

CHAPTER 437

AN ACT concerning pupil transportation, amending P.L.1981, c.57 and P.L.1997, c.53 and supplementing chapter 39 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. Section 2 of P.L.1981, c.57 (C.18A:39-1a) is amended to read as follows:

C.18A:39-1a Adjustment of nonpublic school transportation costs.

2. For the 2002-2003 school year, the maximum amount of nonpublic school transportation costs per pupil provided for in N.J.S.18A:39-1 shall equal \$735 and this amount shall be increased in each subsequent year in direct proportion to the increase in the State transportation aid per pupil in the year prior to the prebudget year compared to the amount for the prebudget year or by the CPI, whichever is greater.

As used in this section, State transportation aid per pupil shall equal the total State transportation aid payments made pursuant to section 25 of P.L.1996, c.138 (C.18A:7F-25) divided by the number of pupils eligible for transportation. "CPI" means the average annual increase, expressed as a decimal, in the consumer price index for the New York City and Philadelphia areas during the fiscal year preceding the prebudget year as reported by the United States Department of Labor.

In the 2002-2003 school year and thereafter, any additional costs incurred by a school district due to the increase in the maximum amount of nonpublic school transportation costs per pupil pursuant to this section shall be borne by the State.

C.18A:39-2.2 Determination of cost efficiencies by combining public, nonpublic school bus routes.

2. A county superintendent of schools, during the approval process of pupil transportation contracts conducted pursuant to N.J.S.18A:39-2, shall examine the contract to determine whether cost efficiencies could be realized by combining public and nonpublic school pupils on the same school bus routes.

3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to the 2002-2003 school year.

Approved January 10, 2002.