



**Bidder: Blue Bird Body Company**

**Proposal for RFP-2501KM – Purchase of School Buses and Related Accessories, Supplies and Parts**

**Section 1 - Introduction and Executive Summary**

Since its founding in 1927, Blue Bird has been recognized as a technology leader and innovator of school buses, setting industry standards with innovative design and manufacturing capabilities. With a singular focus on safety, reliability and durability, Blue Bird offers a complete line of buses, from Type A and C to Type D in a variety of options, configurations and power train choices. Today, Blue Bird is transforming the student transportation industry through cleaner-energy solutions. Blue Bird is the proven leader in low- and zero-emission school buses with more than 25,000 propane, natural gas and electric-powered buses currently in operation. Blue Bird has 2,560 employees, with manufacturing facilities based in Georgia and Quebec, and an extensive network of Dealers and Parts & Service facilities throughout North America. Our 2024 Annual Report is included in this proposal to provide details of our financials.

Our authorized Blue Bird dealer for the state of Georgia is Yancey Bus Sales and Service. As a business unit of Yancey Bros. Co., “The Nation’s Oldest Caterpillar Dealer”, Yancey Bus Sales & Service works closely with Yancey Power Systems – the on-highway transportation division of Yancey Bros. Co. In 2007, Blue Bird Bus announced Yancey Bus Sales & Service as their exclusive dealer for school bus sales, OEM parts and factory-supported service for Georgia. Since that time Yancey Bus Sales and Service has provided an extensive line of parts and aftermarket services for school buses of all makes and models for school buses across the state. In less than 10 years since being named a dealer, Yancey Bus achieved the milestone of being selected Blue Bird's "Dealer of the Year" for 2015.

Blue Bird Authorized Representative:

Albert Burleigh

Vice President, North America Bus Sales

albert.burleigh@blue-bird.com

Phone 478.919.7311

**Section 2 – Experience and Past Performance**

Our buses are sold through an extensive network of 45 U.S. and Canadian dealer locations that, in their territories, are exclusive to our Company on Type C and Type D school buses. In fiscal 2024, we sold 9,000 buses throughout the world. Approximately 91% of our buses sold in fiscal 2024 were sold through distributors and dealers. We design, engineer, manufacture, and sell three types of buses: (i) Type C school buses, (ii) Type D school buses, and (iii) specialty buses. Each of our Type C and Type D buses is manufactured and assembled on its own dedicated purpose-built chassis in Fort Valley, Georgia. Regardless of specifications, all school bus bodies that we manufacture include our signature 14-gauge one-piece steel bows roof system, complemented by a rugged and sturdy floor structure. The Blue Bird Micro Bird by Girardin Type A bus is produced through Micro Bird Holdings, Inc., an unconsolidated Canadian joint venture with Girardin Minibus JV Inc. (“Micro Bird”), and is sold through our dealer network.

Blue Bird has a reputation for safety, product quality/reliability/durability, and drivability. Our longevity and reputation in the school bus industry have made us an iconic American brand. We are the only



principal manufacturer with chassis and body production specifically designed for school bus applications in the U.S. and the only school bus company to offer as a standard feature compliance with industry recognized safety tests - Altoona Testing, Colorado Rack Test and the Kentucky Pole Test - as a standard specification across our entire product line.

We are the market leader in propane, gasoline and electric powered buses, having sold approximately 64% of all alternative powered school buses from fiscal 2015 through fiscal 2024. In fiscal 2024, we sold 5,213 propane, gasoline, compressed natural gas ("CNG") and electric powered buses, as market demand for alternative powered buses remained robust. In 2023, we opened the new Electric Vehicle Build-up Center, a transformed 40,000 square foot facility at the Fort Valley, Georgia manufacturing plant, designed to meet increasing demand for electric school buses.

We have consistently led the school bus industry with innovative product leadership through several industry firsts, including the first unique school bus chassis and the first OEM-manufactured propane powered bus. In fiscal 2016, years ahead of our competition, we launched the industry's first gasoline powered Type C bus (utilizing an exclusive Ford engine and transmission and Roush CleanTech fuel usage evaporative emissions certification) and we were first-to-market with electronic stability control. In fiscal 2018, we sold our first Type D electric vehicles and in the fiscal year ended September 28, 2019 ("fiscal 2019"), we introduced our Type C electric vehicle.

We provide warranties on virtually all of the buses and parts we sell. Warranties are offered for specific periods of time and mileage, and vary depending upon the type of product and the geographic location of its sale. Pursuant to these warranties, we will repair, replace, or adjust certain parts on a bus that are defective in factory-supplied materials or workmanship during the specified warranty period. In addition to the costs associated with this warranty coverage provided on our vehicles, we also incur costs as a result of field service actions (i.e., safety recalls and service bulletins) and customer satisfaction actions. Component suppliers, in particular major component suppliers such as engines and transmissions, provide warranties on their products. We are including a copy of our base warranty in this proposal. Extended warranties are available upon request.

Blue Bird has participated on the Sourcewell National Cooperative contract since 2012. In our fiscal year 2024, we sold approximately 160 school buses on the Sourcewell contract through our dealer network. Our contract number is 063020-BBB. A copy of this contract is included in this proposal.

### **Section 3 – Project Approach**

Blue Bird is uniquely positioned to offer the best possible service to program members wishing to purchase school buses off this contract. Blue Bird and our vast network of school bus dealers have extensive experience utilizing local, regional, and national cooperative contracts. This provides us with the knowledge to best serve those customers who utilize these procurement methods. In addition, Blue Bird has the widest breadth of product in the school bus industry. We are the only school bus manufacturer to offer four fuel types – gas, diesel, propane, and electric – to satisfy the demands of customers wanting options that best fit their student transportation needs.



#### **Section 4 – References**

Cobb County Schools

Matt Sanders

770-429-5821

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Paulding County Schools

Trey Studstill

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Bibb County Schools

Anthony Jackson

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Houston County Schools

Tom Walmer

478-329-2218

[tom.walmer@hcbe.net](mailto:tom.walmer@hcbe.net)

DeKalb County Schools

Cedric Burse

678-676-1330

[cedric\\_burse@dekalbschoolsga.org](mailto:cedric_burse@dekalbschoolsga.org)

#### **Section 5 – Fee Structure/Cost Proposal**

The ceiling price for our base bus in each category has been provided in Bid Table BT-271S. In addition, ceiling pricing has been provided for each bus type and fuel type that is available from Blue Bird and Micro Bird. All pricing includes base specifications, delivery charges, administrative fee of 1% (final fee to be negotiated if successful being awarded), and costs related to tariffs currently imposed by the federal government as of 4/1/2025. Any additional tariffs that are implemented after 4/1/2025 by the federal government are not included in the pricing but will be passed through as an additional charge at time it is imposed. Option pricing for all options available for our products has been provided in the catalog pricing section.

#### **Section 6 – Additional Information**

The following additional information has been submitted for review:

- Current Sourcewell Contract (showing participation in a national cooperative contract)
- Copy of Blue Bird's standard limited warranty
- Blue Bird FY2024 Annual Report and Form 10-K demonstration our financial performance
- Instructions and Conditions – Blue Bird redline edits



## ***Standard Limited Warranty***

*North America (U.S.A. & Canada)*

Blue Bird Body Company (Blue Bird) warrants each bus to be free from defects in material and workmanship under normal use and service within the limits described below:

1. For a period of five (5) years from date of delivery to the original user, Blue Bird warrants the:
  - Interior and exterior paint adhesion to the body shell (those components forming side walls, roof, front and rear sections), doors (entrance/exit, emergency, compartments), BBCV hoods, and front/rear bumpers.
2. For a period of five (5) years/100,000 miles/160,000 kilometers, whichever occurs first from date of delivery to the original user, Blue Bird warrants the:
  - Chassis frame rails and cross-members to be free from defects in structural integrity (breaking or cracking).
  - Body shell (those structural metal components welded or riveted together forming floor, side walls, roof, front and rear sections) to be free from defects in structural integrity (breaking or cracking) including rust-through.
  - School bus seat frames and barrier frames to be free from defects in structural integrity (breaking or cracking).
  - Blue Bird emissions components not covered by the engine manufacturer conform with all U.S. federal emissions regulations at the time of manufacture and that they are free from defects in material or workmanship which would cause them not to meet the U.S. federal emissions regulations. Refer to the engine manufacturer's limited warranty statement for emissions warranty coverage by the engine manufacturer.
3. For a period of four (4) years/50,000 miles/80,000 kilometers, whichever occurs first from date of delivery to the original user, Blue Bird warrants the:
  - Front axle assembly, including king pins, I-beam, bushings and spindles, excluding brakes and axle ends.
  - Rear axle assembly and differential, excluding brakes and axle ends.
4. For a period of three (3) years/36,000 miles/60,000 kilometers, whichever occurs first from date of delivery to the original user, Blue Bird warrants the:
  - Comfort Aire® integrated air conditioner, if equipped, subject to documented annual service inspections. Contact your Blue Bird Dealer for assistance.
5. For a period of two (2) years from date of delivery to the original user, Blue Bird warrants the:
  - School bus passenger and driver windows. Transit-style windows not included.
6. For a period of two (2) years from date of manufacture, Blue Bird warrants the:
  - Paint gloss: Gloss reading shall not drop below 60 on 60° meter (70% of initial gloss).
  - Paint color retention: Color coat shall not shift colors more than 4ΔE from the centroid of the national standard
7. For a period of two (2) years/24,000 miles/40,000 kilometers, whichever occurs first from date of delivery to the original user, Blue Bird warrants the:
  - Suspension, excluding pins and bushings.
  - Driveshafts, support bearings and universal joints.
8. For a period of one (1) year/12,000 miles/20,000 kilometers, whichever occurs first from date of delivery to the original user, Blue Bird warrants:
  - All other components not covered in 1-7 above, except diesel engines, propane engines/fuel systems, automatic transmissions, wheelchair lifts, non-Blue Bird air conditioners, tires, and batteries. The warranties of the diesel engine, propane engine/fuel system, automatic transmission, wheelchair lift, non-Blue Bird air conditioners, tires, and batteries, are provided solely by, and are the responsibility of, those manufacturers and are not a part of Blue Bird's limited warranty.

Blue Bird's obligation covered in this limited warranty is limited to the repair or replacement of such parts as shall, under normal use and service, appear to have been defective in workmanship or material. This warranty is applicable to Blue Bird bus products, All American (AFE, A3RE, D3FE, D3RE) and Vision (BBCV), that are registered and operated in the United States of America, Canada, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa. The warranty period begins on the date the bus is delivered to the original user. During the warranty period, this warranty is transferable to subsequent Owners/Operators in U.S.A. or Canada.

**THIS LIMITED WARRANTY IS EXPRESSLY IN LIEU OF ALL OTHER WARRANTIES EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED AND ALL OTHER OBLIGATIONS OR LIABILITIES. NO PERSON, INCLUDING SALESPERSONS, DEALERS, OR FACTORY REPRESENTATIVES OF BLUE BIRD, IS AUTHORIZED TO MAKE ANY REPRESENTATION OR WARRANTY CONCERNING BLUE BIRD PRODUCTS EXCEPT TO REFER PURCHASERS TO THIS LIMITED WARRANTY. BLUE BIRD MAKES NO WARRANTY OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. BLUE BIRD SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR INCIDENTAL OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES.**

Contact your Blue Bird Dealer to obtain service for your Blue Bird bus. Your Blue Bird Dealer will help arrange for repairs by the Dealer or another qualified repair facility. Defects must be reported to a Blue Bird Dealer immediately upon discovery of the defect and within the warranty period as stated herein. Defects must be repaired immediately upon discovery of the defect and within the warranty period as stated herein. Unless authorized by the Blue Bird Dealer, repairs under this limited warranty are to be performed by the Blue Bird Dealer. It is the responsibility of the Owner/Operator to return the bus to the Blue Bird Dealer, or qualified repair facility authorized by the Blue Bird Dealer for warranty repairs. All claims for warranty repairs by other than the Blue Bird Dealer must be received by the Blue Bird Dealer not later than 30 days after the repair date. The owner/operator is responsible for operating and maintaining the bus as described in the Operator's and Service Manuals. All maintenance records should be retained by the owner/operator. Your Blue Bird Dealer will register the bus with Blue Bird and can assist with registering components that are warranted by the component manufacturers.

## **Limitations & Exclusions**

In addition to the limitations described on the previous page, items specifically not covered include but are not limited to:

- Engines, automatic transmissions, wheelchair lifts, air conditioners (other than Blue Bird Comfort Aire® system), tires, and batteries. The limited warranties for these components are provided solely by and are the responsibility of those manufacturers and are not a part of Blue Bird's limited warranty.
- Loss of use and incidental consequential expenses, including but not limited to commercial loss, loss of commercial fares, driver time or pay, lease or rental of substitute vehicle, storage, lodging, meals, telephone calls and other travel costs.
- Wear, wear-out and consumption. This warranty shall not apply to any parts or components which must be repaired, replaced or adjusted during the warranty period **that are due to wear, wear-out or consumption**, including but not limited to brake pads and linings, drums and rotors, wiper blades, light bulbs, filters, lubricants, fluids, belts, bearings other than those specifically covered by the limited warranty, suspension pins and bushings, batteries, worn seat covers, worn stepreads and floor covering, worn door and window seals, discharged fire extinguishers, damaged (scratches, cracks) gauge and light lenses, and tires. Wear not only includes friction-type wear but can also include environmental deterioration including but not limited to surface corrosion on exhaust pipes/clamps and brake drums/rotors, as well as fading, cracking or discoloration of seat covers caused by U.V.
- Maintenance including but not limited to tightening loose fasteners, axle & wheel alignments, wheel-balancing, tightening body tie-downs, door adjustments, tightening hose clamps, and sealing/caulking windows, doors, roof hatches and lights.
- This warranty shall not apply to any parts or components which must be repaired, replaced or adjusted during the warranty period as a result of accident damage, abnormal operation, misuse and/or abuse, including but not limited to excessive operation on unpaved, un-maintained roads, operation on cross-country trails or off-road conditions, collision, fire, vandalism, explosion, objects striking the vehicle, theft, freezing, riot, flood.
- Paint adhesion, gloss and/or color failures resulting from accidents/abrasions, road chemicals, caustic detergents/cleaners, and/or improper maintenance. Paint adhesion failures, whether warrantable defects or non-warrantable events, that are not repaired immediately upon discovery of the failure may deteriorate the finish and/or panels underneath. Surface corrosion and/or other progressive deterioration as a result of not repairing paint adhesion failures immediately is not covered by this warranty. Contact your Blue Bird Dealer before making any repairs to the paint finish.
- Paint gloss and color failures without evidence of proper care and maintenance, as recommended in the Driver's Handbook, nor repairs to correct paint gloss or color failures without preapproval by Blue Bird. Contact your Blue Bird Dealer before making any repairs to the paint finish.
- Vehicle modifications or equipment installations performed without the written approval of Blue Bird, to the extent the modifications or equipment installations adversely affect other vehicle components or performance, Blue Bird shall not accept any product liability or claims under the terms of the limited warranty. These claims become the sole responsibility of the company performing the modifications and/or installations.
- Transportation expenses to deliver the bus to a Blue Bird Dealer or nearest qualified repair facility, including but not limited to fuel, driver time/pay, mileage and towing.
- Repairs to parts or components which have been previously replaced with parts not obtained from Blue Bird or failures caused by non-Blue Bird parts or components. Rework of repairs not performed by or approved by a Blue Bird Dealer.
- Excessive labor hours, premium labor costs, overtime labor costs, local taxes. This limited warranty covers reasonable labor to perform replacement or repair.
- Defects not reported to a Blue Bird Dealer and repaired during the warranty period. Repairs are to be made immediately upon discovery of the defect.
- Damage caused by using improper or contaminated fluids, including but not limited to fuels, lubricants and coolant. Damage caused by using fluids that do not meet Blue Bird's or the Manufacturers' minimum recommendations. Damage caused by the lack of fluids and/or improper fluid maintenance.
- Using non-Blue Bird service parts. Usage of non-Blue Bird parts will affect future warranty coverage.
- Overloading beyond the normal seated and standee capacity voids all warranties.

Blue Bird reserves the right to make changes in design and changes or improvements upon its products without imposing any obligations upon itself to install the same upon products theretofore manufactured. Any suit alleging a breach of this limited warranty or of any other alleged warranty, including any claim for rescission or revocation of acceptance, must be filed within one year of breach.

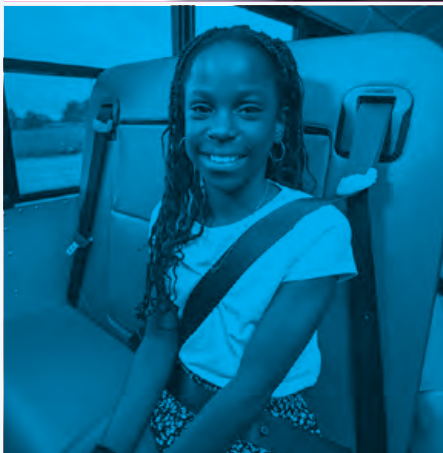
## **Controlling Law and Severability**

This Limited Warranty shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia, U.S.A. The owner/operator agrees and consents to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the State of Georgia for all purposes regarding this Limited Warranty and further agrees and consents that venue of any action involving this Limited Warranty or any other alleged warranty, including any claim for rescission or revocation of acceptance, shall be exclusively in Peach County, Georgia. Owner/Operator hereby submits to personal jurisdiction in Peach County, Georgia and waives any objection or argument related to venue, personal jurisdiction, forum non convenience, and/or transfer. If any portion hereof is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining provisions of the Limited Warranty shall remain in full force and effect.





Your Children's Safety  
is Our Business



**BLUE BIRD**

2024 Annual Report



## Legacy of Leadership, Innovation and Customer Focus.

Since its founding in 1927, Blue Bird has been recognized as a technology leader and innovator of school buses, setting industry standards with innovative design and manufacturing capabilities. With a singular focus on safety, reliability and durability, Blue Bird offers a complete line of buses, from Type A and C to Type D in a variety of options, configurations and power train choices.

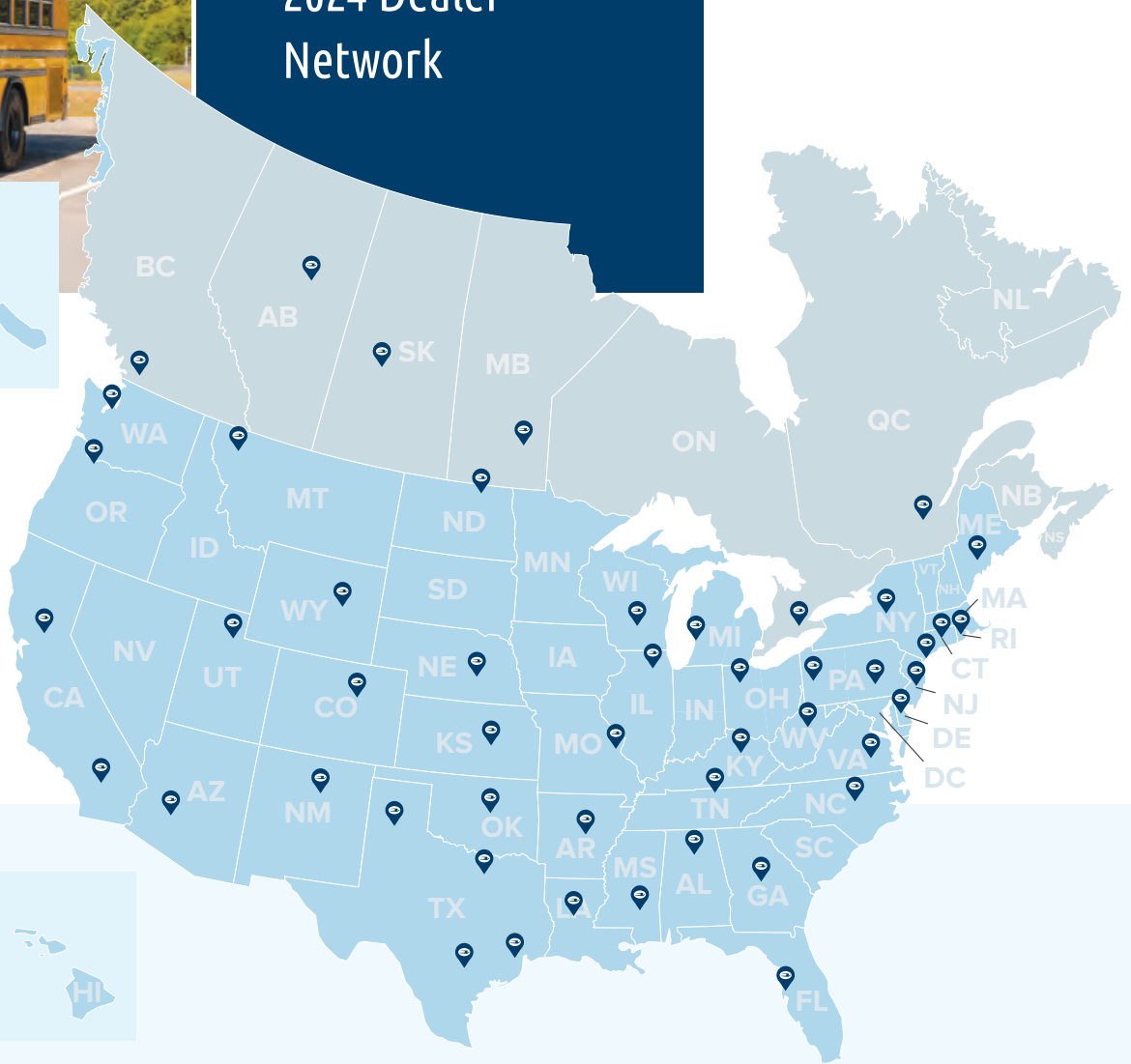
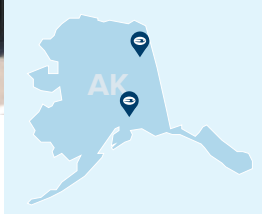
Today, Blue Bird is transforming the student transportation industry through cleaner-energy solutions. Blue Bird is the proven leader in low- and zero-emission school buses with more than 25,000 propane, natural gas and electric-powered buses currently in operation.

