

August 14, 2018

The Colorado Charter School Institute (“CSI”) is dedicated to promoting transportation options for CSI schools and their students. During the 2017-18 school year, CSI hosted a transportation compliance webinar with the Colorado Department of Education (“CDE”), [publicly supported](#) reduced RTD passes in the Denver-metro region for youth and low-income individuals, and conducted a transportation panel at the Spring regional meetings. In furtherance of these efforts, CSI issues this Advisory Bulletin to clarify some common questions relating to ridesharing options for students.

## RIDESHARING OPTIONS: OVERVIEW

In Spring of 2018, “Hop, Skip, Drive” officially launched in the Denver-metro region. Hop, Skip, Drive is quickly expanding to other regions across the state and it is expected that other vendors will enter the market as well. Although Hop, Skip, Drive will be used as an example throughout this Advisory Bulletin, it should be noted that CSI does not endorse any one specific transportation vendor; rather, this Bulletin is intended to be a compilation of information and guidance as to how ridesharing options may be utilized by a school.

### I. Vehicle and Operator Requirements

A ridesharing vendor such as Hop, Skip, Drive operates under the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission (“PUC”) as opposed to the Colorado State Board of Education’s rules governing school transportation vehicles. CDE’s school transportation regulations explicitly exempt vehicles under the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission. See, e.g., 1 CCR 301-25, Rule 5.04 (2015). Because the PUC and only the PUC regulates ridesharing companies (see § 40-10.1-603, C.R.S.), ridesharing companies are not subject to CDE’s regulations relating to vehicle and operator requirements. Instead, the vehicle and driver qualifications will be set by the vendor with oversight of the PUC. As such, when evaluating whether to utilize a ridesharing option, it is important to closely evaluate the operator and vehicle requirements adopted by the company to ensure students’ safety.

### II. Insurance Implications

Prior to contracting with a ridesharing vendor, it is critical to consult with both your attorney and your insurance provider to ensure appropriate coverage and evaluate risk. Ultimately, the insurance model may depend on the structure of the contract with the vendor. Some vendors, for example, may allow flexibility in who holds the contract (the school versus the parents). In other words, either the school could contract with the vendor for specific ridesharing services or the school could require that any interested parents contract with the vendor directly.

### III. Funding and Reimbursements

CDE has informed CSI that schools utilizing a ridesharing service to provide home-to-school, school-to-school, and school-to-home transportation services for students may be eligible for partial reimbursement of expenditures paid to vendors and/or parents from the Public School Transportation Fund. Schools intending to seek partial reimbursement for ridesharing costs associated with route transportation should first carefully review the [Colorado Department of Education Audit Resource Guide for the Public School Transportation CDE-40 Reimbursement Claim Form](#) to ensure that the expenditures are eligible for reimbursement.

**Questions?** Contact Trish Krajniak, Director of Legal & Policy Initiatives ([trishkrajniak@csi.state.co.us](mailto:trishkrajniak@csi.state.co.us))