPA92F204005	11	Blue Bird	School Bus	D	84	2002	219952	In Service	No	Request Refurbishment
1BABNC0A14F216540	34	Blue Bird	School Bus	D	84	2004	145212	In Service	No	Edit Vehicle
1BABNC0A34F216541	35	Blue Bird	School Bus	D	84	2004	226668	In Service	No	Dispose
1BABNCPA0CF288477	29	Blue Bird	School Bus	D	84	2012	93552	In Service	No	Take out of Service

Sample: District Bus Application (EFT-17)

- Dashboard
- Home
- Admin
- Vehicle Inventory and Requests
- Annual Data
- Reports
- Help

Details for School Bus Request Replacement

SAU: RSU 63/MSAD 63

Retiring Bus

Replaced Bus (Old)

VIN:	1BAKGCKA16F233929
Model Year:	2006
Bus Type:	C
Capacity:	77
Manufacturer:	
Make:	Blue Bird
LVN:	33

New Bus

Replaced Bus (Old)

Age (in years):	12
Mileage (as reported 6/30):	186365

Requested Bus (New)

1. School Bus Data:	
1.1 Bus Capacity:	77
1.2 Lift Equipment:	No
1.3 Type:	C
2. Request Details:	
2.1 Purchase Fiscal Year:	2018
2.2 Replacement Reason:	Meets minimum requirements
2.3 Replacement Justification:	High Mileage, High Age
2.4 Replacement Advanced Justification:	N/A
3. Financial:	
3.1 Payment Type:	Lease Purchase
3.2 Payment Years:	3
3.3 SAU Replacement Cost Estimate:	\$90,000.00
3.4 State Bid Value (Previous Fiscal Year):	\$80,000.00

Note: Approvals are based on district requests. If actual approval terms are changed (without prior Department approval) when the district purchases a bus, the approval will be canceled or subsidy will be reduced.



Sample: State Approval Notice

Dashboard Home Vehicle Inventory and Requests Annual Data Reports Help

Bus Requests Summary

Select SAU: Purchase Fiscal Year: Status:

Show entries Search:

SAU	Fiscal Year	Request Type	Replacement Bus (old)					Requested Bus (New)						
			Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)	Bus Type	Capacity	Model Year	Mileage (as of 6/30)	Bus Type	Capacity	Requested Payment Years	SAU Cost Estimate	Request Status	DOE Approval Date	Superintendent Authorized Date
RSU 20	2018	Replacement	4UZAAXCS44CM96976	C	64	2004	202436	C	64	5	\$90,000.00	Applied - Round 1	N/A	N/A
RSU 20	2018	Replacement	4UZAAXBUX2CK16583	C	78	2002	245573	C	81	5	\$87,000.00	Approved	1/13/2017 12:29:45 PM	N/A
RSU 20	2018	Addition	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	C	64	N/A	\$90,000.00	Approved	N/A	N/A
Totals	3										\$267,000.00			

A

B

NOTE: Superintendents receive approval notice by email

How Are Bus Approval Decisions Made?

– First (1st) Priority

- “Bus Replacement”
 - Emergency situation
 - An emergency situation occurs when a bus is damaged beyond economic repair due to:
 - accidents
 - fire
 - vandalism or
 - other [total] losses

How Are Bus Approval Decisions Made?

– Second (2nd) Priority

- “Addition to Fleet”
 - Unique situation
 - An “addition to fleet” situation occurs when a district needs buses to:
 - Transport handicapped students
 - Transport for a special purpose
 - Transport increased enrollment students
 - Replace contracted services (emergency)
 - Replace contracted services (planned)

How Are Bus Approval Decisions Made?

– Third (3rd) Priority

- “Bus Replacement”
 - Age of the retiring bus
 - “Age as the primary consideration, tempered by both high and low mileage”

May Districts Buy A Bus Different From The Bus That Was Requested and Approved?

