School Bus Purchase Program Overview

Pat Hinckley
Transportation and Facilities Administrator

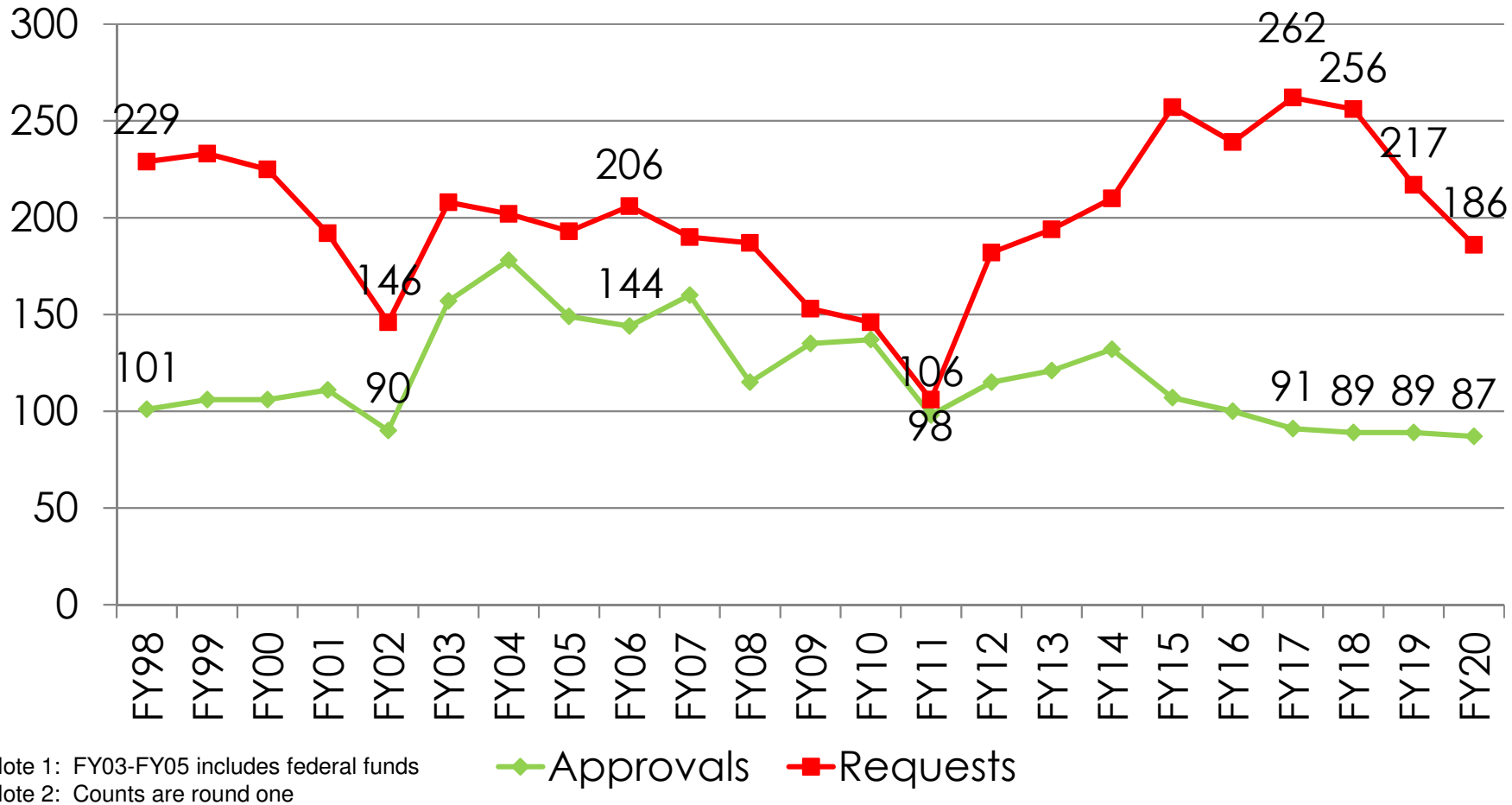
September 2019

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.

