



Philomath School District 17J

Special Board Meeting

Date and Time

Monday April 6, 2026 at 7:00 PM PDT

Location

Philomath High School Library located at 2054 Applegate Street, Philomath, Oregon

The Philomath School District Board of Directors will meet in Executive Session at 7:00 pm until approximately 8:00 pm per ORS 192.660 (2)(f) to consider records exempt by law from public inspection; and per ORS 192.660 (2)(b) to consider the dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or agent, unless he or she requests an open meeting.

Agenda

	Time
I. Opening Items	7:00 PM
A. Call the Meeting to Order	
B. Executive Session	60 m
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Time

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C. Open Session

1. Request for Agenda Modifications

II. Action Items 8:00 PM

A. Award Transportation Contract 10 m

B. Complaint Resolution 15 m

III. Closing Items 8:25 PM

A. Adjourn Meeting

Coversheet

Award Transportation Contract

Section:	II. Action Items
Item:	A. Award Transportation Contract
Purpose:	Vote
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Proposal and Recommendation to the Board.pdf



Philomath School District 17J

Benton County School District No. 17J, 1620 Applegate Street, Philomath, OR 97370 (541) 929-3169

Student Transportation Services Proposal Summary and Recommendation to the Board

Philomath School District's current student transportation contract with Mid-Columbia Bus Company Inc. expires at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. The District has contracted with Mid-Columbia since 2010, extending the original 5 year contract for two extension periods. To ensure uninterrupted service and compliance with public procurement laws, the District initiated a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) process to secure a new contract and ensure the District provides the best possible transportation service for our students and families. The scope of this contract includes regular home-to-school routing, special education transportation, and transportation for field trips and extracurricular activities.

The District solicited an RFP for Student Transportation Services in January 2026, with a closing date of February 27, 2026. The District received two responsive proposals: one from the current contractor, Mid-Columbia Bus Company Inc. and one from First Student, Inc. An evaluation committee comprised of District Administration, District Staff and one Board member reviewed and scored both proposals based on criteria outlined in the RFP. Criteria included cost, safety records, fleet age and maintenance, driver recruitment and retention strategies, parent and family communication strategies, and overall experience. The evaluation committee also held interviews with each of the proposers on Friday, March 6, 2026 to gain further information about each company.

First Student, Inc., emerged as the highest-scoring proposer. The District recommends that the Board authorize the award of a 5-year contract with First Student, Inc. beginning July 1, 2026.

Average Total Scores for Proposals	
First Student, Inc	185/200
Mid-Columbia Bus Company Inc.	120/200

First Student's proposal stood out significantly to the committee due to their commitment to providing a newer fleet of buses, robust driver training and safety protocols, and technology upgrades for both the district and families.

While the total cost of the transportation contract is an important factor in the decision process, it was not the major decision factor. We knew going into the RFP process that transportation costs would increase and are prepared to incorporate that into the 2026-27 budget.

A formal Notice of Intent to Award was issued to both proposers on March 9, 2026. The mandatory protest period closes on March 16, 2026.

Pending the Board's approval tonight, District administration will finalize and execute the formal contract documents with First Student, Inc. and begin the transition process to ensure they are fully operational for the start of the 2026-2027 school year.