Blue Bird has 2,560 employees, with manufacturing facilities based in Georgia and Quebec, and an extensive network of Dealers and Parts & Service facilities throughout North America.





## 2024 Dealer Network



### Blue Bird by the Numbers

**2,000+**

electric, zero-emission buses sold

**550K+**

school buses built since we started in 1927

**25K+**

propane, natural gas and electric-powered buses sold

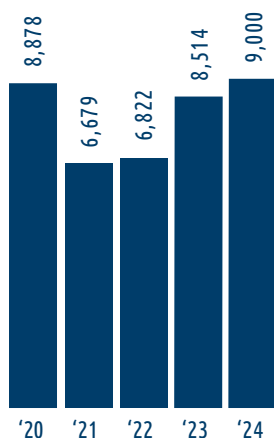
**180K**

school buses on the road today



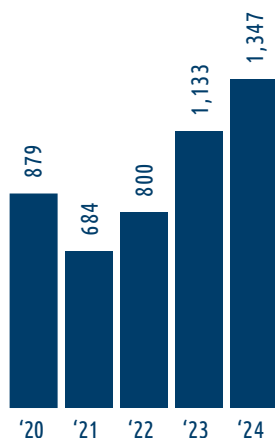
# Financial Highlights

## Bus Unit Sales



## Net Sales

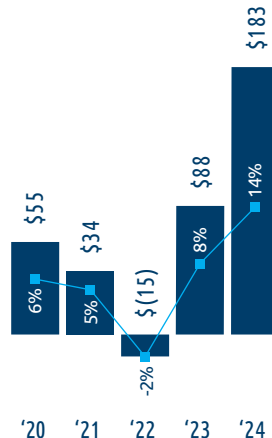
(in Millions)



## Adjusted EBITDA

(in Millions)

■ Adjusted EBITDA  
— Adjusted EBITDA Margin



## Adjusted Free Cash Flow

(in Millions)



UNITS SOLD

9,000

+486 vs. '23

NET SALES

\$1,347M

+\$214M vs. '23



ADJUSTED EBITDA

\$183M

+\$95M vs. '23

ADJUSTED FCF

\$99M

\$(22)M vs. '23





## Dear Fellow Shareholders



Phil Horlock, President

It is with great pride and excitement that I share the accomplishments of Blue Bird Corporation in fiscal 2024.

**This year marks a true turning point in Blue Bird's business trajectory, as we have achieved a level of profitable growth and success that sets a new standard for our performance and prepares for an even brighter future.** Fiscal 2024 was not only a record-breaking year in terms of financial results, but it was also a year of strategic progress, innovation and a reinforced commitment to sustainability.

As we reflect on our outstanding achievements of the past year, we remain focused on the key priorities that have propelled us forward: delivering record financial performance, investing in sustainable growth and positioning Blue Bird for sustained long-term success. I am incredibly proud of the engagement, dedication, and teamwork demonstrated across our entire organization, as well as the unwavering support of our dealers, partners, and shareholders.

### Record-Breaking Financial Performance

**Fiscal 2024 was, without a doubt, a breakout year for Blue Bird. We delivered record results across the board and exceeded our financial guidance for the year on every key metric.** In fact, we beat and raised full-year guidance at every quarter in fiscal 2024, a trend that we set in mid-2023. Our Adjusted EBITDA of \$183 million—representing a full six percentage point increase in Adjusted EBITDA margin to 13.6%—was more than double the prior record that we set in 2023. This **remarkable**



**profit improvement was driven by several factors: an increase in the number of units sold, significantly higher vehicle pricing buoyed by a richer mix of electric and alternative-powered buses, and substantial gains in manufacturing productivity and throughput.**

In total, we sold 9,000 buses in fiscal 2024, which was a solid 6% increase over the previous year. Our bus net revenue, however, grew by a substantial 20% over the prior year, underscoring the strength of demand for Blue Bird buses, particularly our electric and alternative-powered vehicles which command higher prices.

Notably, we achieved a very strong 30% increase in sales of electric buses, and we remain the undisputed leader in the alternative-powered bus segment, with close to 60% of our unit sales comprising of propane, gas, or electric buses. **Our 60% mix of alternative-powered buses compares with a run-rate mix of less than 10% at our two major competitors, who continue to tout diesel engines as the way forward, despite their unquestionable emission challenges.** We like being different and our exclusive propane-, gas-, and electric-powered offerings hit the mark with our customers, and drive higher margins for Blue Bird.

The terrific growth we experienced in fiscal 2024 is not only a testament to the strength of the market, but also to the diligence, resilience and sheer hard work by the Blue Bird team. I want to express my deepest gratitude to every employee, dealer and supplier partner who contributed to this exceptional performance.

### **A Strong and Sustainable Market Position**

As we look forward to the future, it is clear that the market demand for Blue Bird school buses remains exceptionally strong. At the end of fiscal 2024, our order backlog stood at almost 5,000 buses, a 6% increase from the previous year. Importantly, net new orders for Blue Bird buses were up 16% compared with a year ago, reflecting robust customer demand and a strong endorsement of our product portfolio. Our continued market leadership in the electric-vehicle space is a critical driver of this demand, and the impact is growing, with 13% of our order backlog at fiscal year-end being electric vehicle orders.

As part of our commitment to sustainable growth, we are focused on diversifying our product offerings and

expanding our market share in clean-energy solutions. In fiscal 2024, we delivered more than 700 electric buses—nearly 30% above the previous year—thanks in large part to the first round of funding from the EPA’s Clean School Bus Program. This funding is part of a \$5 billion initiative aimed at accelerating the adoption of clean school buses across the United States. Blue Bird remains well-positioned to **continue benefiting from the unprecedented federal investment in clean transportation, and with continued state and local funding support, we intend to grow electric bus sales disproportionately in the coming years.** We are committed to the clean-transportation of our students—**what can be more important than zero-emissions and clean air for the 25 million children who ride school buses every day?**



**The Blue Bird team continued to exceed expectations by improving productivity and throughput, driving new orders, and expanding our leadership in alternative-powered buses.”**

### **Strategic Investments for Long-Term Growth**

While fiscal 2024 was a year of exceptional financial results, it was also a year of strategic investments in our long-term future. We remain focused on delivering a sustained, profitable growth model. To this end, we are investing in key areas to strengthen our market position, increase production capacity, and further enhance our capabilities in electric and alternative-powered vehicles.

**In the third quarter of fiscal 2024, we were awarded an \$80 million grant by the Department of Energy to expand our manufacturing footprint at our home in Fort Valley, Georgia.** Representing 50% funding of a total \$160 million investment plan, this grant will allow us to increase our annual production capacity from 10,000 to 14,000 school buses on a single shift.





**Blue Bird is entering fiscal 2025 with strong momentum, record financial results, and a clear path to continued growth.”**

It will also create up to 400 new jobs and enable us to meet the growing demand for zero- and low-emission school buses. This is **a great example of the private and public sectors working together effectively—creating 400 good-paying American jobs, driving innovation, advancing manufacturing in Middle-Georgia and providing clean-energy school buses for our children’s health and safety.**

Additionally, we are continuing to invest in lean manufacturing techniques and processes, we are upgrading our facilities and designs to improve quality and reliability, and we are driving higher efficiencies and increasing throughput as we position ourselves for greater success and growth in the years ahead. We have no time for complacency!

### **Commitment to Clean Energy and Sustainability**

As a forward-looking Company, we are deeply committed to leading the transition to cleaner, more sustainable school transportation. **The adoption of electric and alternative-powered buses is not only good for business but is also essential for the health and safety of our children and communities.** Our focus on clean-energy solutions aligns with our core values and reflects our responsibility to the environment and the communities we serve.

We have invested heavily over the past 15 years in alternative-powered buses, shifting us away from the traditional diesel power that has dominated our industry

for so long. Blue Bird is unique in this regard and **we are proud to be #1 in electric, propane and gas-powered buses that provide much lower emission solutions for our school districts and schoolchildren.** That is real sustainability that we are delivering today.

Thanks to the EPA’s Clean School Bus Program, our industry has been able to accelerate the deployment of electric- and propane-powered school buses, providing affordable zero- and low-emission transportation solutions. **With \$5 billion in funding being awarded by the EPA over five years, upward of 15,000 clean school buses could be deployed between 2023 to 2028, replacing older, harmful diesel-powered buses** that transport our children today. This is transformational and will ensure a healthier and safer ride to school.

Blue Bird has already delivered over 2,000 electric buses, and we are well-positioned to benefit from the remaining rounds of funding. **We anticipate more than a 60% increase in our electric bus deliveries in fiscal 2025,** and we are confident that Blue Bird will remain the industry leader in this critical transition to healthier and sustainable student transportation.

### **Delivering Value to Shareholders**

As we continue to execute on our profitable-growth strategy, we are focused on delivering increased value to our shareholders. **Fiscal 2024 was a remarkable “breakout” year with profitability and margin at unprecedented highs, and we are committed to**



**maintaining this momentum moving forward.** Our adjusted EBITDA for fiscal 2024 more than doubled, reaching \$183 million, our adjusted free cash flow was just shy of \$100 million (above our target of 50% of Adjusted EBITDA) and we saw a six-percentage point margin increase to 13.6%.

For fiscal 2025, we raised our guidance with expected net revenue of \$1.45 billion and Adjusted EBITDA of \$200 million. Our goal is to maintain a robust 14% Adjusted EBITDA margin, supported by continued strong demand for our products, priced for the economic conditions in which we operate, and built with increased efficiencies.

Further, we continue to allocate capital prudently to ensure long-term growth while returning value to shareholders. In fiscal 2024, we completed a \$10 million stock buyback, and we have authorization for up to another \$50 million in additional buybacks. **We plan to maintain strong liquidity and financial flexibility, positioning us well to pursue both organic and non-organic growth opportunities.**

### A Bright Future Ahead

As we look to the future, we are excited about the opportunities ahead. **Blue Bird is entering fiscal 2025 with strong momentum, record financial results, and a clear path to continued growth.** We remain confident in our ability to meet our long-term financial targets,

namely, achieving a 15%+ Adjusted EBITDA margin and \$1.85 to \$2 billion in revenue by fiscal 2028.

**Our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and profitability is unwavering,** and we are focused on maintaining our leadership position in the school bus industry. With an exciting product-development pipeline for our electric and alternative-powered vehicles, a robust order backlog, and continued investments in manufacturing, people and technology, Blue Bird is well-positioned for future growth.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to our employees, dealers, customers and shareholders for your continued support, belief and commitment to Blue Bird's success. **Together, we are building a brighter, safer, and more sustainable future for student transportation.**

Sincerely,

Phil Horlock  
President & CEO



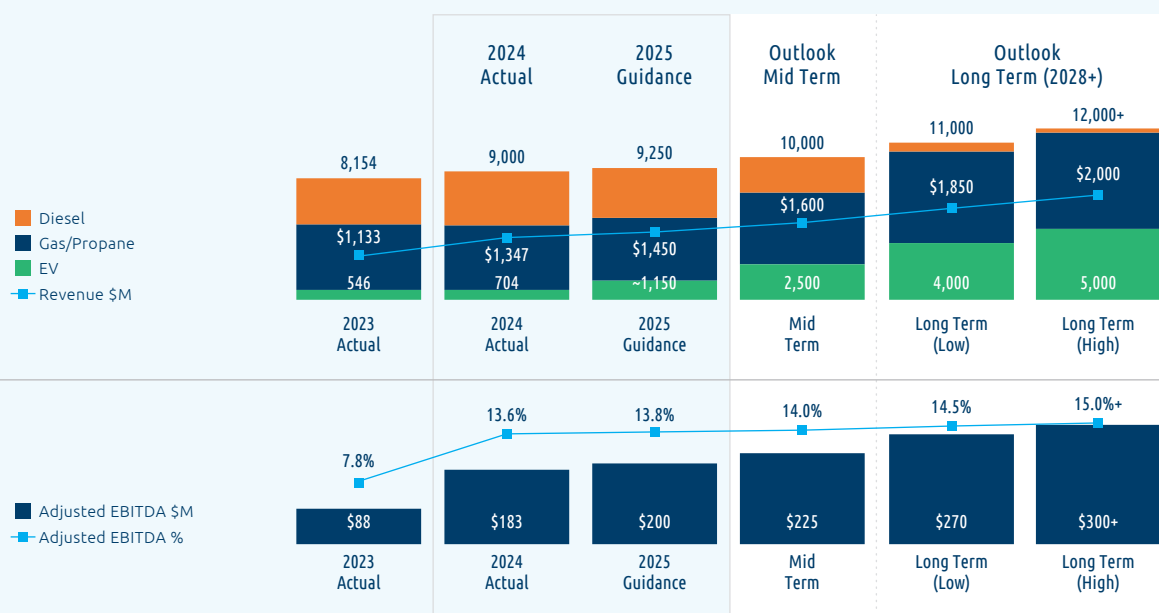
## A Note from Razvan Radulescu, CFO

Razvan Radulescu,  
Chief Financial Officer

We are extremely happy about our 2024 record results, which more than doubled our prior record Adj. EBITDA and more than tripled our prior record Net Income.

Our strong Operating Cash Flow also drives record levels of Liquidity. And our capital allocation strategy balances profitable growth, return to shareholders via stock buybacks, and a strong cash position.

Our business transformation continues to yield great results, and ahead of the plan we have been messaging. We are raising our long-term profit outlook towards an Adjusted EBITDA margin of 15%+ on ~\$2 billion in revenue.



**UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

**Washington, D.C. 20549**

**FORM 10-K**

☒ **ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**  
**For the fiscal year ended September 28, 2024**

**OR**

☐ **TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**  
**For the transition period from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_**

**Commission File Number: 001-36267**

**BLUE BIRD CORPORATION**

**(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)**

**Delaware**

**46-3891989**

(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization) (IRS Employer Identification No.)

**3920 Arkwright Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Macon, Georgia, 31210**

(Address of Principal Executive Offices)

(Zip Code)

**(478) 822-2801**

(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

**Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:**

Title of each class	Trading Symbol(s)	Name of each exchange on which registered
<b>Common stock, \$0.0001 par value</b>	<b>BLBD</b>	<b>NASDAQ Global Market</b>

**Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: None**

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.

Yes ☒ No ☐

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act.

Yes ☐ No ☒

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.

Yes ☒ No ☐



Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically every Interactive Data File required to be submitted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§ 232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit such files). Yes ☒ No ☐

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, a smaller reporting company, or an emerging growth company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer," "smaller reporting company," and "emerging growth company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Accelerated filer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-accelerated filer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Smaller reporting company	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Emerging growth company	<input type="checkbox"/>

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act. ☐

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has filed a report on and attestation to its management's assessment of the effectiveness of its internal control over financial reporting under Section 404(b) of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (15 U.S.C. 7262(b)) by the registered public accounting firm that prepared or issued its audit report. ☒

If securities are registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act, indicate by check mark whether the financial statements of the registrant included in the filing reflect the correction of an error to previously issued financial statements. ☐

Indicate by check mark whether any of those error corrections are restatements that required a recovery analysis of incentive-based compensation received by any of the registrant's executive officers during the relevant recovery period pursuant to §240.10D-1(b). ☐

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act). Yes ☐ No ☒

At March 30, 2024, the aggregate market value of the registrant's common stock held by non-affiliates of the registrant was approximately \$1,232.4 million based on the closing sales price of \$38.34 as reported on The NASDAQ Global Market on March 28, 2024. For the purpose of this response, executive officers, directors, and holders of 10% or more of the registrant's common stock are considered to be affiliates of the registrant at that date.

At November 20, 2024, there were 32,268,022 outstanding shares of the registrant's \$0.0001 par value common stock.

#### **DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE**

Portions of the Registrant's definitive proxy statement to be delivered to stockholders in connection with the Registrant's 2025 Annual Meeting of Stockholders are incorporated by reference in response to Part III of this report.

**BLUE BIRD CORPORATION**  
**FORM 10-K**

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## PART I

### SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

*This Annual Report on Form 10-K (this "Report") of Blue Bird Corporation ("Blue Bird" or the "Company") contains forward-looking statements. Except as otherwise indicated by the context, references in this Report to "we," "us" and "our" are to the consolidated business of the Company. All statements in this Report, including those made by management of the Company, other than statements of historical fact, are forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are based on management's estimates, projections and assumptions as of the date hereof and include the assumptions that underlie such statements. Forward-looking statements may contain words such as "may," "will," "should," "could," "would," "expect," "plan," "estimate," "project," "budget," "forecast," "seek," "target," "anticipate," "believe," "predict," "potential" and "continue," the negative of these terms, or other comparable terminology. Examples of forward-looking statements include statements regarding the Company's future financial results, research and trial results, regulatory approvals, operating results, business strategies, projected costs, products, competitive positions, management's plans and objectives for future operations, and industry trends. These forward-looking statements relate to expectations for future financial performance, business strategies or expectations for our business. Specifically, forward-looking statements may include statements relating to:*

- the future financial performance of the Company;*
- negative changes in the market for Blue Bird products;*
- expansion plans and opportunities;*
- challenges or unexpected costs related to manufacturing;*
- future impacts from pandemics, epidemics or similar widespread disease or illness outbreaks (collectively, "public health crises") on capital markets, manufacturing and supply chain abilities, consumer and customer demand, school system operations, workplace conditions, and any other unexpected impacts, which could include, among other effects:*
  - disruption in global financial and credit markets;*
  - supply shortages and supplier financial risk, especially from our single-source suppliers impacted by public health crises;*
  - negative impacts to manufacturing operations or the supply chain from shutdowns or other disruptions in operations;*
  - negative impacts on capacity and/or production in response to changes in demand due to public health crises, including possible cost containment actions;*
  - financial difficulties of our customers impacted by public health crises;*
  - reductions in market demand for our products due to public health crises; and*
  - potential negative impacts of various actions taken by foreign and United States of America ("U.S.") federal, state and/or local governments in response to public health crises.*
- future impacts resulting from military conflicts, which include or could include, among other effects:*
  - disruption in global commodity and other markets;*
  - supply shortages and supplier financial risk, especially from suppliers providing inventory that is dependent on resources originating from countries involved in military conflicts; and*
  - negative impacts to manufacturing operations resulting from inventory cost volatility or the supply chain due to shutdowns or other disruptions in operations.*

*These forward-looking statements are based on information available as of the date of this Report (or, in the case of forward-looking statements incorporated herein by reference, as of the date of the applicable filed document), and current expectations, forecasts and assumptions, and involve a number of judgments, risks and uncertainties. Accordingly, forward-looking statements should not be relied upon as representing our views as of any subsequent date, and we do not undertake any obligation to update forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date they were made, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as may be required under applicable securities laws. As a result of a number of known and unknown risks and uncertainties, our actual results or performance may be materially different than those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements.*

*Any expectations based on these forward-looking statements are subject to risks and uncertainties and other important factors, including those discussed in this Report, particularly the sections titled "Risk Factors" and "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations." Other risks and uncertainties are and will be disclosed in the Company's prior and future Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") filings. The following information should be read in conjunction with the financial statements included in this Report.*



### **Available Information**

We are subject to the reporting and information requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, and as a result are obligated to file or furnish, as applicable, annual, quarterly, and current reports, proxy statements, and other information with the SEC. We make these documents and other information available free of charge on our website (<https://www.blue-bird.com>) as soon as reasonably practicable after we electronically file them with, or furnish them to, the SEC. Information on our website does not constitute part of this Report. In addition, the SEC maintains a website (<https://www.sec.gov>) that contains our annual, quarterly, and current reports, proxy and information statements, and other information we electronically file with, or furnish to, the SEC.