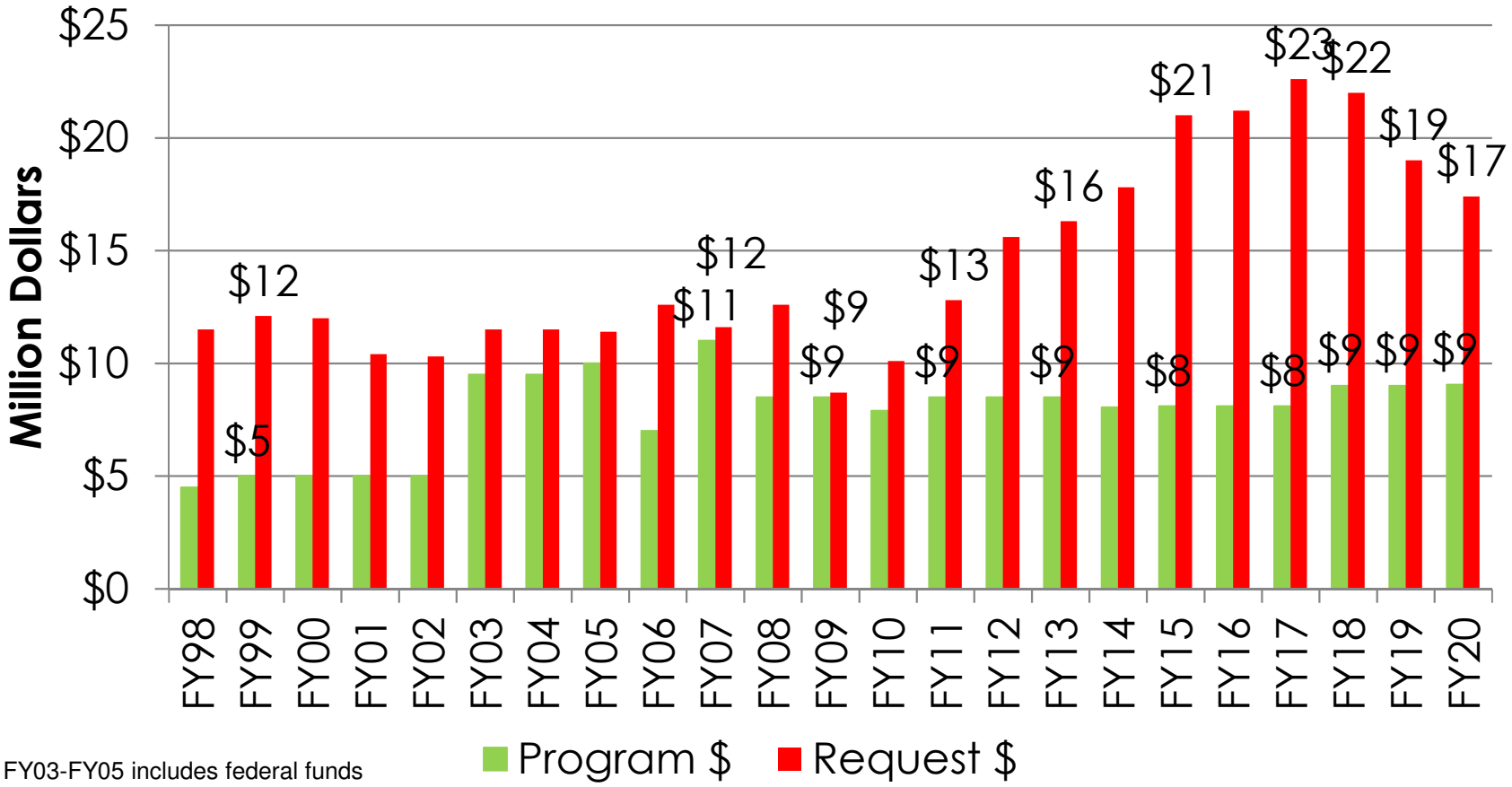
Program Data – SAU Applications and State Approvals