- Bus approvals are based on the **original bus request**
- Change fiscal year of purchase?
 - **No changes** are permitted
 - Bus approvals are valid one (1) year
 - Approvals are not carried forward
 - If a district cannot purchase a bus during the fiscal year of a Department bus approval:
 - The district must cancel the approval
 - Failure to cancel a bus prevents redistribution of funds to other districts in need of buses

May Districts Buy A Bus Different From The Bus That Was Requested and Approved? (cont.)

- Bus approvals are based on the **original bus request**
- Change bus type: A, C, or D?
 - Requires Department approval before purchase
 - **Bus allocation will be reduced**
 - Change down: D to C or A; C to A
 - Total state bus approval allocation is reduced to the lower bus Type rate
 - Change up: A to C or D
 - Total state bus approval allocation is held at lower bus Type rate

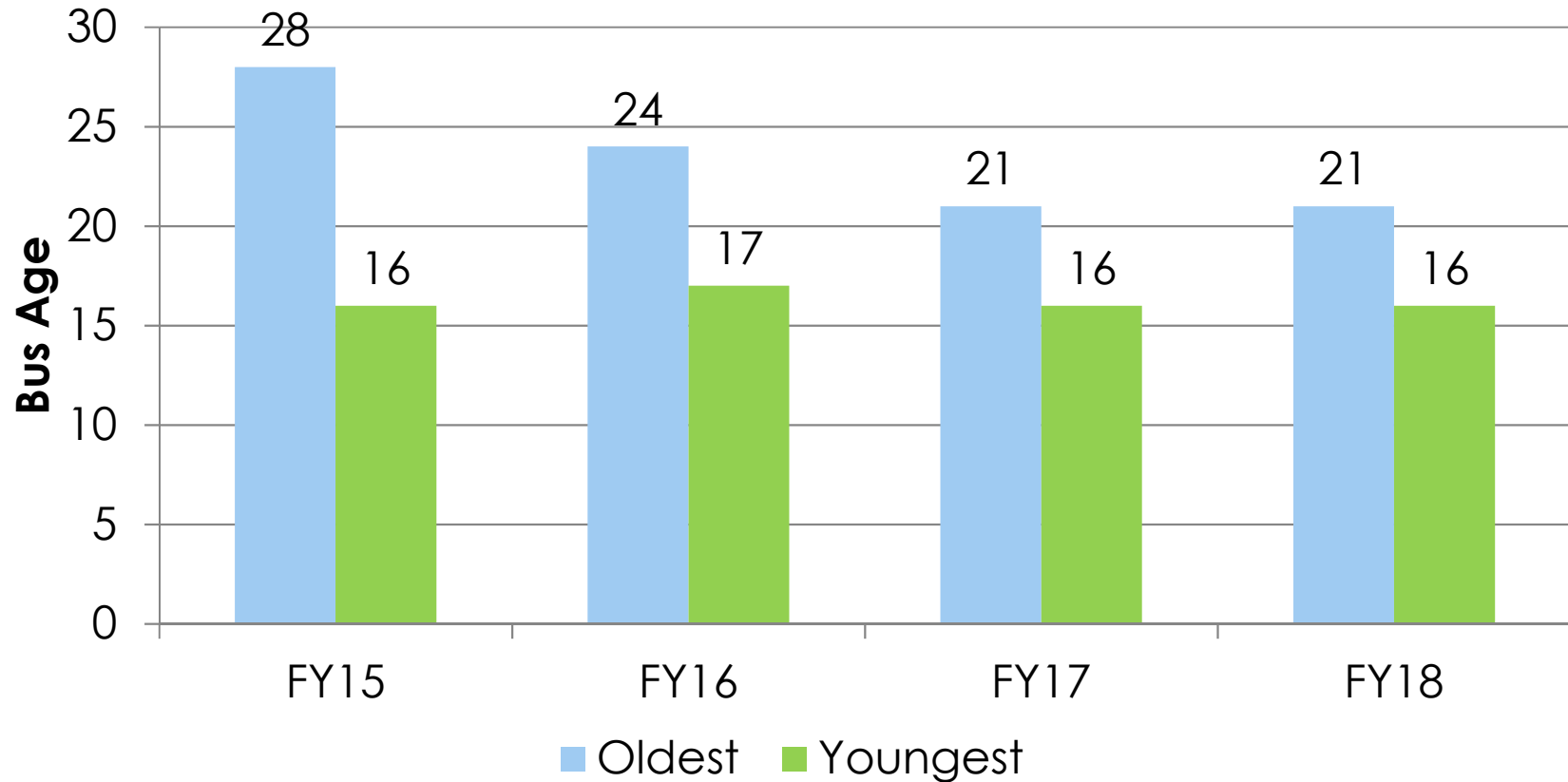
May Districts Buy A Bus Different From The Bus That Was Requested and Approved? (cont.)