## Item 1. Business

The Company (formerly Hennessy Capital Acquisition Corp.) was incorporated in Delaware on September 24, 2013 as a special purpose acquisition company, or SPAC. On February 24, 2015, the Company consummated a business combination (the “Business Combination”), pursuant to which the Company acquired all of the outstanding capital stock of School Bus Holdings Inc., a Delaware corporation (“School Bus Holdings” or “SBH”) from The Traxis Group, B.V. (the “Seller”). The total purchase price was paid in a combination of cash in the amount of \$100.0 million and 12,000,000 shares of the Company’s common stock, \$0.0001 par value (the “Common Stock”), valued at \$120.0 million.

In connection with the closing of the Business Combination, the Company changed its name from Hennessy Capital Acquisition Corp. to Blue Bird Corporation. Unless expressly stated otherwise in this Report, Blue Bird Corporation is referred to as “Blue Bird,” the “Company,” “we,” “our” or “us,” and includes its consolidated subsidiaries.

In May 2016, the Seller, ASP BB Holdings LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (“ASP”), and the Company entered into an agreement pursuant to which the Seller agreed to sell the 12,000,000 shares of Common Stock of the Company owned by Seller (the “Transaction Shares”) to ASP. ASP acquired 7,000,000 Transaction Shares at an initial closing on June 3, 2016 for an amount in cash equal to \$10.10 per share and 5,000,000 Transaction Shares at a second closing on June 8, 2016 for an amount in cash equal to \$11.00 per share, for an aggregate purchase price of \$125.7 million. There were no proceeds to the Company from this transaction.

The following discussion of our business describes the business historically operated by School Bus Holdings and its subsidiaries under the “Blue Bird” name as an independent enterprise prior to the Business Combination and as subsidiaries of Blue Bird Corporation after the Business Combination.

The periodic reports we file with, or furnish to, the SEC pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, are available free of charge on our website: <https://investors.blue-bird.com>. This includes Annual Reports on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and Current Reports on Form 8-K, as well as any amendments to those reports. Section 16 filings made with the SEC by any of our executive officers or directors with respect to our Common Stock also are made available free of charge through our website. We post each of these documents on our website as soon as reasonably practicable after it is electronically filed with, or furnished to, the SEC. Our reports filed with, or furnished to, the SEC may also be found at the SEC’s website at <https://www.sec.gov>. The Company’s Common Stock is traded on The NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol “BLBD.”

The corporate governance information on our website includes our Corporate Governance Principles, Code of Conduct and Ethics and the Charters for each of the Committees of our Board of Directors. Any amendments to our Code of Ethics or waivers granted to our directors and executive officers will be posted on our corporate website.

In addition to the information contained in this Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended September 28, 2024 (“Report”), information about our Company can be found at <https://investors.blue-bird.com>, including extensive information about our management team, our products and our corporate governance.

The foregoing information regarding content on our website is for convenience only and is not deemed to be incorporated by reference into this Report or filed with the SEC.

### Overview

We are the leading independent designer and manufacturer of school buses, with more than 610,000 buses sold since our formation in 1927.

We review and present our business in two operating segments, which are also our reportable segments: (i) the Bus segment, which involves the design, engineering, manufacture and sale of school buses and extended warranties; and (ii) the Parts segment, which includes the sale of replacement bus parts. Financial information is reported on the basis that it is used internally by the chief operating decision maker (“CODM”) in evaluating segment performance and deciding how to allocate resources to segments. The President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company has been identified as the CODM. Management evaluates the segments based primarily upon revenues and gross profit. Refer to Note 11, *Segment Information*, to the accompanying consolidated financial statements for additional financial information regarding our reportable segments including the primary geographic areas in which we earn revenues.

Throughout this Report, we refer to the fiscal year ended September 28, 2024 as “fiscal 2024,” the fiscal year ended September 30, 2023 as “fiscal 2023” and the fiscal year ended October 1, 2022 as “fiscal 2022.” There were 52 weeks in fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023, and fiscal 2022.

Our performance in recent years has been driven by the implementation of repeatable processes focused on product initiatives, continuous improvement of both competitiveness and manufacturing flexibility, and lowering our cost of capital, as described below:

1. **Alternative Power Initiatives** — We believe Blue Bird is the clear leader in alternative powered school buses (defined as buses that do not operate on diesel fuel) and we continue to introduce new or enhanced products to support growing consumer demand for these products.

- **Propane and Gasoline** — In fiscal 2024, we extended our exclusive clean school bus collaboration with Ford Component Sales and Roush CleanTech to 2030, further strengthening Blue Bird's industry leadership in low- and zero-emission student transportation.

As part of this collaboration that began in 2012, Ford Component Sales supplies its 7.3L V8 engine exclusively to us, while Roush CleanTech integrates this compact, durable and easy-to-maintain engine into low-emission powertrain options for propane and gasoline powered school buses. Since 2012, Blue Bird has deployed more than 40,000 alternative fuel powered school buses.

The demand for Blue Bird's propane powered school buses has steadily increased over the past decade. Our propane engine is 90 percent cleaner than the most stringent current federal emission standards set by the United States of America ("U.S.") Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA"). New and even stricter emission standards will take effect in 2027, with our near zero-emission, propane powered school buses already exceeding those emission standards currently.

- **Electric** — Blue Bird is the first major school bus manufacturer to market, and presently the clear leader in, electric bus sales among all major original equipment manufacturers ("OEM"). We have partnered with Cummins, one of our long-standing engine suppliers, to design and develop our electric vehicle offering. We offer electric solutions in both our Type C and Type D buses and commenced delivery to customers in the fiscal year ended September 29, 2018 ("fiscal 2018"). In fiscal 2024, we delivered our 2,000th electric school bus. With demand and interest continuing to grow, we have taken, and will continue to take, actions to expand our electric vehicle production capacity.

2. **Diesel** — Blue Bird works closely with Cummins on diesel engines, which continue to be the power source for the majority of buses sold in the school bus industry.

3. **Product Initiatives** — We continue to update and improve our products.

- During fiscal 2024, we announced, and began taking actions to implement, the most comprehensive safety upgrades to our school buses in the Company's history.

Starting in the first quarter of the fiscal year ending September 27, 2025 ("fiscal 2025"), Blue Bird will begin equipping new school buses with a series of industry-first safety features, enhancing the safety of school children and school bus drivers. For the first time in student transportation history, new Blue Bird buses will be equipped with three-point seat belts as standard protection for all student passengers. Other seat options will still be available to meet specific customer needs. As an additional industry first, Blue Bird will safeguard school bus drivers with the introduction of 4Front, a steering wheel deployed air bag. Blue Bird collaborated with IMMI, an employee-owned, leading global supplier of advanced safety systems and restraints based in Indiana, to develop these industry-leading safety enhancements in student transportation.

Blue Bird will also begin implementing a series of improvements to increase the performance of the school bus and its safety on the road. To improve visibility for the bus driver and other motorists, Blue Bird will adopt high-intensity LED lighting on the outside and inside of the bus, high-resolution front and rear cameras, as well as lighted stop arms, lighted school bus signs, and strobe lights. Blue Bird will also begin implementing high-tech systems to improve vehicle safety, including collision mitigation systems being added to the currently-standard electronic stability control ("ESC").

4. **Manufacturing and Process Initiatives** — We commenced and have continued a number of initiatives to continue to build customer loyalty, reduce costs, and enhance competitiveness.

- We launched our state-of-the-art 60,000 square foot paint facility in July 2019. Using robotic technology, the paint facility is designed to paint a bus three times faster than can be done manually, with a higher paint transfer rate and

consistent, outstanding coverage. In keeping with Blue Bird's environmental awareness focus, the facility features a zero-to-landfill design. All paint over spray is captured, dried and sent to a power generation plant to be used as fuel.

- During fiscal 2023, we opened the new Electric Vehicle Build-up Center, a transformed 40,000 square foot facility at the Fort Valley, Georgia manufacturing plant, designed to meet increasing demand for electric school buses.
- During fiscal 2024, the U.S. Department of Energy ("DOE") selected Blue Bird to receive an approximate \$80 million grant to convert a former manufacturing site for diesel powered motorhomes into an approximately 600,000 square foot, electric and low-emissions vehicle manufacturing facility. The grant represents 50 percent of the total approximate \$160 million investment required to complete the conversion project. The award selection is subject to final contract and funding negotiations between the DOE and Blue Bird, which are expected to conclude at the end of calendar year 2024 or the beginning of calendar year 2025.

5. **Access to Capital** — We refinanced our term debt with substantially better terms in November 2023 via execution of a new Credit Agreement (as defined below), which also provides total revolving commitments of \$150.0 million. Additional details and discussion of this debt facility can be found in the "Liquidity and Capital Resources" section of Item 7. "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" of this Report.

Our management believes that Blue Bird is in a leading position in the industry due to our range of alternative power offerings and our strong diesel offering. We believe that our alternative power options will continue to capture market share in the industry as customers realize benefits on the total cost of ownership and as the adoption of green technology gains traction. Furthermore, we believe that our product, process, and manufacturing initiatives are appropriately aligned with our long-term objectives.

As a result of the concentration of Blue Bird's sales in the school bus industry in the U.S. and Canada, our operations are affected by national, state, and local economic and political factors that impact spending for public and, to a lesser extent, private education. Unlike the discretionary portion of school budgets, the offering of school bus services is typically viewed as a mandatory part of the public infrastructure across the U.S. and Canada, ensuring that funding for new school buses receives some level of priority in all economic climates. All 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the 13 Canadian Provinces and Territories have fleets of school buses in operation.

## **Bus Segment**

Our buses are sold through an extensive network of 45 U.S. and Canadian dealer locations that, in their territories, are exclusive to our Company on Type C and Type D school buses. We also sell directly to major fleet operators, the U.S. government, state governments and authorized dealers in certain limited foreign countries.

In fiscal 2024, we sold 9,000 buses throughout the world. Refer to "Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" for discussion of our unit volumes.

Approximately 91% of our buses sold in fiscal 2024 were sold through distributors and dealers. The Company holds no equity or control position in any of the distributors or dealers.

We design, engineer, manufacture, and sell three types of buses: (i) Type C school buses, (ii) Type D school buses, and (iii) specialty buses. Each of our Type C and Type D buses is manufactured and assembled on its own dedicated purpose-built chassis in Fort Valley, Georgia. Regardless of specifications, all school bus bodies that we manufacture include our signature 14-gauge one-piece steel bows roof system, complemented by a rugged and sturdy floor structure.

Specialty buses include school buses that are converted to suit applications required by the U.S. government, state and local governments, and various customers for commercial and export markets.

The Blue Bird Micro Bird by Girardin Type A bus is produced through Micro Bird Holdings, Inc., an unconsolidated Canadian joint venture with Girardin Minibus JV Inc. ("Micro Bird"), and is sold through our dealer network. This is a smaller bus than the Type C or Type D bus and is produced on a traditional chassis provided by either Ford or GM or on an electric chassis produced by a Micro Bird subsidiary.

## **Parts Segment**

Parts are key for routine maintenance, replacement of parts that are damaged in service, and replacement of parts that suffer from wear and tear throughout the useful life of the vehicle.

In fiscal 2024, parts sales represented 7.7% of Company net sales.

We maintain a parts distribution center in Delaware, Ohio that fills demand for our Company specific and all-makes parts. Additional demand for parts is fulfilled by drop ship and direct sales. To fulfill demand for parts that are not maintained at the distribution center, we are linked to approximately 40 suppliers that ship directly to dealers and independent service centers.

Our network of dealers and authorized repair centers operate over 200 locations to support the fleet across the U.S. and Canada, the majority of which are owned by independent operators, to complement their primary locations. Field service engineers provide technical support to our dealer network. Service engineers are strategically placed throughout the U.S. and Canada to better serve both dealers and end-customers. The network leverages our parts inventory, technical training, and online warranty network to address customer service needs.

## **Our Industry**

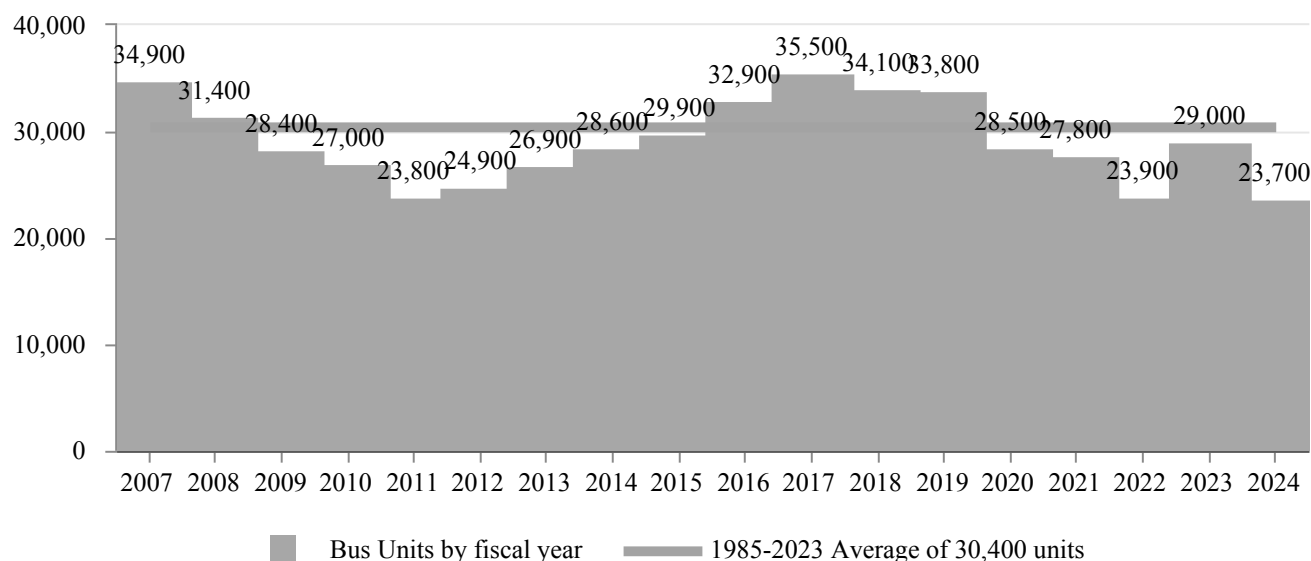
The school bus serves a critical role in the U.S. and Canadian education systems. In normal years (i.e., those not impacted by public health crises), approximately half of the U.S. student population rides a school bus. School buses are distinguished from other types of buses by design characteristics associated with increased safety as mandated by federal, state, and municipal regulations.

Our management has developed a forecasting model using R.L. Polk vehicle registration data, population of school age children forecasts from the National Center for Education Statistics and bus ridership data collected and published by School Transportation News. Our management utilizes this and other models to assess historical experience and to predict demand for school buses in future periods. The ability to purchase new buses to fulfill predicted demand, however, is based on the assumption that funds will be available through property taxes and other state and federal sources.

The U.S. and Canadian school bus industry for Type C and Type D buses has averaged approximately 30,400 unit sales annually (for the period from October through September of the subsequent year) between 1985 and 2024. Unit sales for 2024 are projected to be about 23,700, a decrease of 18.3% when compared with 2023. For the first half of the annual period from October 2023 through September 2024, monthly units sales were comparable to those reported in the same period in the previous year but decreased significantly during the second half of the period. Management understands that this decrease primarily resulted from one of the Company's primary competitors experiencing significant challenges associated with a new product launch that impacted the units that it could manufacture and deliver as it sold approximately 4,700 fewer units during the period from April 2024 through September 2024 when compared with the comparable period in the previous year. Accordingly, management believes that the overall decrease in the annual industry sales experienced during 2024 primarily resulted from an event that is expected to be isolated in nature and is not indicative of decreased demand, or other issues, within the overall school bus industry.



## United States and Canada School Bus Sales - Type C & Type D



Source: Historical registration data are based on R.L. Polk vehicle registration data.

Excluding the isolated incident that impacted industry sales during 2024 that management does not believe is indicative of decreased demand in the school bus industry, the low point in the industry occurred in 2011, at approximately 23,800 units, and was the result of the decline in the U.S. economy and, in particular, the collapse of the housing market in 2008 and 2009. Property taxes are the primary source of funds for school bus purchases and were impacted in the 2010-2011 period as a result of the substantial recession in the U.S. economy in general, and housing market in particular, preceding and during that period.

The school bus industry fully recovered from the downturn in 2010-2011 and from 2016 to 2019 operated at levels approximately 10% higher than the long-term average, supported by positive demographic trends, pent-up demand from several years of below-trend bus sales, and a growing tax base for education-related spending. In 2020, countermeasures taken to battle the the novel coronavirus known as "COVID-19" included virtual and hybrid schooling in many jurisdictions throughout the U.S. and Canada. The uncertainty of when and how schools would open materially affected demand within the Type C and Type D school bus industry in the second half of the Company's fiscal year ended October 3, 2020 ("fiscal 2020") that continued into the first half of the Company's fiscal year ended October 2, 2021 ("fiscal 2021"). However, demand for Type C and Type D school buses strengthened substantially throughout the remainder of 2021 as COVID-19 vaccines were administered and many school jurisdictions returned to in-person learning environments. Nonetheless, subsequent supply chain shortages for certain components, such as microchips and products containing resins, that are critical to the manufacture of school buses, depressed sales during the latter half of fiscal 2021 and throughout fiscal 2022. Although management began to see improvements in the challenges caused by supply chain disruptions during fiscal 2023 and continuing into fiscal 2024, there were still occasional shortages of certain components, as well as ongoing volatility in raw materials costs.

Our management believes, based on our models, that Type C and Type D school bus registrations will return to a similar level as has been experienced over recent pre-pandemic years (2016-2019) once the supply chain constraints are fully addressed. We believe that (i) since the start of the pandemic and continuing through the subsequent period that has been significantly impacted by supply chain disruptions (i.e., the cumulative period beginning in the last half of fiscal 2020 and continuing through fiscal 2024), the industry has been operating below its historical long-term average of approximately 30,400 unit sales per year, and (ii) there are over 148,000 buses in the U.S. and Canadian fleets that have been in service for 15 or more years.

Local property and municipal tax receipts are key drivers of school district transportation budgets. Budgets for school bus purchases are directly related to property tax receipts. Home prices have risen in recent years as home inventories have not met demand, inflation of building materials cost has increased cost of construction, and as home-buyers have taken advantage of historically low mortgage rates prior to 2023. However, the forecast for continued appreciation in housing prices is uncertain due to, among others, recent rises in mortgage rates and significant inflationary pressures that have reduced consumer purchasing power. Nonetheless, such challenges are not expected to have a significant effect on property tax receipts in the near-term due to the lag that occurs in tax authorities reflecting declining home prices in property tax invoices, and school transportation budgets are expected to directly benefit from larger municipal spending budgets.

In addition to strong property tax collections, additional funding for school buses is being made available through federal funding programs, including the DOE's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act ("DERA") and the EPA's Clean School Bus Program ("CSBP"). The DERA funding program provides approximately \$100 million annually to fund projects that upgrade, retrofit, or replace diesel engines and equipment with cleaner technologies including gasoline, propane, and electric school buses. Through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the CSBP provides \$5 billion in funding over five years to school districts and fleet operators to replace existing school buses with zero-emission and low-emission models. Specifically, \$2.5 billion of the funds are allocated solely for the purchase of electric powered buses, while the remaining \$2.5 billion of funds are allocated for the purchase of low and zero-emission school buses, including buses that are propane or electric powered.

In October 2022, the EPA announced the awarding of approximately \$965 million as part of its first round of funding for the CSBP. Over 2,300 zero- and low-emission school buses were ordered by award recipients during the first round, of which the Company received orders for over 500 school buses.

In January 2024, the EPA announced the recipients of the second round of funding for the CSBP, which awarded nearly \$1 billion in the form of competitive grants to 280 school districts and will help award recipients purchase over 2,700 clean school buses, 95% of which will be electric. The Company and its dealer network submitted grant applications on behalf of certain school district customers and also assisted certain other school district customers with completing and submitting their own grant applications. To date, the Company has received over 230 orders for school buses with many of the award recipients yet to spend their funding.

In May 2024, the EPA announced the recipients of the third round of funding for the CSBP, which awarded nearly \$900 million in rebates to 530 school districts and will fund over 3,400 zero- and low-emission school buses, 92% of which will be electric. To date, the Company has received over 220 orders for school buses with many of the award recipients yet to spend their funding.

In September 2024, the EPA announced it will provide an additional \$965 million for its fourth round of funding for the CSBP, with award recipients for this funding to be announced in May 2025.

Finally, the Clean Heavy Duty Vehicle Program funded through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act ("IIJA") announced over \$650 million in funding for electric school buses in April 2024. Recipients for this funding will be announced in January 2025.

In addition to federal funding, many states have also announced significant levels of funding for electric school buses. For example, in California, the Zero Emission School Bus and Infrastructure program allocated \$375 million for qualifying zero-emission school buses and \$125 million for infrastructure and associated costs. In New York, the New York School Bus Incentive Program provided \$300 million to fund the acquisition of new electric school buses and charging infrastructure.