Note 1: FY03-FY05 includes federal funds
Note 2: Counts are round one

Source: EFT-17

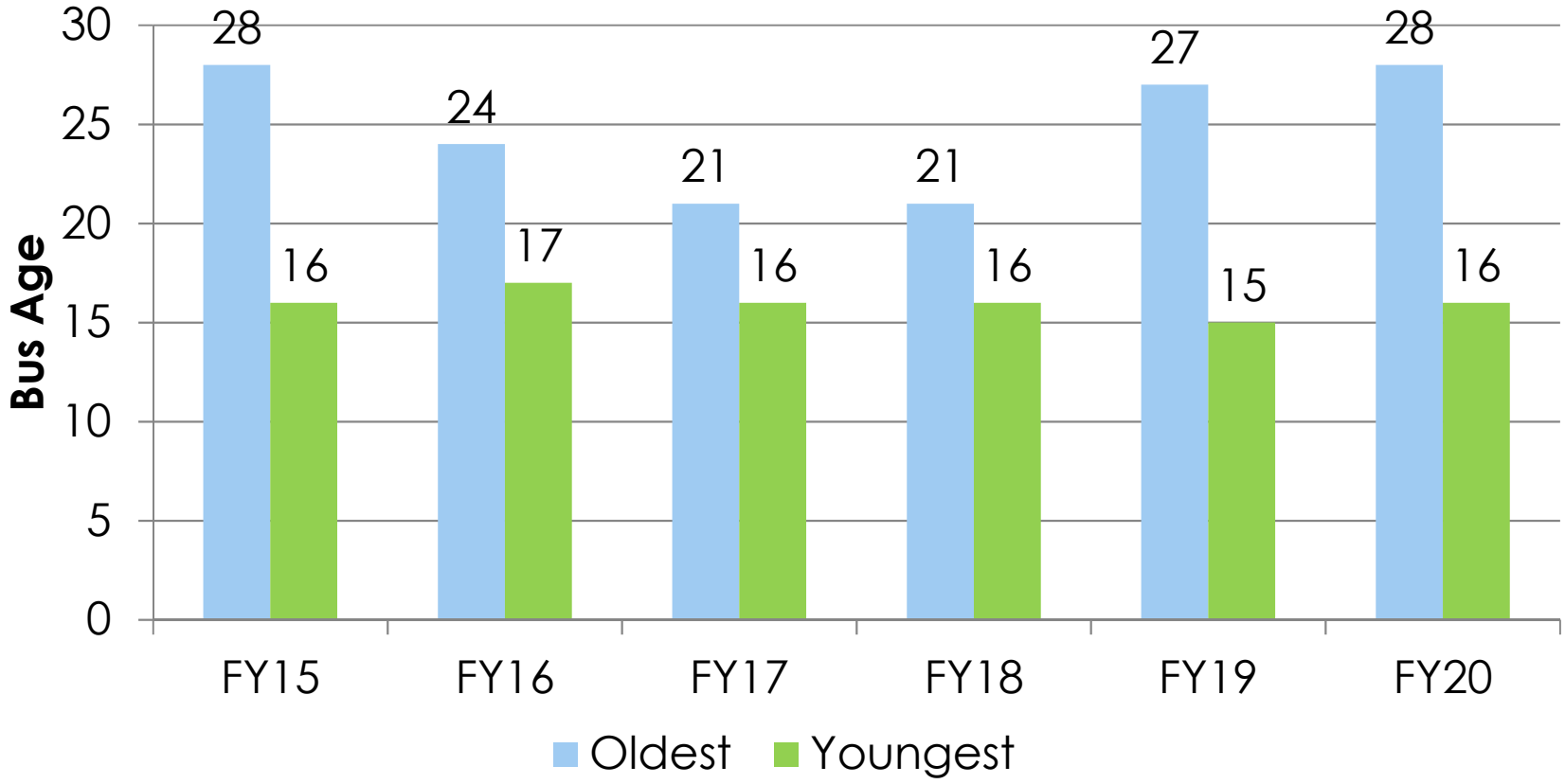
Program Data
– State Dollars and SAU Bus Request Dollars