- Bus approvals are based on the **original bus request**
- Change bus capacity?
 - Requires Department approval before purchase
 - **Bus allocation will be reduced**
 - Change from larger to smaller bus
 - Total allocation will be reduced to the max approval amount for the **smaller bus**
 - Change from smaller to larger bus
 - Total allocation will remain the same as the max approval amount for the smaller bus

May Districts Buy A Bus Different From The Bus That Was Requested and Approved? (cont.)

- Bus approvals are based on the **original bus request**
- Change bus purchase payment terms?
 - Requires Department approval before purchase
 - Change from cash to term
 - District total allocation will remain the same
 - Change from term to cash
 - **Bus allocation will be reduced**
 - Change term payment years
 - Increase years, e.g. from 2 to 3: no reduction
 - Decrease years, e.g. from 5 to 2: **reduction**

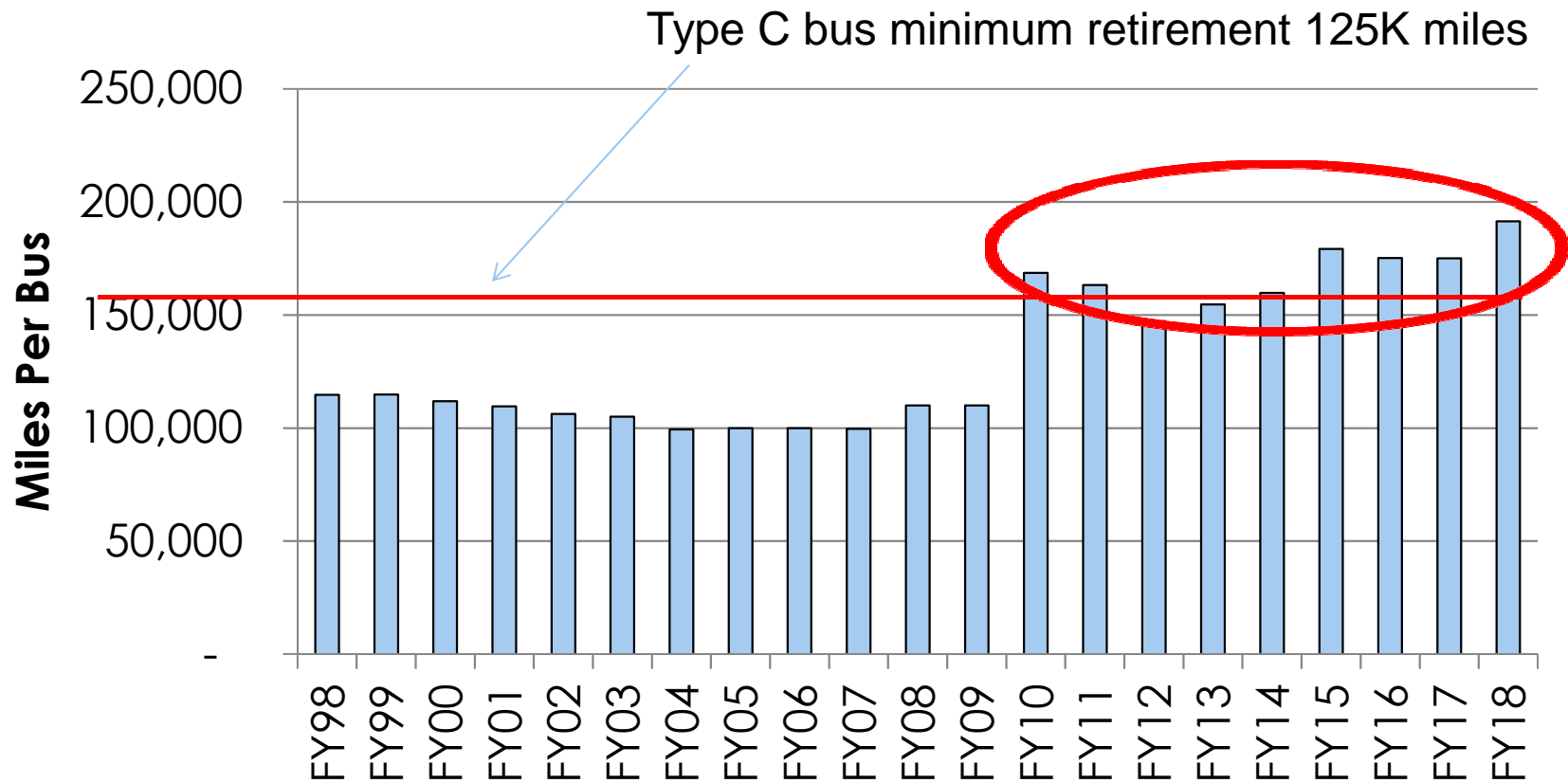
Program Data – Age Range of Approved Buses*