Also, in August 2022, the Inflation Reduction Act ("IRA") was signed into law. The IRA authorizes a \$369 billion investment in energy security and combating climate change. This funding includes \$1 billion in grants for clean Class 6 and 7 heavy-duty vehicles, up to \$40,000 in tax credits for zero-emission commercial vehicles, up to \$100,000 in tax credits for heavy-duty charging infrastructure, and \$2 billion for grants to support electric and fuel cell manufacturing. As discussed previously, in July 2024 the Company was selected to receive an approximate \$80 million grant from the DOE to expand the Company's electric vehicle manufacturing capabilities and related workforce development efforts by converting a former manufacturing site for diesel powered motorhomes into an approximately 600,000 square foot, state-of-the-art electric and low-emissions vehicle manufacturing facility. The grant represents approximately 50 percent of the total approximate \$160 million investment required to complete the conversion project. The award selection is subject to final contract and funding negotiations between the DOE and Blue Bird, which are expected to conclude at the end of calendar year 2024 or the beginning of calendar year 2025.

We believe our leadership in alternative power options, coupled with this external funding, provides a strong foundation to continue to increase sales of our propane, gasoline and electric powered bus platforms.

## Our Competitive Strengths

We believe that our competitive strengths are derived from the following factors:

*Reputation for safety, product quality/reliability/durability, and drivability.* Our longevity and reputation in the school bus industry have made us an iconic American brand. We are the only principal manufacturer with chassis and body production specifically designed for school bus applications in the U.S. and the only school bus company to offer as a standard feature compliance with industry recognized safety tests - Altoona Testing, Colorado Rack Test and the Kentucky Pole Test - as a standard specification across our entire product line.

*Alternative powered bus leadership.* We believe we are the market leader in propane, gasoline and electric powered buses, having sold approximately 64% of all alternative powered school buses from fiscal 2015 through fiscal 2024. In fiscal 2024, we sold 5,213 propane, gasoline, compressed natural gas ("CNG") and electric powered buses, as market demand for alternative powered buses remained robust. To maintain our leadership position, we continue to expand the available features requested by our customers and during fiscal 2022, added a hydraulic braking system with electronic stability control and a fuel-fired heater for cold-weather markets to our Type C electric powered bus offering. Additionally, during fiscal 2023, we opened the new Electric Vehicle Build-up Center, a transformed 40,000 square foot facility at the Fort Valley, Georgia manufacturing plant, designed to meet increasing demand for electric school buses.

*Innovative product leadership.* We believe we have consistently led the school bus industry with innovative product leadership through several industry firsts, including the first unique school bus chassis and the first OEM-manufactured propane powered bus. In fiscal 2016, years ahead of our competition, we launched the industry's first gasoline powered Type C bus (utilizing an exclusive Ford engine and transmission and Roush CleanTech fuel usage evaporative emissions certification) and we were first-to-market with electronic stability control. In fiscal 2018, we sold our first Type D electric vehicles and in the fiscal year ended September 28, 2019 ("fiscal 2019"), we introduced our Type C electric vehicle. In fiscal 2024, we sold 704 Type C and Type D electric vehicles, an increase of 28.9% when compared with prior year.

*Strong distribution model.* We have built an extensive, experienced network of 45 dealer locations to distribute our buses across the U.S. and Canada, and during recent years have significantly enhanced our relationships with large fleet operators. Our dealers have an average tenure of more than 30 years with us and do not sell competing Type C or Type D school bus products in the areas assigned to them by us.

*Highly-skilled and committed workforce.* We benefit from a highly-skilled, committed hourly workforce of approximately 1,613 employees who support our customized assembly operations at our 900,000 square foot integrated chassis manufacturing and body assembly facility and 340,000 square foot component fabrication facility. Our employees are trained to maximize production efficiency by following customized processes developed by us.

*Strong management team.* We are led by a highly experienced and committed management team with an established track record in the U.S. and Canadian school bus and heavy-duty vehicle industries.

## Sales Volume

In fiscal 2024, we sold 9,000 Type C and Type D buses, including 8,844 school buses, 1 export bus and 155 Government Services Administration ("GSA") buses. Our Type C school bus accounted for 79% of unit sales and our Type D school bus accounted for 19% of unit sales. GSA and export buses, which can be ordered with either the Type C or Type D chassis, accounted for the remaining 2% of unit sales.

## Our Dealer Network

In fiscal 2024, we sold approximately 91% of our vehicles through our U.S. and Canadian dealer network, currently consisting of 45 dealer locations that, in their territories, are exclusive to us with Type C and D school buses. School buses sold in the U.S. and Canada through our dealer network are purchased by school districts and private schools, as well as small and medium size contractors that provide services to school districts on a fee basis. Bus purchases and contractor fees are funded through local school district budgets. Purchases of school buses are typically made through a bid process at the district or state level, with dealers coordinating this process. Dealers develop collaborative relationships with school districts, district transportation directors, and key officials in their states.

Our dealers have access to financing through a financing product maintained by an independent third party, Huntington Distribution Finance, Inc. ("Huntington"). We do not assume any balance sheet risk with respect to this type of financing and do not receive any direct economic benefit from Huntington.

## Other Distribution Channels

*Fleet Operators.* We also sell school buses directly to large national fleets that span multiple states and such sales are managed internally by our National Account Sales Team.

*Export Dealers.* We regularly monitor opportunities to sell our Type C and Type D buses in either school bus or other configurations in certain limited international markets and typically sell these products through dealers assigned to those territories.

*U.S. Government; Other Specialty Sales.* We also sell buses through our U.S. GSA contract, an expedited procurement procedure designed to meet the needs of bus customers authorized to purchase through the GSA contracting offices, including the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army, Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This full line of bus models is configured for adult or school bus use. In addition to the base GSA specifications, we offer several additional configurations to provide a wide range of passenger capacities and optional features. We also offer a full line of activity bus and Multi-Function School Activity Bus ("MFSAB") products. With varying vehicle sizes, capacities, power choices, and engine types, our bus options enable our customers to tailor their transportation solutions to their specific needs, be it transporting a church congregation or shuttling workers to job sites.

## Government Contracts

As a U.S. government contractor, we are subject to specific regulations and requirements as mandated by our contracts. These regulations include Federal Acquisition Regulations, Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations, and the Code of Federal Regulations. We are also subject to routine audits and investigations by U.S. government agencies such as the Defense Contract Management Agency and Defense Contract Audit Agency. These agencies review and assess compliance with contractual requirements, cost structure, cost accounting, and applicable laws, regulations, and standards.

A portion of our existing U.S. government contracts extend over multiple years and are conditioned upon the continuing availability of congressional appropriations. In addition, our U.S. government contracts generally permit the contracting government agency to terminate the contract, in whole or in part, either for the convenience of the government or for default based on our failure to perform under the terms of the contract.

## Suppliers

We purchase our engine and transmission components on a single-source basis from major OEMs with sophisticated engineering, production and logistics capabilities, as reflected in the table below:

Component	OEM Supplier
Diesel engines	Cummins Inc.
Diesel emissions kits	Cummins Inc.
Electric powertrains and battery systems	Accelera (a business segment of Cummins Inc.)
Propane and gasoline engines and transmissions	Ford Motor Company
Transmissions	Allison Transmission
Propane fueling kits	Roush CleanTech

Our purchasing department continually works to improve our purchasing processes by rationalizing the supplier base and by implementing improved control processes. We regularly perform supplier audits and, when necessary, will meet with under-performing suppliers in order to enhance performance. At September 28, 2024, we had in place long-term supply contracts (addressing both component price and supply) covering approximately 85% of the value of our purchases from suppliers, including long-term agreements with our major single-source suppliers.

As a result of ongoing supply chain disruptions that began in the latter half of fiscal 2021 and continued through fiscal 2024, we have experienced supplier shortages, which were significant at times, of critical components, which prevented the Company from initiating or completing, as applicable, the production process for certain units that were otherwise scheduled to be delivered to customers during fiscal 2021, fiscal 2022 and, to a lesser extent, fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2024. For further details and discussion about the impact of these supply chain disruptions, refer to the "Impact of Supply Chain Constraints on Our Business" section of Item 7. "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations."

## **Competition**

The U.S. and Canadian school bus industry is highly competitive. Our two principal competitors are Thomas Built Bus and IC Bus. Thomas Built Bus is a subsidiary of Daimler Trucks North America and IC Bus is a subsidiary of International Motors, LLC (formerly known as Navistar, Inc.).

We compete primarily on the basis of product diversification, school bus innovation, safety, quality, durability and drivability of our products, the scope and strength of our dealer network and price. As our principal competitors are parts of larger corporations, they may have greater access to financial capital, human resources, and business opportunities. Such access, in turn, may be used by such companies to compete with us and others in the industry.

## **Facilities**

Our corporate headquarters are located in Macon, Georgia and we have an additional small satellite office in Troy, Michigan. Our Bus segment operates a fabrication plant and an integrated chassis manufacturing and body assembly plant in Fort Valley, Georgia, where components for Type C, Type D, and specialty buses are manufactured and assembled, and an inventory warehouse that supplies these plants in Perry, Georgia. Our Parts segment operates a parts distribution center located in Delaware, Ohio. We own our facilities in Fort Valley, Georgia (approximately 1.5 million square feet). We lease facilities in Macon, Georgia (approximately 0.1 million square feet), Perry, Georgia (approximately 0.1 million square feet), Troy, Michigan (approximately 5 thousand square feet) and Delaware, Ohio (approximately 0.1 million square feet). Our Micro Bird joint venture leases its facility (0.2 million square feet) in Drummondville, Quebec, Canada.

## **Intellectual Property and Technology**

We seek trademark protection in the U.S. and outside of the U.S. where available and when appropriate. Among other trademarks, we have registered trademark rights in the principal names and designs used by us and Micro Bird in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere. We use these registered marks in connection with all aspects of our branding. However, we also rely on a number of significant unregistered trademarks and other unregistered intellectual property in the day-to-day operation of our business. Without the protections afforded by registration, our ability to protect and use our trademarks and other unregistered intellectual property may be limited and could negatively affect our business.

In addition to trademarks, we rely heavily on trade secrets and know-how to develop and maintain our competitive position. For example, significant aspects of our product designs, manufacturing processes and cost containment steps are based on unpatented trade secrets and know-how. Trade secrets and know-how can be difficult to protect. We seek to protect our proprietary technology and processes, in part, by confidentiality agreements with our employees, suppliers and other commercial partners. We also seek to preserve the integrity and confidentiality of our data, designs and trade secrets by maintaining physical security of our premises and physical and electronic security of our information technology systems. While we have confidence in these individuals, organizations and systems, agreements or security measures may be breached, and we may not have adequate remedies for any breach. In addition, our trade secrets may otherwise become known or be independently discovered by competitors. To the extent that our suppliers or contractors use intellectual property owned by others in their work for us, disputes may arise as to the rights in related or resulting know-how.

## **Government Regulation**

Our products must satisfy various legal, environmental, health and safety requirements at federal, state and municipal levels. Compliance with such requirements adds to the costs that must be incurred in order to manufacture a school bus. Failure to comply with such requirements could lead to substantial additional regulatory costs.

At the federal level, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (“FMVSS”) govern the safety of all motor vehicles sold for use in the U.S. More than half of the FMVSS regulations apply to school buses. For example, federal regulations require school buses to be painted “school bus yellow” and to be equipped with specific warning and safety devices. School buses are also built with the body on top of chassis frame rails. This so-called “high floor” construction moves the passenger compartment above the typical automotive “crash zone” and therefore provides an added measure of safety should a collision occur. Steel rollover cages and heavy-duty bumpers are designed to provide incremental protection, in contrast with standard transit buses with “low floor” construction that offer lower curb height access with limited or no steel reinforcement.



After a school bus is sold, regulation of the operation of the school bus becomes the responsibility of the state in which it operates. Today, each state has its own rules and regulations pertaining to the manufacture, design, operation and safety of the school buses operated in its jurisdiction. As a result, we cannot manufacture to a single set of specifications, but rather must assure that each manufactured bus conforms to the specifications of the particular jurisdiction in which it will be operated.

We must also consider the rules and regulations of foreign jurisdictions. In Canada, where our Micro Bird joint venture operates, school buses are governed by the Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Regulations. These regulations are patterned after the FMVSS regulations, although differences do exist between the two regulatory systems.

## **Seasonality**

In the years preceding the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, our business was highly seasonal with school districts buying their new school buses so that they would be available for use on the first day of the school year, typically in mid-August to early September. This resulted in our third and fourth fiscal quarters being our two busiest quarters, the latter ending on the Saturday closest to September 30. Our quarterly results of operations, cash flows, and liquidity have historically been, and are likely to be in future periods, impacted by seasonal patterns. Working capital has historically been a significant use of cash during the first fiscal quarter due to planned shutdowns and a significant source of cash generation in the fourth fiscal quarter.

As a result of the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent supply chain constraints, seasonality and working capital trends have become unpredictable. Accordingly, seasonality and variations from historical seasonality have impacted the comparison of working capital and liquidity results between fiscal periods.

## **Environmental Matters**

We are subject to various federal, state and local laws and regulations governing the protection of the environment and health and safety, including those regulating the following: soil, surface water and groundwater contamination; the generation, storage, handling, use, disposal and transportation of hazardous materials; the emission and discharge of materials, including greenhouse gases ("GHG") into the environment; and the health and safety of our employees. We are also required to obtain environmental permits from governmental authorities for certain operations. We have taken various steps to comply with these numerous and sometimes complex laws, regulations and permits. Compliance with environmental requirements historically has not had a material impact on our capital expenditures, earnings, or competitive position. We have made, and will continue to make, capital and other expenditures pursuant to such requirements. If we violate or fail to comply with these requirements, we could be subject to fines, penalties, enforcement actions or lawsuits.

For additional information regarding potential environmental issues at Blue Bird's Fort Valley, Georgia facility, refer to Item 1A. "Risk Factors - Risk Factors Relating to Our Business and Industry - Environmental obligations and liabilities could have a negative impact on our financial condition, cash flows and profitability."

Environmental laws, regulations, and permits and the enforcement thereof, change frequently and have become more stringent over time. Among other things, more rigorous GHG emission requirements are in various stages of development. For example, the U.S. EPA has promulgated the GHG Reporting Rule, which requires reporting of GHG data and other relevant information from large sources and suppliers in the U.S., and the GHG Tailoring Rule, which requires certain facilities with significant GHG emissions to obtain emissions permits under the authority of the Clean Air Act (typically limited to only the largest stationary sources of GHG). The U.S. Congress has also considered imposing additional restrictions on GHG emissions. Any additional regulation of GHG emissions by either the U.S. Congress and/or the U.S. EPA could include a cap-and-trade system, technology mandate, emissions tax, reporting requirement, or other program and could subject us to significant costs, including those relating to emission credits, pollution control equipment, monitoring, and reporting, as well as increased energy and raw material prices.

Our facilities and operations could in the future be subject to regulations related to climate change and climate change itself may also have some impact on the Company's operations. However, these impacts are currently uncertain and the Company cannot presently predict the nature and scope of those impacts.

## **Research and Development**

Refer to Note 2, *Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and Recently Issued Accounting Standards*, to the accompanying consolidated financial statements for information on research and development.

## **Warranty**

We provide warranties on virtually all of the buses and parts we sell. Warranties are offered for specific periods of time and mileage, and vary depending upon the type of product and the geographic location of its sale. Pursuant to these warranties, we will repair, replace, or adjust certain parts on a bus that are defective in factory-supplied materials or workmanship during the specified warranty period. In addition to the costs associated with this warranty coverage provided on our vehicles, we also incur costs as a result of field service actions (i.e., safety recalls and service bulletins) and customer satisfaction actions. Component suppliers, in particular major component suppliers such as engines and transmissions, provide warranties on their products.

## **Legal Proceedings**

We are engaged in legal proceedings in the ordinary course of our business. Although no assurances can be given about the final outcome of pending legal proceedings, at the present time our management does not believe that the resolution or outcome of any of our pending legal proceedings will have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, liquidity or results of operations.

## **Human Capital Management**

Blue Bird delivers market value to stockholders through a people centered human capital strategy, critical to our ability to deliver on our strategic plans. Our success in delivering high quality products and solutions for our customers is only achievable through the talent, expertise, and dedication of our workforce.

### *Attraction, Development, and Retention*

We recognize that attracting, developing and retaining skilled talent and promoting a diverse and inclusive culture are essential to maintaining our leadership position in the markets we serve. We offer employees resources to continuously improve their skills and performance with the goal of further cultivating the diverse, entrepreneurial talent to fill key positions. We seek people who are proactive and dedicated, demonstrate an ownership mindset and share our commitment to the pursuit of operational excellence. We continue to make significant investments in talent development and recognize that the growth and development of our employees is essential for our continued success. Employee training and development programs are extensive and comprehensive, including professional and technical skills training, compliance training, leadership development and management training.

We view the diversity of our employees as a strength to better serve our customers and communities. We also believe the diversity of our workforce enables us to attract new talent, keeps our employees engaged and productive, and advances ideas reflecting the diversity of our employees' backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. To that end, we have taken various actions to enhance diversity, including partnering with organizations that can support our efforts to identify and recruit talented and diverse candidates.

We aim to cultivate an inclusive culture that enables employees to feel connected to Blue Bird's three foundational objectives (Care, Delight, Deliver) while being valued for their contributions. One of the ways in which we seek to promote an inclusive work environment is by supporting the establishment of employee resource groups. These groups allow for collaboration and serve as an open forum for networking, professional development, and mentoring. We are committed to our efforts to maintain a work environment that is professional, inclusive, and free from discrimination and harassment.

The Company's benefit packages support employee physical, emotional and financial well-being. Employee satisfaction and engagement are measured through periodic surveys.

### *Health and Safety*

Safety is a key priority at all of our facilities and as such, we have invested in a safety and health department staffed with trained medical personnel. The Company's leaders and managers continuously address safety enhancements, provide regular and ongoing safety training, and use displays located near our employee work areas to provide all employees with safety-related information.

## Employees

At September 28, 2024, we employed 1,948 employees, of which 1,945 were full-time.

On May 22, 2023, the National Labor Relations Board (“NLRB”) certified the United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied & Industrial Service Workers International Union, AFL-CIO, CLC (“USW”) as the exclusive bargaining representative for a bargaining unit of the Company’s full-time and regular part-time production, maintenance, quality control, and warehouse employees at the Company’s Fort Valley and Macon, Georgia locations, with certain exceptions. In May 2024, a three year collective bargaining agreement (“CBA”) was executed with the USW, which covers more than 1,500 employees as of September 28, 2024.

## Item 1A. Risk Factors

*You should carefully consider the following risk factors in addition to the other information included in this Report, including matters addressed in the section entitled “Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements.” We may face additional risks and uncertainties that are not presently known to us, or that we currently deem immaterial, which may also impair our business. The following discussion should be read in conjunction with the financial statements and notes to the financial statements included in this Report.*

### Risk Factors Relating to Our Business and Industry

**Pandemics, epidemics or similar widespread disease or illness outbreaks (collectively, “public health crises”) and their disruptive impact on the supply chain have had, and could have in future periods, a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, financial condition, and cash flows, particularly resulting from reductions in demand for our products, shortages of critical components that hinder the production of units to fulfill sales orders, disruptions or other developments negatively impacting our workforce or workplace conditions, and/or reduced access to capital markets and reductions in liquidity.**

The degree to which public health crises have impacted our prior, and could impact our future, business, results of operations and financial condition depends on a number of developments, which are uncertain, including but not limited to the duration, spread and severity of outbreaks, government responses and other actions to mitigate the spread of and to treat such outbreaks and when and to what extent business, economic and social activity and conditions are disrupted. These uncertain developments and their resulting impacts have applied, and could apply in future periods, equally to our customers, suppliers and other partners and their financial conditions, but adverse effects on these parties would likely also adversely affect us. Such impacts include, among others:

- reducing demand for school buses due to schools operating totally or partially virtually;
- triggering significant volatility in capital markets;
- causing significant disruptions in global supply chains resulting from, among others, labor shortages; the lack of maintenance on, and acquisition of, capital assets during extended global lockdowns; and significant increased demand for consumer products containing certain materials required for the production of school buses;
- significantly altering global consumer demand;
- halting a material number of global manufacturing operations resulting from permanent and temporary plant shut-downs; and
- changing global workplace conditions resulting from "shelter-in-place" orders and "work from home" employer policies.