Note 1: FY03-FY05 includes federal funds
Note 2: Request dollars are round one

Source: EFT-17

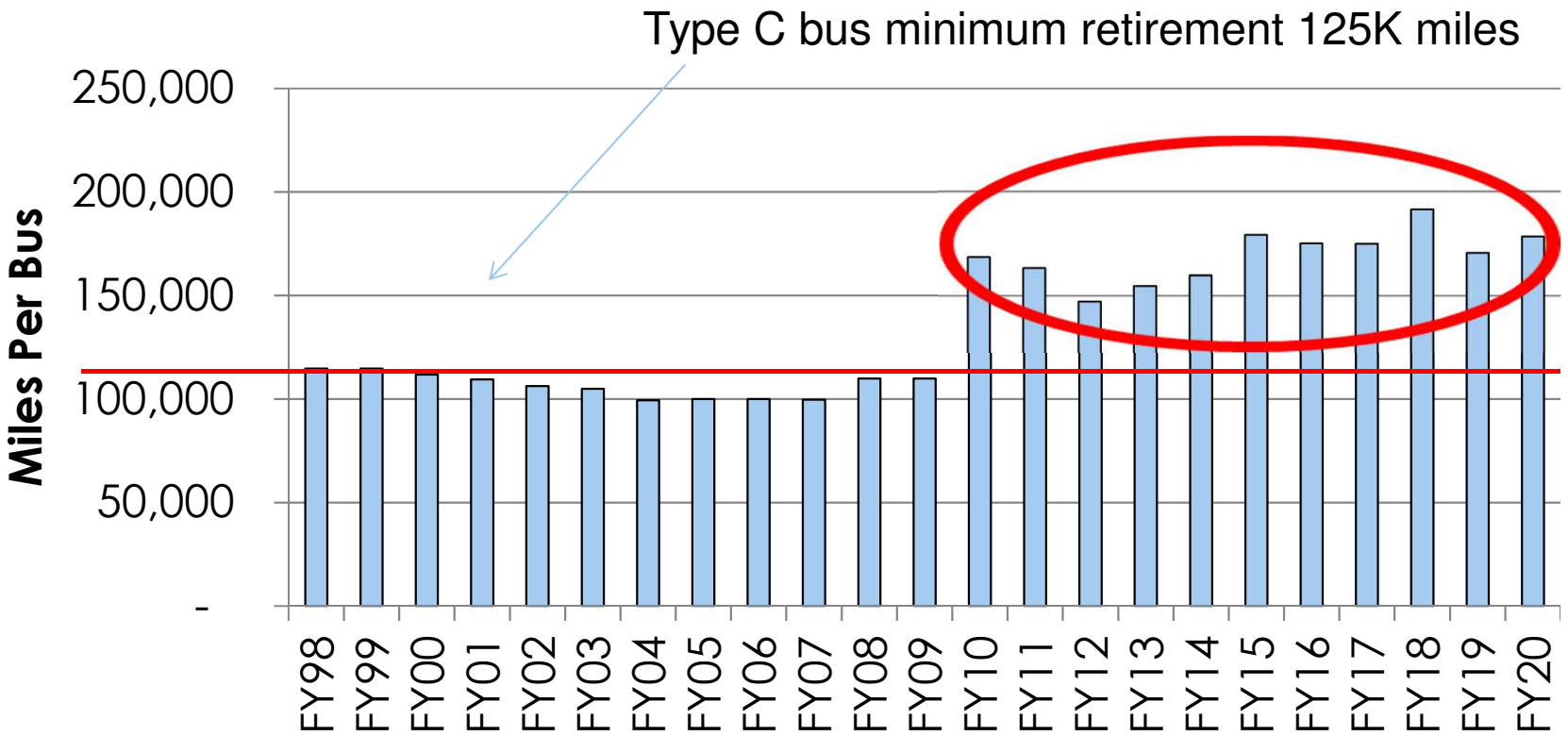
Program Data – Age Range of Approved Buses*



* Round 1; youngest buses may not include all of that age range; excludes unique and emergency requests