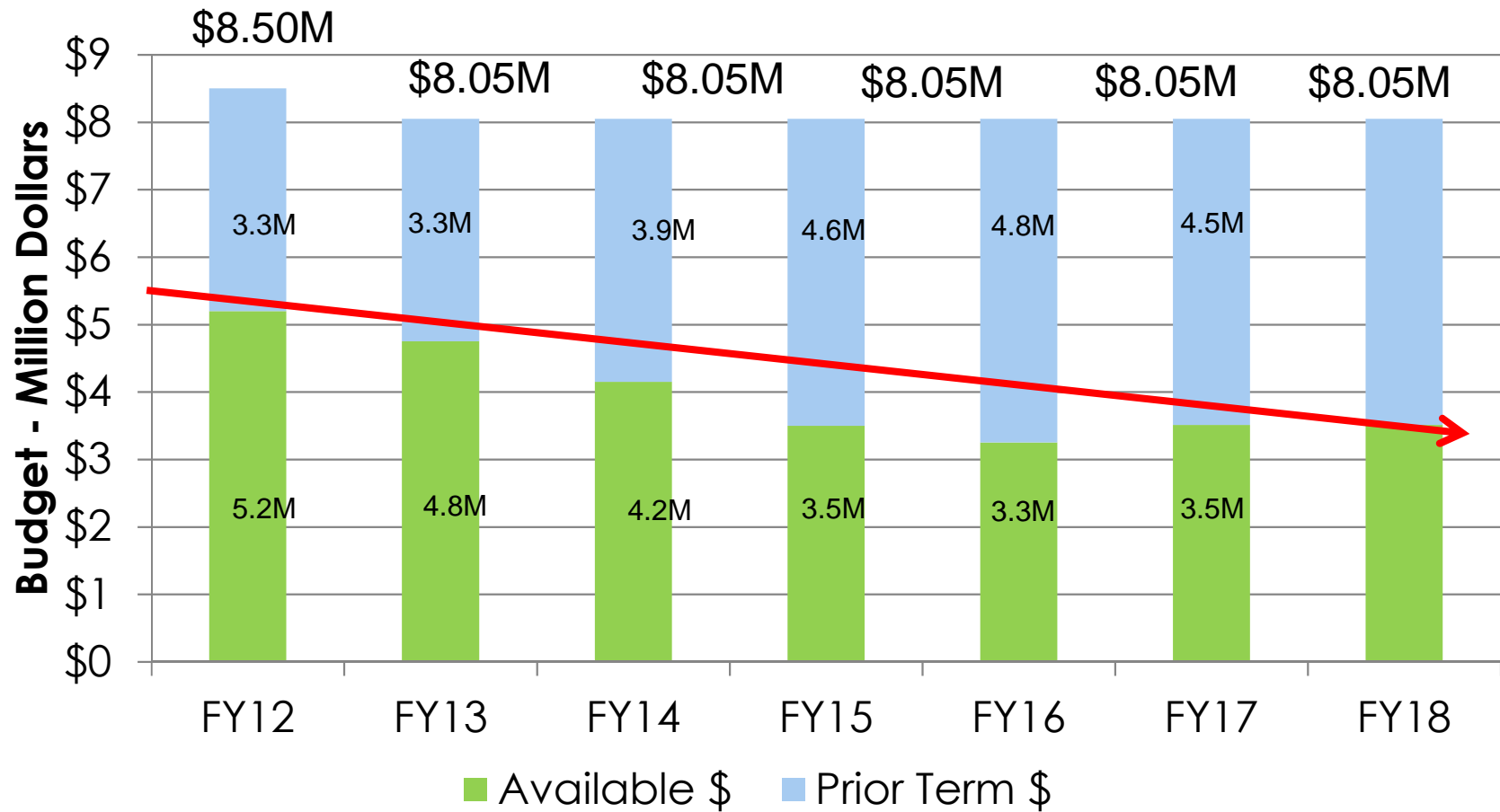
* Round 1; excludes unique and emergency requests