However, we consider the following areas to be the most significant material risks to our business resulting from global health crises and subsequent supply chain constraints:

#### *Supply Chain Disruptions*

We rely on specialist suppliers, some of which are single-source suppliers, for critical components (including but not limited to engines, transmissions and axles) and replacement of any of these components with like parts from another supplier normally requires engineering and testing resources, which entail costs and take time. We also currently rely on a limited number of single-source suppliers and/or have limited alternatives for important bus parts such as diesel engines and emission components, propane and gasoline engines including powertrains, control modules, steering systems, seats, specialty resins, and other key components. Future

delays or interruptions in the supply chain expose us to the following risks which would likely significantly increase our costs and/or impact our ability to meet customer demand:

- we or our third-party suppliers may lose access to critical services and components, resulting in an interruption in the manufacture, assembly, and delivery or shipment of our products;
- we or our third-party suppliers may not be able to respond to unanticipated changes in customer orders;
- we or our suppliers may have excess or inadequate inventory of materials and components;
- we or our third-party suppliers may be subject to price fluctuations, including for inbound freight costs that are incurred to transport goods and supplies to production facilities, and a lack of long-term supply arrangements for key components;
- we may experience delays in delivery by our third-party suppliers due to changes in demand from us or their other customers;
- fluctuations in demand for products that our third-party suppliers manufacture for others may affect their ability or willingness to deliver components to us in a timely manner;
- we may not be able to find new or alternative components or reconfigure our products and manufacturing processes in a timely manner, or at all, if the necessary components become unavailable; and
- our third-party suppliers may encounter financial hardships unrelated to our demand, which could inhibit their ability to fulfill our orders and meet our requirements.

*Disruptions or other developments negatively impacting our workforce or workplace conditions*

During public health crises, federal, state and/or local governments may issue “shelter-in-place” orders, quarantines, executive orders and similar government orders, restrictions and recommendations for their residents to control the spread of the outbreak. Such orders, restrictions and recommendations could result in widespread closures of businesses, work stoppages, interruptions, slowdowns and delays, work-from-home policies and travel restrictions. While remote work policies may be implemented in response to the health risks that could impact our employees, we do not have the ability to manufacture school buses without our on-site manufacturing personnel given the nature of our business. If we were to experience some form of outbreak within our facilities, we would take all appropriate measures to protect the health and safety of our employees, which could include a temporary halt in production. Any extended production halt or diminution in production capacity would have a negative impact on our ability to fulfill orders and thus negatively impact our revenues, profitability and cash flows.

*Reduced profitability and liquidity, resulting in the restructuring of our credit facilities, and/or inadequate access to credit and capital markets*

Public health crises and the related disruption in the supply chain could materially adversely impact global commercial activity and contribute to significant volatility in financial markets. Supply chain constraints, including any resulting inflationary environment that may develop, could have a material adverse impact on economic and market conditions, potentially reducing our ability to access capital, which could in the future negatively affect our liquidity. Specifically, future outbreaks could cause a severe contraction in our profits and/or liquidity, which could lead to issues complying with the financial covenants in our credit facility. If we were unable to comply with such covenants, we may need to seek amendment for covenant relief or even refinance the debt to a “covenant lite” or “no covenant” structure. We can offer no assurances that we would be successful in amending or refinancing the debt. An amendment or refinancing of our debt could lead to higher interest rates and possible up-front expenses not included in our historical financial statements.

**Current and future military conflicts could cause additional supply chain disruptions that could have a material adverse impact on our business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows.**

Beginning in fiscal 2022 and continuing through fiscal 2024, the ongoing pressure on the global supply chain was further exacerbated as a result of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine towards the end of February 2022. Both countries have large quantities of minerals and other natural resources that impact commodity costs, such as diesel fuel, steel, rubber and resin, among others, and the conflict has further restricted access to inventory that is at least partially dependent upon such commodities, primarily for the Company’s

suppliers. Such restricted access has, in certain cases, limited our ability to obtain critical component parts and/or resulted in us paying premium prices for freight and to access the limited supply of inventory.

The degree to which this and similar conflicts, including future military conflicts, impact our future business, results of operations, financial condition and cash flows will depend on future developments, which are uncertain, including but not limited to the duration of, potential spread and severity of, and additional governmental actions in response to, such conflicts and when and to what extent normal business and economic activity and conditions resume and continue without further disruption.

**General economic conditions in the markets we serve have a significant impact on demand for our buses.**

The school bus market is predominantly driven by long-term trends in the level of spending by municipalities. The principal factors underlying spending by municipalities are housing prices, property tax levels, municipal budgeting issues and voter initiatives. Demand for school buses is further influenced by overall acquisition priorities of municipalities, availability of school bus financing, student population changes, school district busing policies, price and other competitive factors, fuel prices and environmental regulations. Significant deterioration in the economic environment, housing prices, property tax levels or municipal budgets could result in fewer new orders for school buses or could cause customers to seek to postpone or reduce orders, which could result in lower revenues, profitability and cash flows.

**We may be unable to obtain critical components from suppliers, which could disrupt or delay our ability to deliver products to customers.**

We rely on specialist suppliers for critical components (including engines, transmissions and axles) and replacement of any of these components with like parts from another supplier normally requires engineering and testing resources, which entail costs and take time. The lack of ready-to-implement alternatives could give such suppliers, some of which have substantial market power, significant leverage over us if these suppliers elected to exert their market power over us, which leverage could adversely impact the terms and conditions of purchase, including pricing, warranty claims and delivery schedules. We seek to mitigate supply chain risks with our key suppliers by entering into long-term agreements, by commencing contract negotiations with suppliers of critical components significantly before contract expiration dates, and by diversifying our suppliers of key components with contingency programs when possible.

If any of our critical component suppliers limit or reduce the supply of components due to commercial reasons, financial difficulties or other problems, we could experience a loss of revenues due to our inability to fulfill orders. These single-source and other suppliers are each subject to quality and operational issues, materials shortages, unplanned demand, reduction in capacity and other factors that may disrupt the flow of goods to us or to our customers, which would adversely affect our business and customer relationships.

We have no assurance that our suppliers will continue to meet our requirements. If supply arrangements are interrupted, we may not be able to find another supplier on a timely or satisfactory basis. We may incur significant set-up costs, delays and lag time in manufacturing should it become necessary to replace any key suppliers. Our business interruption insurance coverage may not be adequate for any interruptions that we could encounter and may not continue to be available in amounts and on terms acceptable to us. Production delays could, under certain circumstances, result in penalties or liquidated damages in certain of our GSA contracts.

**We rely substantially on single-source suppliers which could materially and adversely impact us if they were to interrupt the supply of component parts to us.**

We currently rely on a limited number of single-source suppliers and/or have limited alternatives for important bus parts such as diesel engines and emission components, propane and gasoline engines including powertrains, control modules, air brakes, steering systems, seats, specialty resins, and other key components. Shortages and allocations by such manufacturers may result in inefficient operations and a build-up of inventory, which could negatively affect our working capital position.

**Our products may not achieve or maintain market acceptance or competing products could gain market share, which could adversely affect our competitive position.**

We operate in a highly competitive domestic market. Our principal competitors are Thomas Built Bus (owned by Daimler Trucks North America) and IC Bus (owned by International Motors, LLC and former known as Navistar, Inc.), which, at the consolidated level, have potential access to more technical, financial and marketing resources than the Company. Our competitors may develop or gain access to products that are superior to our products, develop methods of more efficiently and effectively providing products and services, or adapt more quickly than we do to new technologies or evolving customer requirements. IC Bus and Thomas Built Bus both sell electric powered school buses. This brings both competitors into direct competition with our electric powered product offerings. Our competitors may achieve cost savings or be able to withstand a substantial downturn in the market because their businesses are consolidated with other vehicle lines. In addition, our competitors could be, and have been in the past, vertically

integrated by designing and manufacturing their own components (including engines) to reduce their costs. The school bus market does not have “Buy America” regulations, so competitors or new entrants to the market could manufacture school buses in more cost-effective jurisdictions and import them to the U.S. to compete with us. Any increase in competition may cause us to lose market share or compel us to reduce prices to remain competitive, which could result in reduced sales, profitability and cash flows.

**Our business is cyclical, which has had, and could have future, adverse effects on our sales and results of operations and lead to significant shifts in our results of operations from quarter to quarter that make it difficult to project long-term performance.**

The school bus market historically has been and is expected to resume being, at some point in the relatively near future, cyclical. This cyclicity has an impact both on the school bus industry and also on the comparative analysis of quarterly results of our Company.

Customers historically have replaced school buses in lengthy cycles. Moreover, weak macroeconomic conditions can adversely affect demand for new school buses and lead to an overall aging of school bus fleets beyond a typical replacement cycle. To the extent the increase in school bus demand is attributable to pent-up demand rather than overall economic growth, future school bus sales may lag behind improvements in general economic conditions or property tax levels. During downturns, we may find it necessary to reduce line rates and employee levels due to lower overall demand. An economic downturn may reduce, and in the past has reduced, demand for school buses, resulting in lower sales volumes, lower prices and decreased profits.

Primarily as a result of the historically seasonal nature of our business, we may operate with negative working capital for significant portions of our fiscal year. During economic downturns, this tends to result in our utilizing a substantial portion of our cash reserves.

**Our ability to sell our products may be negatively affected by trade policies and tariffs.**

We import some of our components from China and other foreign countries. Our purchases may be subject to the effects of the U.S. trade policy, including the imposition of tariffs and anti-dumping/countervailing duties on these components. We can provide no assurance that our ability to sell our products at reasonable margins will not be impaired by the imposition of tariffs or other changes in trade policy which may make it more difficult or more expensive to purchase our products.

**At times we enter into firm fixed-price school bus sales contracts without price escalation clauses that could subject us to reduced gross profits or losses if we have cost overruns or if our costs increase.**

We sometimes provide fixed-price bids on potential school bus orders months before the expected delivery date. Also, a substantial amount of time may lapse between the bid date and the date that a school bus sales contract containing a fixed price is executed. The sales bids historically have not included price escalation provisions to account for economic fluctuations between the bid date and delivery date. As a result, we have historically been unable to pass along to our customers increased costs due to economic fluctuations between these dates as was the case during fiscal 2022 and the first quarter of fiscal 2023, which is generally not expected to continue as the Company now includes price escalation provisions when bidding on contracts. However, once a sales contract containing a fixed bus price is executed with a customer, we are generally unable to pass along increased costs resulting from economic fluctuations between the contract date and delivery date. We generally purchase steel at fixed prices up to four quarters in advance, with larger quantities subject to fixed price purchase contracts in the more immediate upcoming quarters with quantities decreasing in later quarters, but because we usually do not hedge our other primary raw materials (rubber, aluminum and copper), changes in prices of raw materials can significantly impact operating margins. Our actual costs and any gross profit realized on fixed-price sales contracts could vary from the estimated costs on which these contracts were originally based.

**New laws, regulations or governmental policies regarding environmental, health and safety standards, or changes in existing ones, may have a significant negative impact on how we do business.**

Our products must satisfy various legal, environmental, health and safety requirements, including applicable emissions and fuel economy requirements. Meeting or exceeding government-mandated safety standards can be difficult and costly. Such regulations are extensive and may, in certain circumstances, operate at cross purposes. While we are managing our product development and production operations to reduce costs, unique local, state, federal and international standards can result in additional costs for product development, testing and manufacturing. We depend on third party single-source suppliers to comply with applicable emissions and fuel economy standards in the manufacture of engines supplied to us for our buses. Increased environmental, safety, emissions, fuel economy or other regulations may result in additional costs and lag time to introduce new products to market.



**Safety or durability incidents associated with a school bus malfunction may result in loss of school bus sales that could have material adverse effects on our business.**

The school bus industry has few participants due to the importance of brand and reputation for safety and durability, compliance with stringent safety and regulatory requirements, an understanding of the specialized product specifications in each region and specialized technological and manufacturing know-how. If incidents associated with school bus malfunction transpired that called into question our reputation for safety or durability, it could harm our brand and reputation and cause consumers to question the safety, reliability and durability of our products. Lost school bus sales resulting from safety or durability incidents could materially adversely affect our business.

**Disruption of our manufacturing and distribution operations would have an adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows.**

We manufacture school buses at facilities in Fort Valley, Georgia and distribute parts from a distribution center located in Delaware, Ohio. If operations at our manufacturing or distribution facilities were to be disrupted for a significant length of time as a result of significant equipment failures, critical component shortages, natural disasters, power outages, fires, explosions, terrorism, adverse weather conditions, labor disputes, cybersecurity attacks or other reasons, we may be unable to fulfill dealer or customer orders and otherwise meet demand for our products, which would have an adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations and cash flows. Any interruption in production or distribution capability could require us to make substantial capital expenditures to fulfill customer orders, which could negatively affect our profitability and financial condition. We maintain property damage insurance that we believe to be adequate to provide for reconstruction of facilities and equipment, as well as business interruption insurance to mitigate losses resulting from any production interruption or shutdown caused by an insured loss. However, any recovery under our insurance policies may not offset the lost sales or increased costs that may be experienced during the disruption of operations. Also, our property damage and business interruption insurance coverage may not be applicable or adequate for any such disruption and may not continue to be available in amounts and on terms acceptable to us.

**Disputes with the labor union may adversely affect our ability to operate, as well as impact our financial results.**

Most of our operations employees are represented by the USW with the current CBA set to expire in 2027. Work stoppages, strikes, or other disputes with the USW, arising under the existing CBA or in connection with negotiations of a new collective bargaining agreement, could disrupt production and adversely affect our business, results of operations, and cash flows. Any amendments to the existing CBA, or the implementation of new collective bargaining agreements, could result in increased labor costs.

**Rationalization or restructuring of manufacturing facilities, including plant expansions and system upgrades at our manufacturing facilities, may cause production capacity constraints and inventory fluctuations.**

The rationalization of our manufacturing facilities has at times resulted in, and similar rationalizations or restructurings in the future may result in, temporary constraints upon our ability to produce the quantity of products necessary to fulfill orders and thereby complete sales in a timely manner. In addition, system upgrades at our manufacturing facilities that impact ordering, production scheduling and other related manufacturing processes are complex, and could impact or delay production targets. A prolonged delay in our ability to fulfill orders on a timely basis could affect customer demand for our products and increase the size of our raw material inventories, causing future reductions in our manufacturing schedules and adversely affecting our results of operations. Moreover, our continuous development and production of new products will often involve the retooling of existing manufacturing equipment. This retooling may limit our production capacity at certain times in the future, which could materially adversely affect our results of operations and financial condition. In addition, the expansion, reconfiguration, maintenance and modernization of existing manufacturing facilities and the start-up of new manufacturing operations, could increase the risk of production delays and require significant investments of capital.

**We may incur material losses and costs related to product warranty claims.**

We are subject to product warranty claims in the ordinary course of our business. Our standard warranty covers the bus for one year and certain components for up to five years. We attempt to adequately price ongoing warranty costs into our bus purchase contracts; however, our warranty reserves are estimates and if we produce poor quality products, develop new products with deficiencies or receive defective materials or components, we may incur material unforeseen costs in excess of what we have provided for in our contracts or reserved in our financial statements.

In addition, we may not be able to enforce warranties and extended warranties received or purchased from our suppliers if such suppliers refuse to honor such warranties or go out of business. Also, a customer may choose to pursue remedies directly under its contract with us over enforcing such supplier warranties. In such a case, we may not be able to recover our losses from the supplier.

**We may incur material losses and costs as a result of product liability claims and recalls.**

We face an inherent risk of exposure to product liability claims if the use of our products results, or is alleged to result, in personal injury and/or property damage. If we manufacture a defective product or if component failures result in damages that are not covered by warranty provisions, we may experience material product liability losses in the future. In addition, we may incur significant costs to defend product liability claims. We could also incur damages and significant costs in correcting any defects, lose sales and suffer damage to our reputation. Our product liability insurance coverage may not be adequate for all liabilities we could incur and may not continue to be available in amounts and on terms acceptable to us. Significant product liability claims could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows. Moreover, the adverse publicity that may result from a product liability claim or perceived or actual defect with our products could have a material adverse effect on our ability to market our products successfully.

We are subject to potential recalls of our products from customers to cure manufacturing defects or in the event of a failure to comply with customers' order specifications or applicable regulatory standards, as well as potential recalls of components or parts manufactured by suppliers that we purchase and incorporate into our school buses. We may also be required to remedy or retrofit buses in the event that an order is not built to a customer's specifications or where a design error has been made. Significant retrofit and remediation costs or product recalls could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows.

**A failure to renew dealer agreements or cancellation of, or significant delay in, new bus orders may result in unexpected declines in revenue and profitability.**

We rely to a significant extent on our dealers to sell our products to the end consumer. A loss of one or more significant dealers or a reduction in the market share of existing dealers would lead to a loss of revenues that could materially adversely affect our business and results of operations.

Our dealer agreements are typically for a five-year term; however, the dealer can usually cancel the agreement for convenience without penalty upon 90 days' notice. While most of our dealers have been purchasing from us for more than three decades, we can provide no assurance that we will be able to renew our dealer agreements on favorable terms, or at all, at their scheduled expiration dates. If we are unable to renew a contract with one or more of our significant dealers, our revenues and results of operations could be adversely affected until an alternative solution is implemented (e.g., a new dealer or combining the territory with another, existing Blue Bird dealer). If dealer agreements are terminated with one or more of our top 10 dealers, significant orders are canceled or delayed or we incur a significant decrease in the level of purchases from any of our top 10 dealers, our sales and operating results would be adversely impacted. In addition, our new bus orders are subject to potential reduction, cancellation and/or significant delay. Although dealers generally only order buses from us after they have a firm order from a school district, orders for buses are also generally cancellable until 14 weeks prior to delivery.

**Changes in laws or regulations related to the manufacture of school buses, or a failure to comply with such laws and regulations, could adversely affect our business and results of operations.**

We are subject to laws and regulations enacted by national, regional and local governments, including non-U.S. governments, related to the manufacture of our school buses. Compliance with, and monitoring of, applicable laws and regulations may be difficult, time consuming and costly, which could negatively impact our business and results of operations. Our products must satisfy a complex compliance scheme due to variability in and potentially conflicting local, state, federal and international laws and regulations. The cost of compliance may be substantial in a period due to the potential for modification or customization of our school buses in any of the 50 plus jurisdictions in which our buses are sold. In addition, if we expand into more international jurisdictions, we could potentially incur additional costs in order to tailor our products to the applicable local law requirements of such jurisdictions. Further, we must comply with additional regulatory requirements applicable to us as a federal contractor for our GSA contracts, which increase our costs. GSA contracts are also subject to audit and increased inspections and costs of compliance. Any potential penalties for non-compliance with laws and regulations may not be covered by insurance that we carry.

**Environmental obligations and liabilities could have a negative impact on our financial condition, cash flows and profitability.**

Potential environmental issues have been identified at our facility in Fort Valley, Georgia, including the solid waste management units at the facility's old landfill. Potential remediation costs and obligations could require the expenditure of capital and, if greater than expected, or in excess of applicable insurance coverage, could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations, liquidity or financial condition. We are cooperating with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division and have conducted a site-wide investigation under the current hazardous waste management law. All investigations of suspect areas have been completed. Implementation of a corrective action plan has commenced, which will consist of re-surfacing the landfill cap, re-grading a portion of

the lot in close proximity to the landfill, ongoing monitoring, and ground water use restrictions for the old landfill. There are currently no proposed remediation actions to be included in the corrective action plan. Based on the data generated from the latest site investigation, we believe our environmental risks have been reduced substantially, but not eliminated.

**Our future competitiveness and ability to achieve long-term profitability depend on our ability to control costs, which requires us to improve our organization continuously and to increase operating efficiencies and reduce costs.**

In order to operate profitably in our market, we are continually transforming our organization and rationalizing our operating processes. Our future competitiveness depends upon our continued success in implementing these initiatives throughout our operations. While some of the elements of cost reduction are within our control, others, such as commodity costs, regulatory costs and labor costs, depend more on external factors, and there can be no assurance that such external factors will not materially adversely affect our ability to reduce our costs.

**Our operating results may vary widely from period to period due to the sales cycle, seasonal fluctuations and other factors.**

Our orders with our dealers and customers generally require time-consuming customization and specification. We incur significant operating expenses when we are building a bus prior to sale or designing and testing a new bus. If there are delays in the sale of buses to dealers or customers, such delays may lead to significant fluctuations in results of operations from quarter to quarter, making it difficult to predict our financial performance on a quarterly basis. Further, if we were to experience a significant amount of cancellations of or reductions in purchase orders, it would reduce our future sales and results of operations.

Our business is subject to seasonal and other fluctuations. In particular, we have historically experienced higher revenues during the third and fourth quarters when compared with the first and second quarters during each fiscal year. This seasonality is caused primarily by school districts ordering more school buses prior to the beginning of a school year. Our ability to meet customer delivery schedules is dependent on a number of factors including, but not limited to, access to components and raw materials, an adequate and capable workforce, assembling/engineering expertise for certain projects and sufficient manufacturing capacity. The availability of these factors may in some cases be subject to conditions outside of our control. A failure to deliver in accordance with our performance obligations may result in financial penalties under certain of our GSA contracts and damage to existing customer relationships, damage to our reputation and a loss of future bidding opportunities, which could cause the loss of future business and could negatively impact our financial performance.

**Our defined benefit pension plan may become underfunded in future periods and pension funding requirements could increase significantly due to a reduction in funded status as a result of a variety of factors, including weak performance of financial markets, decreasing interest rates and investments that do not achieve adequate returns.**

Our defined benefit pension plan currently holds a significant amount of equity and fixed income securities. Our future funding requirement for our frozen defined benefit pension plan ("Pension Plan") qualified with the Internal Revenue Service depends upon the future performance of assets placed in trusts for this plan, the level of interest rates used to determine funding levels, the level of benefits provided for by the Pension Plan and any changes in government laws and regulations. Future funding requirements generally increase if the discount rate decreases or if actual asset returns are lower than expected asset returns, as other factors are held constant. If future funding requirements increase, we would be required to contribute more funds, which would negatively impact our cash flows.