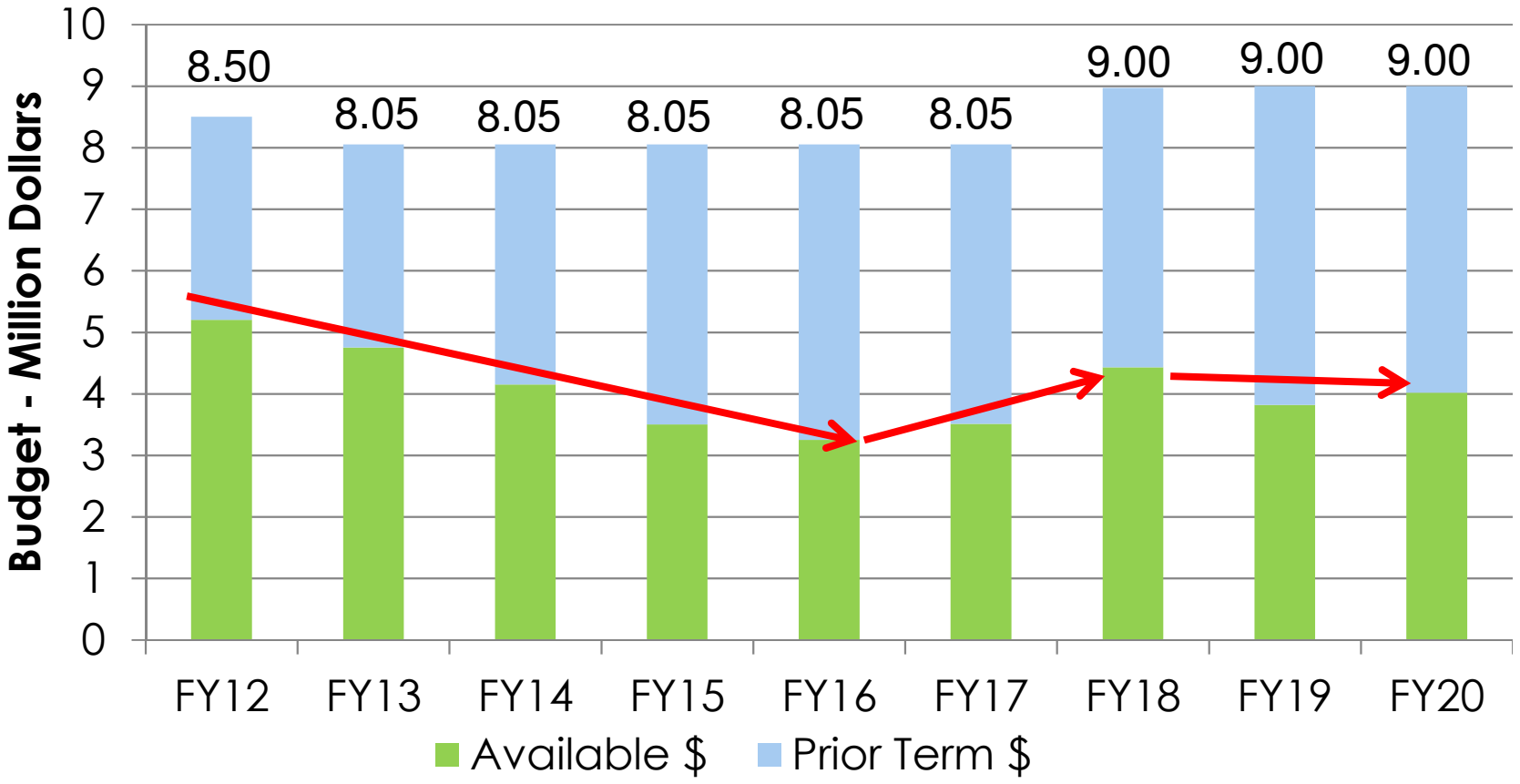
Source: EFT-17

Program Data
– Average Miles When School Bus Is Retired



Source: EFT-17

Program Data – Budget



Source: School Finance

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

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

Note: Maintenance issues are not an emergency situation.

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"

Source: CMR 05-071 Chapter 85

Program Cycle
-3 Stages and 5 Steps Per Cycle

- Stage 1 (FY19)
  - 1. Apply Nov. 1 – Nov. 25
  - 2. Approve Dec. 30 – Jan. 15
- Stage II (FY20)
  - 3. Purchase during FY20
  - 4. Report year-end transportation reports
- Stage III (FY21)
  - 5. Begin subsidy (ED 279)
    - Fiscal year after taking possession of a new bus and making the year one payment