



Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District

From zero telematics to high expectations.



Organization

Carrollton-Farmers Branch
Independent School District

Industry

Pupil

Location

Carrollton, Texas

Website

cfbisd.edu

Operation

- 100 buses
- 100 white fleet vehicles

Solutions

- Zonar Ground Traffic Control®
- Zonar V4™ TCUs
- Zonar EVIR®
- Samsung Galaxy Tab Active3
- Transfinder Routefinder

Benefits

- Reduced paper usage by 40%
- Faster, verified bus inspections
- Reliable bus repair requests
- More bus uptime
- Reduced bus inventory
- Answer parent calls faster
- More efficient routes & savings
- 75% more drivers than nearby districts

The Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District (CFBISD) serves 24 elementary schools, six middle schools, five high schools, and three education centers. When Mark Hill arrived at CFBISD in mid-2022, the district did not have a functioning telematics system.

With nearly 100 school buses and 100 white fleet vehicles to transport almost 6,500 student riders more than 3 million miles each year, CFBISD needed an efficient fleet management solution. As the director of transportation, Hill was given the opportunity to choose and engage one.

As he researched providers, Hill's must-have list included what the fleet needs to best support CFBISD and its communities.

- A precision GPS system to easily locate each bus in real time
- Electronic routing to replace paper-based systems, reduce manual labor, and cut back on paper costs
- Integration with existing Transfinder routing solution for real-time updating
- Efficient, accurate, electronically verifiable bus inspections that streamlined maintenance requests

After comparing potential smart fleet providers, Hill and CFBISD's audio video technology specialist, N. Rico McClain, chose Zonar smart fleet management solutions because we met every requirement.

"Zonar's capabilities meant it was a one-stop shop for all our needs," he says. "It has such a rich platform that I sensed it would play an ever-increasing role in our fleet as time went by."

Integration enables optimized routing.

Hill's first concern was that Zonar GPS data integrate smoothly with Transfinder Routefinder, the district's routing software provider. The Zonar partnership with Transfinder technologies enables seamless integration using Zonar APIs.

Having the two platforms work together ensures that every stop is properly accounted for, annotated and tracked. Most importantly, CFBISD ensures that all students are picked up and dropped off safely.

The compatibility ensures school and district transportation fleets benefit from more accurate and efficient route optimization, and increased fleet safety and ridership visibility.

Skipped stops save time, fuel and labor.

Transfinder was also key to savings in time, fuel, and labor. When dispatchers know a student isn't riding the bus that day, they remotely update that route in real time so drivers can skip the stop.

Each skipped stop saves time, fuel and labor expenses, especially when the student lives in an apartment complex. CFBISD's communities feature several complexes, each of which can consist of up to two dozen buildings. Skipping a stop deep within a large complex saves 10 to 15 minutes, plus fuel.

Digitizing routes cut paper use by 40%.

When Hill joined the CFBISD fleet, bus routes were being entered on a spreadsheet. Every update required that 201 pages of routes be printed for each operating bus, an inefficient process that Hill replaced by integrating Zonar and Transfinder.

Now, bus drivers navigate each route by viewing it on their Samsung Galaxy Tab Active3 tablet; no printed paper routes. Transitioning from digital routes has cut paper consumption by 40%.

And Hill expects another 40% reduction when the transition is complete.

Real-time bus tracking protects students.

Parents are put at ease faster.

Occasionally, buses ran late after field trips, sports events and other outings. Before Hill implemented Zonar fleet solutions, answering parent calls took too many steps.

Concerned parents would call, looking for their child's bus. Dispatchers called drivers, who shared their location and status with dispatchers, who relayed that information back to parents; frustrating for everyone.

Real-time, online fleet visibility enables dispatchers to locate each bus in a map view within Ground Traffic Control. Parents get answers and drivers focus on driving.

Inspections are accurate and faster.

The CFBISD bus fleet used to rely on pencil-and-paper for mandatory vehicle inspections, which take up to 20 minutes.