**Our current or future indebtedness could impair our financial condition and reduce the funds available to us for growth or other purposes. Our debt agreements impose certain operating and financial restrictions, with which failure to comply could result in an event of default that could adversely affect our business.**

We have substantial indebtedness. If our cash flows and capital resources are insufficient to fund the interest payments on our outstanding borrowings under our credit facility and other debt service obligations and keep us in compliance with the covenants under our debt agreements or to fund our other liquidity needs, we may be forced to reduce or delay capital expenditures, sell assets or operations, seek additional capital or restructure or refinance our indebtedness. We can provide no assurance that we would be able to take any of these actions, that these actions would permit us to meet our scheduled debt service obligations or that these actions would be permitted under the terms of our existing or future debt agreements, which may impose significant operating and financial restrictions on us and could adversely affect our ability to finance our future operations or capital needs; obtain standby letters of credit, bank guarantees or performance bonds required to bid on or secure certain customer contracts; make strategic acquisitions or investments or enter into alliances; withstand a future downturn in our business or the economy in general; engage in business activities, including future opportunities for growth, that may be in our interest; and plan for or react to market conditions or otherwise execute our business strategies.

If we cannot make scheduled payments on our debt, or if we breach any of the covenants in our debt agreements, we will be in default and, as a result, our lenders could declare all outstanding principal and interest to be due and payable, could terminate their commitments to lend us money and foreclose against the assets securing our borrowings, and we could be forced into bankruptcy or liquidation.

In addition, we and certain of our subsidiaries may incur significant additional indebtedness, including additional secured and/or unsecured indebtedness. Although the terms of our debt agreements contain restrictions on the incurrence of additional indebtedness, these restrictions are subject to a number of qualifications and exceptions, and additional indebtedness incurred in compliance with these restrictions could be significant. Incurring additional indebtedness could increase the risks associated with our substantial indebtedness, including our ability to service our indebtedness.

**Our profitability depends on achieving certain minimum school bus sales volumes and margins. If school bus sales deteriorate, our results of operations, financial condition, and cash flows will suffer.**

Our profitability requires us to maintain certain minimum school bus sales volumes and margins. As is typical for a vehicle manufacturer, we have significant fixed costs and, therefore, changes in our school bus sales volume can have a disproportionately large effect on profitability. If our school bus sales decline to levels significantly below our assumptions, due to a financial downturn, recessionary conditions, changes in consumer confidence, geopolitical events, inability to secure an adequate supply of critical components, limited access to financing or any other reason or factors that would limit our ability to produce sufficient quantities of school buses, our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows would be materially adversely affected.

**If Huntington Distribution Finance, Inc. cannot provide financial services to our dealers and customers to acquire our products, our sales and results of operations could deteriorate.**

Our dealers and customers benefit from their relationships with Huntington, which provides (i) floorplan financing for certain of our network dealers and (ii) a modest amount of vehicle lease financing to school districts. Although we neither assume any balance sheet risk nor receive any direct economic benefit from Huntington, we could be materially adversely affected if Huntington was unable to provide this financing and our dealers were unable to obtain alternate financing, at least until a replacement for Huntington was identified. Huntington faces a number of business, economic and financial risks that could impair its access to capital and negatively affect its business and operations and its ability to provide financing and leasing to our dealers and customers. Because Huntington serves as an additional source of leasing and financing options for dealers and customers, an impairment of Huntington's ability to provide such financial services could negatively affect our efforts to expand our market penetration among customers that rely on these financial services to acquire new school buses and dealers that seek financing.

**We rely heavily on trade secrets to gain a competitive advantage in the market and the unenforceability of our nondisclosure agreements may adversely affect our operations.**

Historically, we have not relied upon patents to protect our design or manufacturing processes or products. Instead, we rely significantly on maintaining the confidentiality of our trade secrets and other information related to our operations. Accordingly, we require all executives, engineering employees and suppliers to sign a nondisclosure agreement to protect our trade secrets, business strategy and other proprietary information. If the provisions of these agreements are found unenforceable in any jurisdiction in which we operate, the disclosure of our proprietary information may place us at a competitive disadvantage. Even where the provisions are enforceable, the confidentiality clauses may not provide adequate protection of our trade secrets and proprietary information in every such jurisdiction.

We require training sessions for our employees regarding the protection of our trade secrets, business strategy and other proprietary information. Our employee training may not provide adequate protection of our trade secrets and proprietary information.

We may be unable to prevent third parties from using our intellectual property rights, including trade secrets and know-how, without our authorization or from independently developing intellectual property that is the same as or similar to our intellectual property, particularly in those countries where the laws do not protect our intellectual property rights as fully as in the U.S. The unauthorized use of our trade secrets or know-how by third parties could reduce or eliminate any competitive advantage we have developed, cause us to lose sales or otherwise harm our business or increase our expenses as we attempt to enforce our rights.

**Our intellectual property rights may not be successfully asserted in the future or may be invalidated, circumvented or challenged.**

We rely on a number of significant unregistered trademarks and other unregistered intellectual property in the day-to-day operation of our business. Without the protections afforded by registration, our ability to protect and use our trademarks and other unregistered intellectual property may be limited, which could negatively affect our business in the future. In addition, while we have not faced

intellectual property infringement claims from others in recent years, in the event successful infringement claims are brought against us, particularly claims (under patents or otherwise) against our product design or manufacturing processes, such claims could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition or results of operation.

**Our business could be materially adversely affected by changes in foreign currency exchange rates.**

We sell the majority of our buses and parts in U.S. Dollars. Our foreign customers have exposures to risks related to changes in foreign currency exchange rates on our sales in that region. Foreign currency exchange rates can have material adverse effects on our foreign customers' ability to purchase our products. Further, we have certain sales contracts that are transacted in Canadian Dollars. While we generally aim to hedge any such transactions, that may not always be the case. As a result, foreign currency fluctuations and the associated remeasurements and translations could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations and financial condition.

**The manufacture of our Type A buses is conducted by the Micro Bird joint venture that we do not control and cannot operate solely for our benefit.**

The manufacture of Type A buses is carried out by a 50/50 Canadian joint venture, Micro Bird, which we do not control or consolidate. In joint ventures, we share ownership and management of a company with one or more parties who may not have the same goals, strategies, priorities or resources as we do and may compete with us outside the joint venture. Joint ventures are intended to be operated for the equal benefit of all co-owners, rather than for our exclusive benefit. Operating a business as a joint venture often requires additional organizational formalities as well as time-consuming procedures for sharing information and making decisions. In joint ventures, we are required to foster our relationships with co-owners as well as promote the overall success of the joint venture, and if a co-owner changes or relationships deteriorate, our success in the joint venture may be materially adversely affected. The benefits from a successful joint venture are shared among the co-owners, so that we do not receive all the benefits from our joint venture.

## **General Risk Factors**

**The inability to attract and retain key personnel could adversely affect our business and results of operations.**

Our ability to operate our business and implement our strategies depends, in part, on the efforts of our executive officers and other key employees. Our future success depends, in large part, on our ability to attract and retain qualified personnel, including manufacturing personnel, sales professionals and engineers. The unexpected loss of services of any of our key personnel or the failure to attract or retain other qualified personnel could have a material adverse effect on the operation of our business.

While we have enjoyed good relations and a collaborative approach with our work force, employment relationships can deteriorate over time. Given the extent to which we rely on our employees, any significant deterioration in our relationships with our key employees or overall workforce could materially harm us. Work stoppages or instability in our relationships with our employees could delay the production and/or development of our products, which could strain relationships with customers and cause a loss of revenues that would adversely affect our operations. In addition, local economic conditions in the Central Georgia area (where our principal manufacturing facilities are located) may impact our ability to attract and retain qualified personnel.

**Our worker's compensation insurance may not provide adequate coverage against potential liabilities.**

Although we maintain a workers' compensation insurance stop loss policy to cover us for costs and expenses we may incur resulting from work-related injuries to our employees over our self-insured limit, this insurance may not provide adequate coverage against potential liabilities as we incur the costs and expenses up to our self-insured limit. In addition, we may incur substantial costs in order to comply with current or future health and safety laws and regulations. These current or future laws and regulations may negatively impact our manufacturing operations. Failure to comply with these laws and regulations also may result in substantial fines, penalties or other sanctions.

**We may need additional financing to execute our business plan and fund operations, which additional financing may not be available on reasonable terms or at all.**

Our ability to execute current and future business plans, including the potential for future market and/or product expansion and opportunities for future international growth, may require substantial additional capital. We will consider raising additional funds through various financing sources, including the sale of our equity securities or the procurement of additional commercial debt financing. However, there can be no assurance that such funds will be available on commercially reasonable terms, if at all. If such financing is not available on satisfactory terms, we may be unable to execute our growth strategy, and operating results may be adversely affected. Any additional debt financing will increase expenses and must be repaid regardless of operating results and may involve restrictions limiting our operating flexibility. If we issue equity securities to raise additional funds, the percentage ownership of our existing stockholders will be reduced, and our stockholders may experience additional dilution in net book value per share. If the amount of capital we are able to raise from financing activities, together with our revenues from operations, are not sufficient to satisfy our capital needs, we may be required to decrease the pace of, or eliminate, our future product offerings and market expansion opportunities and potentially curtail operations.

**Interest rates could change substantially, materially impacting our profitability.**

Our borrowings under our credit facility bear interest at variable market rates and expose us to interest rate risk. We monitor and manage this exposure as part of our overall risk management program, which recognizes the unpredictability of interest rates and seeks to reduce potentially adverse effects on our business. However, changes in interest rates cannot always be predicted, hedged, or offset with price increases to eliminate earnings volatility.

**An impairment in the carrying value of goodwill and other long-lived intangible assets could negatively affect our operating results.**

We have a substantial amount of goodwill and purchased intangible assets on our balance sheet, concentrated in our bus segment and specifically related to the dealer network and our trade name. These long-lived assets are required to be reviewed for impairment at least annually, or more frequently if potential interim indicators exist that could result in impairment. If any business conditions or other factors cause profitability or cash flows to significantly decline, we may be required to record a non-cash impairment charge, which could adversely affect our operating results. Events and conditions that could result in impairment include a prolonged period of global economic weakness, a further decline in economic conditions or a slow, weak economic recovery, sustained declines in the price of our common stock, adverse changes in the regulatory environment, adverse changes in the market share of our products, adverse changes in interest rates or other factors leading to reductions in the long-term sales or profitability that we expect.

**The failure of our information technology networks and systems could result in the inoperability of our critical business processes and substantially disrupt our operations.**

We utilize and rely upon information technology systems and networks, some of which are managed by third parties, to process, transmit and store electronic information, and to manage or support a wide variety of business processes and activities, including supply chain management, manufacturing, invoicing and collection of payments from our dealer network and customers, among others. The operation of these information technology systems and networks, and the processing and maintenance of this electronic information, is critical to our business operations and strategy. These systems and networks may be vulnerable to damage, disruptions, shutdowns or outages while upgrading or replacing computer software or hardware or as a result of hardware failures; software errors or malfunctions; third-party service provider outages; power outages; computer viruses; telecommunication or utility failures; errors or malfeasance by employees, contractors and others who have access to our networks and systems; or natural disasters or other catastrophic events, among others.

The occurrence of any of these events could compromise our systems and contribute to the loss or corruption of our electronic information, which may reduce the competitive advantage we hope to derive from our investment in information technology. Any extended systems downtime and/or data loss or corruption could significantly disrupt our ability to meet operational and financial targets and/or requirements, which may adversely affect our business, operating results, financial condition, cash flows and stock price. While we maintain business continuity and disaster recovery plans and conduct training and tests to respond to these types of events, we can provide no assurance that these measures would be sufficient to prevent or mitigate the impact of a prolonged information technology failure or that we would not experience material losses if such an event was to occur.

**A cybersecurity incident could compromise the confidentiality, integrity, and/or availability of our proprietary electronic information.**

We are highly dependent on information technology systems and networks to conduct our business and manage critical operations. We collect, store and process sensitive data, including intellectual property, material non-public financial information, proprietary



business information, the proprietary business information of our dealers and suppliers, as well as personally identifiable information of our employees, in data centers and in our information technology systems. Despite implementing robust security measures, there is always a risk of a cybersecurity incident, including a data breach, hack, ransomware attack, social engineering scheme and/or other malicious activity aimed at compromising the confidentiality, integrity and/or availability of our networks, systems and/or electronic information.

A cybersecurity incident could result in significant business interruptions, operational delays, or shutdowns, negatively affecting our ability to serve our customers and meet operational and financial targets and/or requirements. Additionally, unauthorized access to our networks and systems could lead to the theft, destruction, disclosure, alteration or loss of sensitive electronic information, potentially causing reputational harm, loss of customer and/or supplier trust, and financial loss. It could also result in legal claims or proceedings, liability or regulatory penalties under laws protecting the privacy of personal information. We may be required to expend substantial resources on investigation, remediation, and mitigation efforts, including enhancements to our security measures, which could impact our financial performance.

A cybersecurity program, leveraging industry best-practice frameworks for guidance, has been developed and maintained to help prevent and defend against these cybersecurity threats. To help cover potential damage and financial loss due to a cybersecurity incident, we maintain cybersecurity and other insurance policies that align with our disaster recovery and incident response plans. However, we can provide no assurance that our cybersecurity program is sufficient to prevent or mitigate every cybersecurity threat that exists. We can also provide no assurance that our insurance policies will cover every cybersecurity incident and/or will be adequate to cover all the costs related to significant security attacks or disruptions resulting from such attacks. Finally, such insurance policies may not continue to be available in amounts and/or on terms acceptable to us.

### **Other Risk Factors Relating to an Investment in Our Common Stock**

**Our only significant asset is ownership of 100% of the capital stock of School Bus Holdings and we do not currently intend to pay cash dividends on our common stock. Consequently, stockholders' ability to achieve a return on their investment will depend on appreciation in the price of our common stock.**

We have no direct operations and no significant assets other than the ownership of 100% of the capital stock of School Bus Holdings. We depend on School Bus Holdings and its subsidiaries for distributions, loans and other payments to generate the funds necessary to meet our financial obligations, including our expenses as a publicly traded company, and to pay any dividends with respect to our common stock, if any. Legal and contractual restrictions in agreements governing our current indebtedness, as well as our financial condition and operating requirements, may limit our ability to obtain cash from School Bus Holdings and its subsidiaries. While we are permitted to pay dividends in certain circumstances under our credit facility, as long as we are in compliance with our obligations under the credit facility, we do not expect to pay cash dividends on our common stock. Any future dividend payments are within the absolute discretion of our Board of Directors and will depend on, among other things, our results of operations, working capital requirements, capital expenditure requirements, financial condition, level of indebtedness, contractual restrictions with respect to payment of dividends, business opportunities, anticipated cash needs, provisions of applicable law and other factors that our Board of Directors may deem relevant.

**There can be no assurance that we will continue to repurchase shares of our common stock.**

Share repurchases are subject to limitations under applicable laws and the terms of our Credit Agreement (defined below). They are also subject to the discretion of our Board of Directors and are determined after considering then-existing conditions, including earnings, other operating results and capital requirements and cash deployment alternatives. Our share repurchase activity could vary from historical practices or our stated expectations. In addition, the timing and amount of share repurchases under Board of Directors approved share repurchase plans may differ from stated expectations and is within the discretion of management and will depend on many factors, including our ability to generate sufficient cash flows from operations in the future or to borrow money from available financing sources, our results of operations, capital requirements and applicable law.

**Shares of our common stock are reserved for current and future issuance, which would have the effect of diluting the existing shareholders.**

On May 28, 2015 and March 12, 2020, we registered 3,700,000 and 1,500,000 common stock shares, respectively, representing the shares of common stock issuable under the Blue Bird Corporation 2015 Omnibus Equity Incentive Plan (the “Incentive Plan”) and, pursuant to Rule 416(c) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, an indeterminable number of additional shares of common stock issuable under the Incentive Plan, as such amount may be adjusted as a result of stock splits, stock dividends, recapitalizations, anti-dilution provisions and similar transactions. At September 28, 2024, there were 594,232 common stock shares remaining to be issued under the Incentive Plan.

Additionally, on November 16, 2021, we filed a Registration Statement on Form S-3 that allows the Company to sell up to \$200.0 million in the aggregate of any combination of several different types of securities, including shares of common stock, from time to time in one or more offerings. The number of shares is indeterminable and is dependent on whether or not common stock is a security being sold in a future offering and, if so, the amount of capital we are attempting to raise and the price at which the shares of common stock can be sold. Any such sale of shares may also be adjusted as a result of stock splits, stock dividends, recapitalizations, anti-dilution provisions and similar transactions.

**Anti-takeover provisions contained in our certificate of incorporation and bylaws, as well as provisions of Delaware law, could impair a takeover attempt.**

Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws contain provisions that could have the effect of delaying or preventing changes in control or changes in our management without the consent of our Board of Directors. These provisions include:

- no cumulative voting in the election of directors, which limits the ability of minority stockholders to elect director candidates;
- the exclusive right of our Board of Directors to elect a director to fill a vacancy created by the expansion of the Board of Directors or the resignation, death, or removal of a director with or without cause by stockholders, which prevents stockholders from being able to fill vacancies on our Board of Directors;
- subject to any rights of holders of existing preferred shares, if any, the ability of our Board of Directors to determine whether to issue shares of our preferred stock and to determine the price and other terms of those shares, including preferences and voting rights, without stockholder approval, which could be used to significantly dilute the ownership of a hostile acquirer;
- a prohibition on stockholder action by written consent, which forces stockholder action to be taken at an annual or special meeting of our stockholders;
- the requirement that a special meeting of stockholders may be called only by the chairman of the Board of Directors, the chief executive officer, or the Board of Directors, which may delay the ability of our stockholders to force consideration of a proposal or to take action, including the removal of directors;
- limiting the liability of, and providing indemnification to, our directors and officers;
- controlling the procedures for the conduct and scheduling of stockholder meetings;
- providing for a staggered board, in which the members of the Board of Directors are divided into three classes to serve for a period of three years from the date of their respective appointment or election;
- permitting the removal of directors with or without cause by stockholders voting a majority of the votes cast if, at any time and for so long as, American Securities LLC beneficially owns, in the aggregate, capital stock representing at least 40% of the outstanding shares of our common stock;
- advance notice procedures that stockholders must comply with in order to nominate candidates to our Board of Directors or to propose matters to be acted upon at a stockholders’ meeting, which may discourage or deter a potential acquirer from conducting a solicitation of proxies to elect the acquirer’s own slate of directors or otherwise attempting to obtain control of our Company;
- requiring an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of our entire Board of Directors and by the holders of at least 66.67% of the voting power of our outstanding voting stock in order to adopt an amendment to our certificate of incorporation if, at any time and for so long as, American Securities LLC beneficially owns, in the aggregate, capital stock representing at least 50% of the outstanding shares of our common stock; and

- requiring an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of our entire Board of Directors or by the holders of at least 66.67% of the voting power of our outstanding voting stock to amend our bylaws if, at any time and for so long as, American Securities LLC beneficially owns, in the aggregate, capital stock representing at least 50% of the outstanding shares of our common stock.

These provisions, alone or together, could delay hostile takeovers and changes in control of our Company or changes in our Board of Directors and management.

As a Delaware corporation, we are also subject to provisions of Delaware law, including Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, which prevents some stockholders holding more than 15% of our outstanding common stock from engaging in certain business combinations without approval of the holders of substantially all of our outstanding common stock. Any provision of our certificate of incorporation or bylaws or Delaware law that has the effect of delaying or deterring a change in control could limit the opportunity for our stockholders to receive a premium for their shares of our common stock and could also affect the price that some investors are willing to pay for our common stock.

## **Item 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments**

None.

## **Item 1C. Cybersecurity**

### **Definitions**

The SEC defines several key terms included in the below cybersecurity discussion as follows:

*Information systems* are electronic information resources, owned or used by a registrant, including physical or virtual infrastructure controlled by such information resources, or components thereof, organized for the collection, processing, maintenance, use, sharing, dissemination, or disposition of the registrant's information to maintain or support the registrant's operations.

A *cybersecurity threat* is any potential unauthorized occurrence on or conducted through a registrant's information systems that may result in adverse effects on the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of a registrant's information systems or any information residing therein.

A *cybersecurity incident* is an unauthorized occurrence, or a series of related unauthorized occurrences, on or conducted through a registrant's information systems that jeopardizes the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of a registrant's information systems or any information residing therein.

