A Trusted Partnership Half a Century Old
First Student - The Partner of Choice for District 54

First Student and Community Consolidated School District 54, Schaumburg, IL, began their partnership in 1952 with Schaumburg Transportation, which was later acquired by First Student, providing standard busing service to the school district. As the district changed and grew, so did their partnership and the need for a variety of services and buses, including special-needs transportation. First Student now services District 54’s 27 schools with 186 buses.

Ed Rafferty, (recently retired) Superintendent of District 54, speaks highly of the district’s relationship with First Student. Rafferty began with the district 37 years ago as a special-education teacher, and First Student was the transportation provider for his students. “We have always been extremely fortunate to have a great relationship with First Student, and we know that we can depend on First Student for whatever we need, whenever we need it. The partnership enables us to do what we need to do, and our primary job is to teach and educate our students.”

District 54 benefits from First Student’s vast resources to accommodate all its transportation needs, large and small. The district enjoys well-managed, efficient fleet operations allowing it to share transportation resources between its numerous branches because buses and parts are always available. In addition, First Student’s advanced route-planning and bus-tracking technologies, including Zonar, FOCUS, GPS and Versatrans, increase efficiency in planning and scheduling routes and provide peace of mind to District 54’s parents through real-time monitoring of their child’s bus location.

The partnership extends into the local community as well. First Student believes strongly in giving back to the communities in which they serve, whether it be providing service to a small church-group outing or a large festival that draws thousands of people.

Developing solid, long-term district and community relationships built on trust has always been important to First Student. In the past, the tri-annual decision for District 54 to maintain its decades-long partnership with First Student was strongly tied to Illinois’ low-bid requirement, with work awarded based solely on price. While First Student was consistently the low-bidder, they also continuously delivered solid results. Recent changes in Illinois legislation allow school districts to focus on their other important, district-specific needs, including solid safety ratings and processes, high service levels and extensive value-added tools – which build the foundation for long-term partnerships that benefit everyone involved.

Scan this QR code to watch the Schaumburg 54 Video.
Or visit http://firststudentinc.com/advantages/case-studies

Advanced routing and technology solutions, stringent safety practices, commitment to customer service, and high standards established for and by the First Student staff, are just a few of the reasons underpinning past decisions and will be a driving force moving forward as the relationship progresses.

Debbie Ancona, Assistant Superintendent for District 54 says “First Student is consistent, professional, and we have a wonderful, reciprocal relationship with them.”

Ancona adds, “First Student empowers me to be a leader in my role, but also, I can support the schools,” Ancona adds. “I know I can call First Student, or the supervisor of transportation, or any of the staff in that department. I know them by name; we have a long-going relationship.”

First Student is the vendor of choice for District 54, and both the school district and First Student look forward to a successful partnership for many more years to come.

866-960-6274
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