Program Data

– Average Miles When School Bus Is Retired



Program Data – Budget



Program Application Rounds

- Round 1
 - Occurs annually
 - Applications opens Nov. 1 and closes Nov. 25
 - Approvals announced Dec. 30 to Jan. 15
- Round 2
 - Depends on cancellations, may **or** may **not** occur
 - Opens after Round 1 approval announcement
 - All applications that did not make Round 1 approval are automatically moved to Round 2
 - No specific approval date (March to Oct.)

Program Subsidy Reminder

- Subsidy Amount
 - ED 279 report, section 3 A, other allocations
 - Contact Maine DOE school finance
- Delayed district reports effect subsidy (ED 279)
 - Bus **cancellation** report (EFT-19)
 - Delayed cancellation reports prevent redistribution of bus money to other districts
 - Bus **purchase** report (EFT-20)
 - Delayed reports lead to withheld subsidy
- Timely transportation reports are important

Program Subsidy Reminder (cont.)

- Statutory Authority
 - “Authority to withhold state subsidy until reports are received. Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, if a school administrative unit has failed to file the reports by this Title in the format and within the time periods specified, the Commissioner may withhold state subsidy payments until these reports are received.”

EPS Model Review Cycle

- Statute requires EPS model review every 3 years
 - Transportation is in the FY 2017-18 group review
- Maine DOE contracts the review with USM
 - USM makes recommendations to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
 - Final decision is made by the Committee
- EPS website:
<http://www.maine.gov/education/data/eps/epsmenu.htm>

The Future of School Transportation



Thank you for your interest in school transportation and your commitment to safety and security.

Contact Information

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<http://maine.gov/doe/transportation/>

<http://www.maine.gov/doe/security/>

Abstract

Safety is priority one when transporting students. This clinic will focus on the Maine School Bus Purchase Program that is designed to help school districts replace the aging fleet. Participants will learn the program purpose, qualifications, and process while exploring how buses are put on the list and how decisions are made. This clinic will include historic data on program funding, applications, and approvals.