### **Risk Management and Strategy**

We have developed and implemented a cybersecurity risk management program that is designed to safeguard the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of Company electronic information. The Company's cybersecurity risk management program is integrated into the overarching enterprise risk management program to ensure that cybersecurity risk is properly mitigated. Crucial parts of the Company's cybersecurity risk management program include the following:

- Regular vulnerability scans, penetration tests and risk assessments designed to identify weaknesses in the Company's systems and processes.
- A Business Impact Analysis and Business Continuity Plan to identify potential threats, their potential impact on the business, and plans to respond, communicate and continue operations.
- An Incident Response Plan that includes detailed procedures for detecting, reporting and addressing security incidents in an organized and effective manner.
- A Disaster Recovery Plan that details the steps we must take to respond and recover from a disaster event.
- A Third-Party Risk Management Program that identifies and reduces risks presented by vendors and suppliers.
- The development and maintenance of a Cybersecurity Risk Register to identify and monitor security risks and treatment plans.

We utilize a third-party cybersecurity consulting firm that provides strategic and tactical security support, including, but not limited to, a Virtual Chief Information Security Officer ("vCISO"). The vCISO works with and provides strategic guidance to the Vice President of Information Technology, including preparing and/or presenting key information to the Company's Audit Committee or Board or Directors, as necessary.

To date, there have been no risks identified from cybersecurity threats, including as a result of cybersecurity incidents, that have materially affected, or are reasonably likely to materially affect, the Company, including its business strategy, results of operations, financial condition or cash flows.

## **Governance**

The Board of Directors has oversight responsibility for cybersecurity risks to the Company. It is informed of the status of the cybersecurity risk management program at least quarterly and is briefed on strategic objectives and high priority risks and incidents as they arise.

The Audit Committee oversees management's implementation of our cybersecurity risk management program. The Audit Committee also receives quarterly reports from various members of management, including information technology and security specialists, on the state of the cybersecurity risk management program. The periodic updates include, but are not limited to, strategic objectives, key initiatives, key metrics, and noteworthy cybersecurity risks. In addition, management will update the Audit Committee regarding any significant cybersecurity incidents in a timely manner.

A Cybersecurity Materiality Assessment Committee has been formed to review material cybersecurity risks and threats and determine materiality criteria and thresholds for incidents. This committee is comprised of senior management from multiple departments including legal, information technology, security, human resources, finance and more. The Vice President of Information Technology, responsible for the development of the cybersecurity risk management program, has extensive experience across information technology within the automotive manufacturing industry. The security team provided by the cybersecurity consulting firm contracted by the Company has a wide breadth of expertise across core cybersecurity disciplines including governance, risk, compliance, and security architecture and engineering. This security team has combined experience exceeding 30 years and numerous industry recognized security certifications. The vCISO, who is responsible for the oversight of, and strategic guidance for, the security team, has over 20 years of related experience and is a Certified Information Security Manager and a Certified Information Systems Security Professional.

To support these efforts, we follow the guidance of numerous security agencies, industry resources and frameworks, including, but not limited to, the Center for Internet Security Critical Security Controls v8 and the NIST Cybersecurity Framework. A comprehensive library of policies and procedures has been developed leveraging security best practices and industry standards to define the security program. In addition, a cybersecurity roadmap has been developed and is maintained to execute on the strategic plan and expand and mature the overall program.

## **Item 2. Properties**

Our corporate headquarters are located in Macon, Georgia and we have an additional small satellite office in Troy, Michigan. Our Bus segment operates a fabrication plant and an integrated chassis manufacturing and body assembly plant in Fort Valley, Georgia, where components for Type C, Type D, and specialty buses are manufactured and assembled, and an inventory warehouse that supplies these plants in Perry, Georgia. Our Parts segment operates a parts distribution center located in Delaware, Ohio. We own our facilities in Fort Valley, Georgia (approximately 1.5 million square feet). We lease facilities in Macon, Georgia (approximately 0.1 million square feet), Perry, Georgia (approximately 0.1 million square feet), Troy, Michigan (approximately 5 thousand square feet) and Delaware, Ohio (approximately 0.1 million square feet). Our Micro Bird joint venture leases its facility (0.2 million square feet) in Drummondville, Quebec, Canada.

## **Item 3. Legal Proceedings**

In the ordinary course of business, we may be a party to various legal proceedings from time to time. We do not believe that there is any pending or threatened proceeding against us, which, if determined adversely, would have a material effect on our business, results of operations, or financial condition.

## **Item 4. Mine Safety Disclosures**

Not Applicable.

## PART II

### Item 5. Market for Registrant’s Common Equity, Related Stockholder Matters and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities

Our common stock is currently quoted on the NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol “BLBD.” At November 20, 2024, there were 66 holders of record of the Company’s common stock. Management of the Company believes that there are in excess of 34,000 beneficial holders of our common stock.

#### Dividends

We have not paid any dividends on our common stock to date. It is our present intention to retain any earnings for use in our business operations and, accordingly we do not anticipate that the Board of Directors will declare any dividends in the foreseeable future on our common stock. In addition, certain of our loan agreements restrict the payment of dividends.

#### Securities Authorized for Issuance Under Equity Compensation Plans

The following table provides information for all equity compensation plans at September 28, 2024, under which the equity securities of the Company were authorized for issuance:

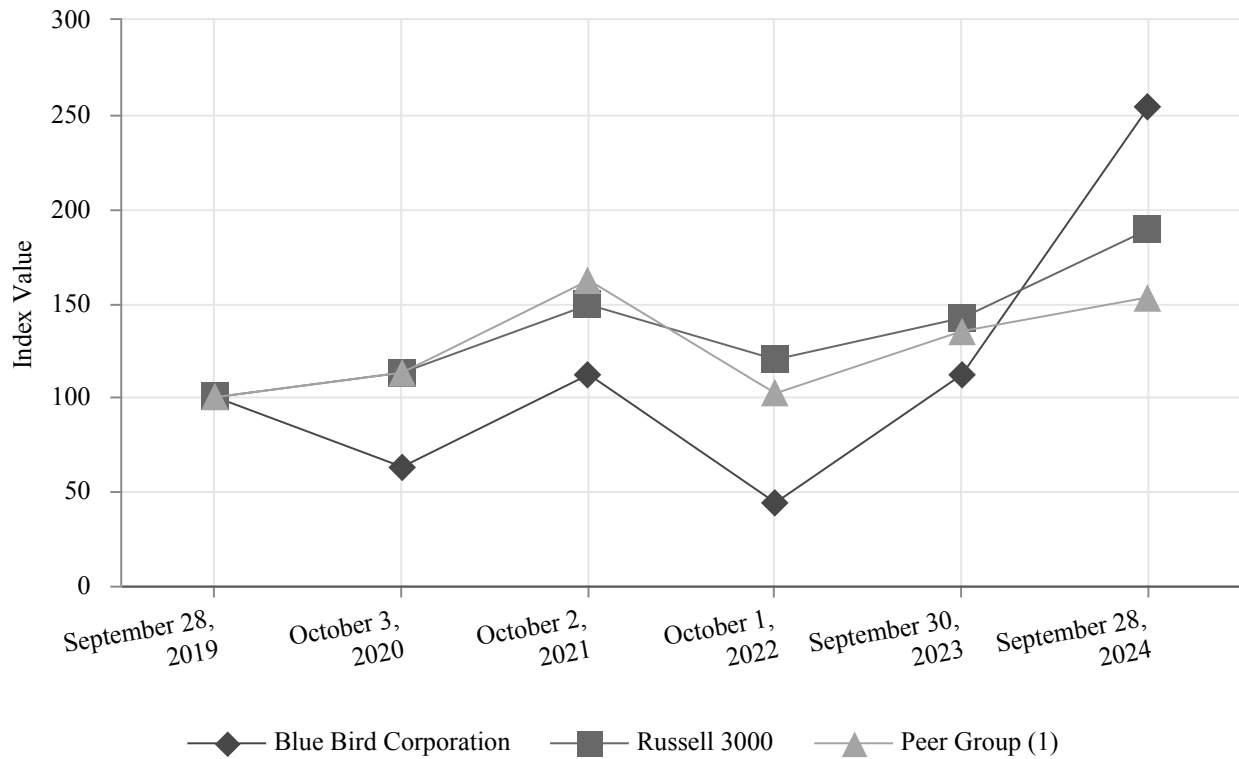
Plan Category (1)	(a) Number of Securities to be Issued Upon Exercise of Outstanding Options, Warrants, and Rights	(b) Weighted Average Exercise Price of Outstanding Options, Warrants and Rights	(c) Number of Securities Remaining Available for Future Issuance Under Equity Compensation Plans (excluding securities reflected in column (a)) (2)
Equity compensation plans approved by security holders	278,678	\$ 17.58	594,232

- (1) There are no equity compensation plans not approved by stockholders.
- (2) Securities available for future issuance may take the form of non-qualified stock options, incentive stock options, stock appreciation rights, restricted stock, restricted stock units, performance shares, performance units, incentive bonus awards, other cash-based awards, and/or other stock-based awards.

#### Performance Graph

The following performance graph and related information is not deemed to be “soliciting material” or to be “filed” with the SEC or subject to Regulation 14A or 14C under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or to the liabilities of Section 18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, and will not be deemed to be incorporated by reference into any filing under the Securities Act of 1933 or the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, except to the extent the Company specifically incorporates it by reference into such a filing: the SEC requires the Company to include a line graph presentation comparing cumulative five year common stock returns with a broad-based stock index and either a nationally recognized industry index or an index of peer companies selected by the Company. The Company has chosen to use the Russell 3000 Index as the broad-based index. The following stock performance graph compares the total stockholder return of an investment of \$100 in cash from September 28, 2019 through September 28, 2024.

## Stock Performance Graph



### Cumulative Total Return

	September 28, 2019	October 3, 2020	October 2, 2021	October 1, 2022	September 30, 2023	September 28, 2024
<b>Blue Bird Corporation</b>	100	63	112	44	112	254
<b>Russell 3000</b>	100	113	149	120	142	189
<b>Peer Group</b>	100	113	162	102	135	153

### (1) Peer Group

Astec Industries Inc.	Commercial Vehicle Group Inc.	Douglas Dynamics, Inc.
Federal Signal Corp.	NFI Group Inc.	Rev Group Inc.
The Shyft Group, Inc.	Thor Industries Inc.	Wabash National Corp

Other than Lion Electric Company, Blue Bird is the only publicly traded school bus company. As such, our peer group is not constructed on a line-of-business basis. Given our business model and brand recognition, we believe that the specialty vehicle OEMs and branded industrial companies that we have selected represent the most comparable publicly traded companies to Blue Bird. While Lion Electric Company is within Blue Bird's peer group, it is not included in the chart above as it has only been publicly traded since May 2021. Additionally, NFI Group Inc. is traded on the Toronto Stock Exchange in Canadian Dollars. The hypothetical investment in NFI Group Inc. assumes investing \$100 U.S. Dollars to acquire shares on September 28, 2019. The value of such shares at each of the above dates is then translated from Canadian Dollars to U.S. Dollars for inclusion in the peer group index.

## Issuer Repurchase of Equity Securities

On January 31, 2024, the Board of Directors of the Company authorized and approved a share repurchase program for up to \$60 million of outstanding shares of the Company's common stock over a period of 24 months, expiring January 31, 2026. Under the share repurchase program, the Company may repurchase shares through open market purchases, privately negotiated transactions, accelerated share repurchase transactions, block purchases or otherwise in accordance with applicable federal securities laws, including Rule 10b-18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.



The Board of Directors also authorized the Company to enter into written trading plans pursuant to Rule 10b5-1 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. Adopting a trading plan that satisfies the conditions of Rule 10b5-1 allows a company to repurchase its shares at times when it might otherwise be prevented from doing so due to self-imposed trading blackout periods or pursuant to insider trading laws. The Company may from time to time enter into Rule 10b5-1 trading plans to facilitate the repurchase of its common stock pursuant to its share repurchase program.

The timing, manner, price, and number of shares to be repurchased will be at the discretion of Company management. The repurchase program does not obligate Blue Bird to acquire any specific amount of securities and can be modified or terminated at any time without notice. Repurchases under this program are expected to be funded from one or a combination of existing cash balances, future free cash flow, or indebtedness.

Share repurchase activity under the share repurchase program, on a trade date basis, for each month in the quarter ended September 28, 2024, was as follows:

Period by fiscal month	Total number of shares repurchased	Average price paid per share (in dollars) <sup>(1)</sup>	Total number of shares repurchased as part of publicly announced plans or programs <sup>(2)</sup>	Approximate dollar value of shares that may yet be purchased under the plans or programs (in millions)
June 30 - July 27, 2024	—	\$ —	—	\$ 60.0
July 28 - August 24, 2024	20,000	48.86	20,000	59.0
August 25 - September 28, 2024	181,818	49.29	181,818	50.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>201,818</b>		<b>201,818</b>	

<sup>(1)</sup> Average price paid per share includes costs associated with the repurchases, except for the cost of any associated excise tax.

<sup>(2)</sup> All share repurchases were made under the \$60.0 million repurchase program approved on January 31, 2024 and announced on February 1, 2024 that expires on January 31, 2026

## Item 6. [Reserved]

## Item 7. Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations

The following discussion and analysis of financial condition and results of operations of the Company should be read in conjunction with the Company’s audited financial statements for the fiscal years ended September 28, 2024, September 30, 2023 and October 1, 2022 and related notes appearing elsewhere in this Report. Our actual results may not be indicative of future performance. This discussion and analysis contains forward-looking statements and involves numerous risks and uncertainties, including, but not limited to, those discussed or incorporated by reference in the sections of this Report titled “Special Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements” and “Risk Factors.” Actual results may differ materially from those contained in any forward-looking statements. Certain monetary amounts, percentages and other figures included in this Report have been subjected to rounding adjustments. Accordingly, figures shown as totals in certain tables may not be the arithmetic aggregation of the figures that precede them, and figures expressed as percentages in the text may not total 100% or, as applicable, when aggregated, may not be the arithmetic aggregation of the percentages that precede them.

### Executive Overview

Blue Bird is the leading independent designer and manufacturer of school buses. Our longevity and reputation in the school bus industry have made Blue Bird an iconic American brand. We distinguish ourselves from our principal competitors by dedicating our focus to the design, engineering, manufacture and sale of school buses, and related parts. As the principal manufacturer of chassis and body production specifically designed for school bus applications in the U.S., Blue Bird is recognized as an industry leader for school bus innovation, safety, product quality/reliability/durability, efficiency, and lower operating costs. In addition, Blue Bird is the market leader in alternative powered product offerings with its propane powered, gasoline powered, and all-electric powered school buses.

Blue Bird sells its buses and parts through an extensive network of U.S. and Canadian dealers that, in their territories, are exclusive to Blue Bird on Type C and Type D school buses. Blue Bird also sells directly to major fleet operators, the U.S. government, state governments, and authorized dealers in certain limited foreign countries.

## ***Impact of Supply Chain Constraints on Our Business***

During the second half of our fiscal year that ended October 3, 2020 ("fiscal 2020") and first half of our fiscal year that ended on October 2, 2021 ("fiscal 2021"), COVID-19 materially affected demand for new buses and replacement/maintenance parts, significantly impacting our business and operations. Although demand for school buses strengthened substantially during the second half of fiscal 2021, the Company, and automotive industry as a whole, began experiencing significant supply chain constraints resulting from, among others, labor shortages due to the 'great resignation,' the lack of maintenance on, and acquisition of, capital assets during the extended COVID-19 global lockdowns; significant increased demand for consumer products containing certain materials required for the production of vehicles, such as microchips, as consumers spent stimulus and other funds on items for their homes; etc. Additionally, the already challenged global supply chain for automotive parts that began in fiscal 2021 was further impacted, including continuing escalating inventory purchase costs, by additional stress resulting from Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 (see further discussion below). These supply chain disruptions had a significant adverse impact our operations and results due to higher purchasing costs, including freight costs incurred to expedite receipt of critical components, increased manufacturing inefficiencies and our inability to complete the production of buses to fulfill sales orders during most of fiscal 2022.

Towards the end of fiscal 2022 and continuing into fiscal 2023, there were slight improvements in the supply chain's ability to deliver the parts and components necessary to support our production operations, resulting in increased (i) manufacturing efficiencies and (ii) production of buses to fulfill sales orders during fiscal 2023. However, the higher costs charged by suppliers to procure inventory that continued into fiscal 2023 had a significant adverse impact on our operations and results. Specifically, such cost increases outpaced the increases in sales prices that we charged for the buses that were sold during the first quarter of fiscal 2023, many of which were included in the backlog of fixed price sales orders originating in fiscal 2021 and the early months of fiscal 2022 that carried forward into fiscal 2023. During the remainder of fiscal 2023, the buses that were sold were generally included in the backlog of fixed price sales orders originating more recently (i.e., the latter months of fiscal 2022 and in fiscal 2023), with the cumulative increases in sales prices we charged for those buses generally outpacing the higher costs we paid to procure inventory, resulting in gross profit during the quarters. While the gross margin on bus sales during the second quarter of fiscal 2023 lagged the historical gross margin reported prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, it returned to more normal historical levels during the latter half of fiscal 2023.

Supply chain disruptions continued into fiscal 2024 as there were still occasional shortages of certain critical components as well as ongoing increases in raw materials costs, both of which impacted our business and operations by limiting the number of school buses that we could produce and sell as well as increasing the costs to manufacture buses. Nonetheless, the lessons learned, and resulting actions taken, by management over the past three fiscal years allowed the Company to better navigate these supply chain challenges and consistently produce buses to fulfill sales orders. Ongoing improvements in manufacturing operations, when coupled with periodic pricing actions taken by the Company to ensure that the increased sales prices charged for buses kept pace with increased costs to procure inventory to produce the buses, allowed the Company to report gross profits and gross margins throughout fiscal 2024 that were consistent with, or better than, historic levels experienced prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

New bus orders during fiscal 2023 and continuing into fiscal 2024 remained robust, primarily due to a combination of (i) pent-up demand resulting from the cumulative effect of the COVID-19 pandemic when many school systems conducted virtual learning and (ii) the challenged global supply chain for automotive parts that hindered the school bus industry's ability to produce and sell buses during the latter half of fiscal 2021 and continuing through fiscal 2024. Accordingly, the Company's backlog remained strong at approximately 4,600 units and 4,800 units as of September 30, 2023 and September 28, 2024, respectively, despite it selling over 8,500 units during fiscal 2023, the majority of which were included in the backlog that existed as of October 1, 2022, and 9,000 units in fiscal 2024.

In general, management believes that supply chain disruptions could continue in future periods and could materially impact our results if we are unable to i) obtain parts and supplies in sufficient quantities to meet our production needs and/or ii) pass along rising costs to our customers. They have resulted, and could continue to result, in significant economic disruption and have adversely affected our business. Significant uncertainty exists concerning the magnitude of the impact and duration of ongoing supply chain constraints and their potential impact on the overall economy, both within the U.S and globally. Accordingly, the magnitude and duration of any production and supply chain disruptions and their related financial impacts on our business cannot be estimated at this time.

The impacts from supply chain constraints on the Company's business and operations beginning during the second half of fiscal 2021 and continuing into fiscal 2024 negatively affected our inventory procurement costs, gross profit, income and cash flows. We continue to monitor and assess the ability of suppliers to maintain operations and to provide parts and supplies in sufficient quantities to meet our production needs and our ability to maintain continuous production in future periods. See PART I, Item 1A. "Risk Factors," of this Report for a discussion of the material risks we believe we face particularly related to supply chain disruptions and related constraints.

## ***Impact of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine on Our Business***

On February 24, 2022, Russian military forces launched a large-scale invasion of Ukraine. While the Company has no assets or customers in either of these countries, this military conflict has had a significant negative impact on the Company's operations, cash flows and results beginning in the second half fiscal 2022 and continuing into fiscal 2024, primarily in an indirect manner since the Company does not sell to customers located in, or source goods directly from, either country.

Specifically, Ukraine has historically been a large exporter of ferroalloy materials used in the manufacture of steel and the disruption in the supply of these minerals resulted in a significant volatility in the price of steel. While the Company has generally mitigated its direct exposure to steel prices by executing fixed price purchase contracts (generally purchased up to four quarters in advance) for the majority of the significant amount of steel used in the manufacture of school bus bodies, many suppliers from which the Company purchases components containing steel increased the price that they charge the Company to acquire such inventory, primarily on a lagged basis, starting from the latter half of fiscal 2022 and continuing into fiscal 2024, as applicable. These inventory costs impact gross profit when school buses are sold and cash flows when the related invoices are paid.

Additionally, Russia has historically been a large global exporter of oil and many countries have ceased buying Russian oil in protest of the invasion and to comply with sanctions imposed by the U.S. and many European countries. Accordingly, the disruption in the supply of oil has significantly impacted the price of goods refined from oil, such as diesel fuel, the price of which has been volatile and has remained high since the latter half of fiscal 2022. These higher costs significantly impacted the Company both as a result of the price that suppliers charge the Company to acquire inventory (since diesel fuel impacts their cost of acquiring the inventory used in producing their goods) and the price that the Company pays for freight to deliver the inventory that it acquires. Additionally, such increases are generally implemented with very little lag so that they impact the purchase cost of inventory and cash flows on an almost real-time basis.