When a bus needed repairs or maintenance, the driver filled out a request form and turned it in to dispatch, who passed it to the mechanic shop. Some requests were lost in the daisy chain, and the bus would stay out-of-service (OOS) until someone noticed the oversight.

Zonar EVIR digitizes vehicle inspections and enables Hill's team to electronically verify that each one is performed properly.

- Drivers must physically visit and inspect each zone of the bus.
- They follow the procedure EVIR displays to ensure they inspect the correct components.
- When they're done, they upload the results for review.
- Repairs are prioritized and addressed faster.

Buses are moved back into service sooner—and less likely to break down while transporting students.

Still, when a bus inevitably breaks down, looking up its exact location online enables maintenance and dispatch to focus on whether to send a mechanic or a replacement bus. Less time is spent finding the bus, and they can solve the problem faster.

Healthy buses, healthier budgets.

When drivers used paper-based inspections, 25 to 30 buses (nearly 20% of the fleet) might be OOS at any given time. Extra buses were needed to run routes in their place.

Using EVIR has enhanced vehicle uptime to such a degree that Hill has reduced the fleet's inventory.

- Number of extra buses is down to five.
- May dispose of another 15 to 20 buses.
- Having fewer older buses to keep running reduced maintenance costs.

With fewer older buses and reduced maintenance costs, CFBISD reallocated expenses to purchase new, more efficient vehicles that need fewer repairs and less maintenance.

75% more drivers than fleets next door.

Zonar smart fleet management gives the district a hiring advantage. Hill explains why. "When we get a brand new driver, he has the support of EVIR, GPS, better routing, all these things add up. And it allows the drivers to always put safety first instead of being distracted."

"We're known as being the place to work, and that's due in large part to our use of technology. Zonar makes drivers' jobs easier."

Mark Hill,
Director of Transportation, CFBISD

Annual savings add up.

Hill estimates that using Zonar smart fleet solutions saves CFBISD approximately six figures each year.

“You choose Zonar because you want to raise your efficiency, lower your costs, help your preventive maintenance, and have a better customer service experience. And especially because it helps with what matters most: safety.”

Coming up: Plans for Zonar Z Pass.

[Zonar Z Pass](#) is a ridership tracking solution that provides detailed visibility into who’s on board and who isn’t. All securely, online, through the same platform used to manage the fleet.

Students scan their passive RFID card when they board and exit the bus. Z Pass captures the date, time, location and student ID associated with that card. Then automatically uploads that data to Ground Traffic Control, where authorized personnel see who’s on board, and who got off when and where—in near real time.

Hill plans to use that visibility to increase safeguards for student riders.

- Deter altercations and bullying through greater accountability.
- Quickly and accurately help parents looking for their child’s bus.
- Help search for missing students by quickly seeing who got off, when and where.
- Optimize routes and stops so students spend less time waiting.

With Zonar smart fleet solutions in place and by adding Z Pass ridership tracking, Hill looks forward to uncovering more ways to better serve CFBISD communities. Zonar looks forward to being his partner every step of the way.

“We put a lot of emphasis on customer service here. And Zonar augments our ability to do the best possible job for our customers.”

Mark Hill

About Zonar

Zonar exists because you deserve better. Student transportation fleets trust us to protect our nation's children every day. Now, we're the trusted leader and clear choice for small to mid-sized businesses, enterprise fleets, and public sector organizations across the Americas. To some, you're one of a million. To us, you're the one in a million. Our proven fleet management solutions help you run better, safer and more efficiently. We help you save more of everything. We work late, push harder and deliver what's needed, faster—for you.

You might not get fired for choosing someone bigger or shinier. But when there's a surprise, you'll want the one who picks up and shows up to help. You call? We answer, 24/7. Whatever size, mix or industry your fleet is, we move at your speed to help solve real-world problems.

Zonar HQ: Seattle, WA. Other locations: Cincinnati, OH, West Chicago, IL & Lakeland, FL. Top priority: You.

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