Finally, both countries have large quantities of other minerals that impact commodity costs, such as rubber and resin, among others, and the disruption caused by the ongoing military conflict increased the cost and/or decreased the supply of components containing these materials, further impacting an already challenged global supply chain for automotive parts.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has resulted, and is likely to continue to result, in significant economic disruption and has adversely affected our business. Specifically, it has contributed to higher inventory purchase costs, including freight costs, that negatively impacted the gross profit recognized on sales beginning during the latter part of fiscal 2022 and continuing into fiscal 2024. Because peace negotiations do not appear to be productive and because Russia has continued to intensify its military operations in Ukraine, we currently believe that this matter will continue to adversely impact our business in future periods. Significant uncertainty exists concerning the magnitude of the impact and duration of the ongoing military conflict and its impact on the overall economy, both within the U.S. and globally. Accordingly, the duration of any production and supply chain disruptions, and related financial impacts, cannot be estimated at this time.

## ***Factors Affecting Our Revenues***

Our revenues are driven primarily by the following factors:

- *Property tax revenues.* Property tax revenues are one of the major sources of funding for school districts, and therefore new school buses. Property tax revenues are a function of land and building prices, based on assessments of property value by state or county assessors and millage rates voted by the local electorate.
- *Student enrollment and delivery mechanisms for learning.* Increases or decreases in the number of school bus riders have a direct impact on school district demand. Evolving protocols for public health concerns and/or continued technological advancements could shift the future form of educational delivery away from in-person learning on a more permanent basis, with increased remote learning reasonably expected to decrease the number of school bus riders.
- *Revenue mix.* We are able to charge more for certain of our products (e.g., Type C propane powered school buses, electric powered buses, Type D buses, and buses with higher option content) than other products. The mix of products sold in any fiscal period can directly impact our revenues for the period.
- *Strength of the dealer network.* We rely on our dealers, as well as a small number of major fleet operators, to be the direct point of contact with school districts and their purchasing agents. An effective dealer is capable of expanding revenues within a given school district by matching that district's needs to our capabilities, offering options that would not otherwise be provided to the district.

- *Pricing.* Our products are sold to school districts throughout the U.S. and Canada. Each state and each Canadian province has its own set of regulations that govern the purchase of products, including school buses, by their school districts. We and our dealers must navigate these regulations, purchasing procedures, and the districts' specifications in order to reach mutually acceptable price terms. Pricing may or may not be favorable to us, depending upon a number of factors impacting purchasing decisions. Additionally, in certain cases, prices originally quoted with dealers and school districts may have become less favorable, or more unfavorable, to us given increasing inventory costs between the time the sales order was contractually agreed upon and the bus is built and delivered as a result of ongoing supply chain disruptions and general inflationary pressures.
- *Buying patterns of major fleets.* Major fleets regularly compete against one another for existing accounts. Fleets are also continuously trying to win the business of school districts that operate their own transportation services. These activities can have either a positive or negative impact on our sales, depending on the brand preference of the fleet that wins the business. Major fleets also periodically review their fleet sizes and replacement patterns due to funding availability as well as the profitability of existing routes. These actions can impact total purchases by fleets in a given year.
- *Seasonality.* In the years preceding the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, our sales were subject to seasonal variation based on the school calendar with the peak season during our third and fourth fiscal quarters. Sales during the third and fourth fiscal quarters were typically greater than the first and second fiscal quarters due to the desire of municipalities to have any new buses that they ordered available to them at the beginning of the new school year. With the COVID-19 pandemic impacting the demand for Company products and the impact of the subsequent supply chain constraints hindering the Company's ability to produce and sell buses, seasonality has become unpredictable. Seasonality and variations from historical seasonality have impacted the comparison of results between fiscal periods.
- *Inflation.* As discussed previously above, supply chain disruptions developing subsequent to the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine have significantly increased our inventory purchase costs, including freight costs incurred to expedite receipt of critical components, reflected in cost of goods sold during all of fiscal 2022, and continuing, to a lesser extent, into fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2024. In response, beginning in July 2021, the Company announced a number of sales price increases that applied to new sales orders and partially applied to backlog orders that were both intended to mitigate the impact of rising purchase costs on our operations and results. Most of these price increases only began to marginally impact sales and gross profit in the latter half of fiscal 2022. Specifically, they did not offset the significant continued increase in the Company's production costs, resulting in further deterioration of the Company's gross profit during the second half of fiscal 2022 and continuing into the first quarter of fiscal 2023 as it produced and sold the oldest units included in the backlog as of the end of fiscal 2022. However, they began to have a more significant, positive impact on sales and gross profit during the remainder of fiscal 2023, as the Company fulfilled sales orders (i) from the backlog existing as of the end of fiscal 2022 that originated more recently (i.e., during the latter months of fiscal 2022) and (ii) that were taken during fiscal 2023, both of which contained most or all of the cumulative sales price increases that have been announced. These cumulative price increases also continued to have a significant, positive impact on sales and gross profit during fiscal 2024.

### ***Factors Affecting Our Expenses and Other Items***

Our expenses and other line items in our Consolidated Statements of Operations are principally driven by the following factors:

- *Cost of goods sold.* The components of our cost of goods sold consist of material costs (principally powertrain components, steel and rubber, as well as aluminum and copper) including freight costs, labor expense, and overhead. Our cost of goods sold may vary from period to period due to changes in sales volume, efforts by certain suppliers to pass through the economics associated with key commodities, fluctuations in freight costs, design changes with respect to specific components, design changes with respect to specific bus models, wage increases for plant labor, productivity of plant labor, delays in receiving materials and other logistical challenges, and the impact of overhead items such as utilities.
- *Selling, general and administrative expenses.* Our selling, general and administrative expenses include costs associated with our selling and marketing efforts, engineering, centralized finance, human resources, purchasing, and information technology services, along with other administrative matters and functions. In most instances, other than direct costs associated with sales and marketing programs, the principal component of these costs is salary expense. Changes from period to period are typically driven by the number of our employees, as well as by merit increases provided to experienced personnel.
- *Interest expense.* Our interest expense relates to costs associated with our debt instruments and reflects both the amount of indebtedness and the interest rate that we are required to pay on our debt. Interest expense also includes unrealized gains or losses from interest rate hedges, if any, and changes in the fair value of interest rate derivatives not designated in hedge accounting relationships, if any, as well as expenses related to debt guarantees, if any.
- *Income taxes.* We make estimates of the amounts to recognize for income taxes in each tax jurisdiction in which we operate. In addition, provisions are established for withholding taxes related to the transfer of cash between jurisdictions and for uncertain tax positions taken.

- *Other income/expense, net.* This balance includes periodic pension expense or income as well as gains or losses on foreign currency, if any. Other amounts not associated with operating expenses may also be included in this balance.
- *Equity in net income or loss of non-consolidated affiliate(s).* We include in this line item our 50% share of net income or loss from our investments in Micro Bird and Clean Bus Solutions, our unconsolidated joint ventures.

## Key Non-GAAP Financial Measures We Use to Evaluate Our Performance

The consolidated financial statements included in this Report in Item 8. "Financial Statements and Supplementary Data" are prepared in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the U.S. ("U.S. GAAP"). This Report also includes the following financial measures that are not prepared in accordance with U.S. GAAP ("non-GAAP"): "Adjusted EBITDA," "Adjusted EBITDA Margin," and "Free Cash Flow." Adjusted EBITDA and Free Cash Flow are financial metrics that are utilized by management and the Board of Directors, as and when applicable, to determine (a) the annual cash bonus payouts, if any, to be made to certain employees based upon the terms of the Company's Management Incentive Plan, and (b) whether the performance criteria have been met for the vesting of certain equity awards granted annually to certain members of management based upon the terms of the Company's Omnibus Equity Incentive Plan. Additionally, consolidated EBITDA, which is an adjusted EBITDA metric defined by our Credit Agreement (defined below) that could differ from Adjusted EBITDA discussed above as the adjustments to the calculations are not uniform, is used to determine the Company's ongoing compliance with several financial covenant requirements, including being utilized in the denominator of the calculation of the Total Net Leverage Ratio ("TNLR"), which is also utilized in determining the interest rate we pay on borrowings under our Credit Agreement (defined below). Accordingly, management views these non-GAAP financial metrics as key for the above purposes and as a useful way to evaluate the performance of our operations as discussed further below.

Adjusted EBITDA is defined as net income or loss prior to interest income; interest expense including the component of operating lease expense (which is presented as a single operating expense in selling, general and administrative expenses in our U.S. GAAP financial statements) that represents interest expense on lease liabilities; income taxes; and depreciation and amortization including the component of operating lease expense (which is presented as a single operating expense in selling, general and administrative expenses in our U.S. GAAP financial statements) that represents amortization charges on right-of-use lease assets; as adjusted for certain non-cash charges or credits that we may record on a recurring basis such as share-based compensation expense and unrealized gains or losses on certain derivative financial instruments; net gains or losses on the disposal of assets as well as certain charges such as (i) significant product design changes; (ii) transaction related costs; (iii) discrete expenses related to major cost cutting and/or operational transformation initiatives. While certain of the charges that are added back in the Adjusted EBITDA calculation, such as transaction related costs and operational transformation and major product redesign initiatives, represent operating expenses that may be recorded in more than one annual period, the significant project or transaction giving rise to such expenses is not considered to be indicative of the Company's normal operations. Accordingly, we believe that these, as well as the other credits and charges that comprise the amounts utilized in the determination of Adjusted EBITDA described above, should not be used in evaluating the Company's ongoing annual operating performance.

We define Adjusted EBITDA Margin as Adjusted EBITDA as a percentage of net sales. Adjusted EBITDA and Adjusted EBITDA Margin are not measures of performance defined in accordance with U.S. GAAP. The measures are used as a supplement to U.S. GAAP results in evaluating certain aspects of our business, as described below.

We believe that Adjusted EBITDA and Adjusted EBITDA Margin are useful to investors in evaluating our performance because the measures consider the performance of our ongoing operations, excluding decisions made with respect to capital investment, financing, and certain other significant initiatives or transactions as outlined in the preceding paragraph. We believe the non-GAAP measures offer additional financial metrics that, when coupled with the U.S. GAAP results and the reconciliation to U.S. GAAP results, provide a more complete understanding of our results of operations and the factors and trends affecting our business.

Adjusted EBITDA and Adjusted EBITDA Margin should not be considered as alternatives to net income or loss as an indicator of our performance or as alternatives to any other measure prescribed by U.S. GAAP as there are limitations to using such non-GAAP measures. Although we believe that Adjusted EBITDA and Adjusted EBITDA Margin may enhance an evaluation of our operating performance based on recent revenue generation and product/overhead cost control because they exclude the impact of prior decisions made about capital investment, financing, and certain other significant initiatives or transactions, (i) other companies in Blue Bird's industry may define Adjusted EBITDA and Adjusted EBITDA Margin differently than we do and, as a result, they may not be comparable to similarly titled measures used by other companies in Blue Bird's industry, and (ii) Adjusted EBITDA and Adjusted EBITDA Margin exclude certain financial information that some may consider important in evaluating our performance.

We compensate for these limitations by providing disclosure of the differences between Adjusted EBITDA and U.S. GAAP results, including providing a reconciliation to U.S. GAAP results, to enable investors to perform their own analysis of our ongoing operating results.

Our measure of Free Cash Flow is used in addition to and in conjunction with results presented in accordance with U.S. GAAP and it should not be relied upon to the exclusion of U.S. GAAP financial measures. Free Cash Flow reflects an additional way of evaluating our liquidity that, when viewed with our U.S. GAAP results, provides a more complete understanding of factors and trends affecting our cash flows. We strongly encourage investors to review our financial statements and publicly-filed reports in their entirety and not to rely on any single financial measure.

We define Free Cash Flow as total cash provided by/used in operating activities as adjusted for net cash paid for the acquisition of fixed assets and intangible assets. We use Free Cash Flow, and ratios based on Free Cash Flow, to conduct and evaluate our business because, although it is similar to cash flow from operations, we believe it is a more conservative measure of cash flow since purchases of fixed assets and intangible assets are a necessary component of ongoing operations. Accordingly, we expect Free Cash Flow to be less than operating cash flows.

## Our Segments

We manage our business in two operating segments, which are also our reportable segments: (i) the Bus segment, which involves the design, engineering, manufacture and sale of school buses and extended warranties; and (ii) the Parts segment, which includes the sale of replacement bus parts. Financial information is reported on the basis that it is used internally by the chief operating decision maker (“CODM”) in evaluating segment performance and deciding how to allocate resources to segments. The President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company has been identified as the CODM. Management evaluates the segments based primarily upon revenues and gross profit.

## Consolidated Results of Operations for the fiscal years ended September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023
<b>Net sales</b>	\$ 1,347,154	\$ 1,132,793
Cost of goods sold	1,090,998	993,943
Gross profit	\$ 256,156	\$ 138,850
<b>Operating expenses</b>		
Selling, general and administrative expenses	116,825	87,193
Operating profit	\$ 139,331	\$ 51,657
Interest expense	(10,579)	(18,012)
Interest income	4,136	1,004
Other expense, net	(4,394)	(8,307)
Loss on debt refinancing or modification	(1,558)	(537)
Income before income taxes	\$ 126,936	\$ 25,805
Income tax expense	(33,228)	(8,953)
Equity in net income of non-consolidated affiliate(s)	11,839	6,960
<b>Net income</b>	<u>\$ 105,547</u>	<u>\$ 23,812</u>
<b>Other financial data:</b>		
Adjusted EBITDA	\$ 182,909	\$ 87,927
Adjusted EBITDA Margin	13.6 %	7.8 %



**The following provides the results of operations of Blue Bird's two reportable segments:**

<i>(in thousands)</i>		2024	2023
<b>Net Sales by Segment</b>			
Bus		\$ 1,242,885	\$ 1,034,625
Parts		104,269	98,168
Total		<u>\$ 1,347,154</u>	<u>\$ 1,132,793</u>
<b>Gross Profit by Segment</b>			
Bus		\$ 203,791	\$ 91,003
Parts		52,365	47,847
Total		<u>\$ 256,156</u>	<u>\$ 138,850</u>

*Net sales.* Net sales were \$1,347.2 million for fiscal 2024, an increase of \$214.4 million, or 18.9%, compared to \$1,132.8 million for fiscal 2023. The increase in net sales is primarily due to increased unit bookings, product and mix changes, as well as pricing actions taken by management in response to increased inventory purchase costs.

Bus sales increased \$208.3 million, or 20.1%, reflecting a 5.7% increase in units booked and a 13.6% increase in average sales price per unit. In fiscal 2024, 9,000 units were booked compared to 8,514 units booked for fiscal 2023. The increase in units sold was primarily due to product and customer mix changes as well as slight improvements in supply chain constraints impacting the Company's ability to produce and deliver buses due to shortages of critical components during fiscal 2024 compared to fiscal 2023. The increase in average unit sales price reflects pricing actions taken by management as well as product and customer mix changes.

Parts sales increased \$6.1 million, or 6.2%, for fiscal 2024 compared to fiscal 2023. This increase is primarily attributed to price increases, driven by ongoing inflationary pressures, as well as higher fulfillment volumes and slight variations due to product and channel mix.

*Cost of goods sold.* Total cost of goods sold was \$1,091.0 million for fiscal 2024, an increase of \$97.1 million, or 9.8%, compared to \$993.9 million for fiscal 2023. As a percentage of net sales, total cost of goods sold decreased from 87.7% to 81.0%, primarily due to the pricing actions discussed above.

Bus segment cost of goods sold increased \$95.5 million, or 10.1%, for fiscal 2024 compared to fiscal 2023. The increase was partially attributable to the 5.7% increase in units booked during fiscal 2024 compared to fiscal 2023. Also contributing was increased inventory costs, as the average cost of goods sold per unit for fiscal 2024 was 4.2% higher compared to fiscal 2023, primarily due to product and mix changes as well as increases in manufacturing costs attributable to a) increased raw materials costs resulting from ongoing inflationary pressures and b) ongoing supply chain disruptions that resulted in higher purchase costs for components.

The \$1.6 million, or 3.1%, increase in parts segment cost of goods sold for fiscal 2024 compared to fiscal 2023 was primarily due to increased purchased parts costs, driven by ongoing inflationary pressures and supply chain disruptions, as well as slight variations due to product and channel mix.

*Operating profit.* Operating profit was \$139.3 million for fiscal 2024, an increase of \$87.7 million, or 169.7%, compared to \$51.7 million for fiscal 2023. Profitability was primarily impacted by an increase of \$117.3 million in gross profit, as outlined in the revenue and cost of goods sold discussions above. The increase in gross profit was partially offset by an increase of \$29.6 million in selling, general and administrative expenses, primarily due to an increase in labor costs. Additionally, selling, general and administrative expenses during the first quarter of fiscal 2023 benefited from actions taken by management to reduce labor costs and certain discretionary spending to mitigate the significant adverse impact of ongoing supply chain constraints on the Company's operations and results.

*Interest expense.* Interest expense was \$10.6 million for fiscal 2024, a decrease of \$7.4 million, or 41.3%, compared to \$18.0 million for fiscal 2023. The decrease was primarily attributable to a decrease in the stated term loan interest rate from 10.0% at September 30, 2023 to 6.9% at September 28, 2024, as well as lower outstanding borrowings during fiscal 2024 when compared with fiscal 2023.

*Other expense/income, net.* Other expense, net, was \$4.4 million for fiscal 2024, a decrease of \$3.9 million, or 47.1%, compared to \$8.3 million of other expense, net, in fiscal 2023. We recorded \$0.1 million of net periodic pension expense during fiscal 2024 when compared with \$0.7 million recorded during fiscal 2023.

Additionally, on June 7, 2023, the Company entered into an underwriting agreement with BofA Securities, Inc. and Barclays Capital Inc., as representatives of the several underwriters and American Securities LLC, Coliseum Capital Partners, L.P., and Blackwell Partners LLC – Series A ("2023 Selling Stockholders"), pursuant to which the 2023 Selling Stockholders agreed to sell 5,175,000 shares of common stock, including the sale of 675,000 shares pursuant to the underwriters' exercise of their over-allotment option, at a purchase price of \$20.00 per share. On September 11, 2023, the Company entered into another underwriting agreement with Barclays Capital, Inc. and the 2023 Selling Stockholders, pursuant to which the 2023 Selling Stockholders agreed to sell 2,500,000 shares of common stock, at a purchase price of \$21.00 per share (collectively, the "2023 Offerings").

The 2023 Offerings were conducted pursuant to prospectus supplements, dated June 7, 2023 and September 11, 2023, respectively, to the prospectus, dated December 22, 2021, included in the Company's registration statement on Form S-3 (File No. 333-261858) that was initially filed with the SEC on December 23, 2021 (the "December 2021 Prospectus"). The 2023 Offerings closed on June 12, 2023 and September 14, 2023, respectively.

On December 14, 2023, the Company entered into an underwriting agreement with BofA Securities, Inc. and Barclays Capital Inc., as representatives of the several underwriters and American Securities LLC ("2024 Selling Stockholder"), pursuant to which the 2024 Selling Stockholder agreed to sell 2,500,000 shares of common stock at a purchase price of \$25.10 per share. On February 15, 2024, the Company entered into an underwriting agreement with Barclays Capital Inc., as representative of the several underwriters and the 2024 Selling Stockholder, pursuant to which the 2024 Selling Stockholder agreed to sell 4,042,650 shares of common stock at a purchase price of \$32.90 per share (collectively, the "2024 Offerings").

The 2024 Offerings were conducted pursuant to prospectus supplements, dated December 14, 2023 and February 15, 2024, respectively, to the December 2021 Prospectus. The 2024 Offerings closed on December 19, 2023 and February 21, 2024, respectively.

Although the Company did not sell any shares or receive any proceeds from the 2023 Offerings or 2024 Offerings, it was required to pay certain expenses in connection with these transactions that totaled approximately \$7.4 million and \$3.2 million in fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2024, respectively.

Also, on May 23, 2024, eligible members of the USW voted to ratify a three-year CBA with Blue Bird Body Company ("BBBC"), a subsidiary of the Company. Among other items, the CBA required the payment of a \$750 signing bonus to the approximate 1,500 covered workers in our Fort Valley and Perry, Georgia facilities as well as a lump-sum payment to certain employees who were not eligible for the approximate 12%, on average, year one wage increase because their current hourly wage rate exceeded the rate required by the terms of the CBA. During fiscal 2024, the Company paid the above amounts to those employees covered by the CBA as well as similar amounts to a small number of hourly employees not covered by the CBA so that their total compensation is competitive with that of unionized employees performing comparable job functions. These payments totaled \$2.7 million in fiscal 2024 and were recorded in other (expense) income, net in the Consolidated Statements of Operations because such compensation is not reflective of wages paid for services provided by the direct and indirect employees who support our operating activities and is expensed within cost of goods sold. There was no similar expense recorded during fiscal 2023.

Finally, during fiscal 2024, the Company sold certain state emissions credits that it was not projecting to use for approximately \$1.5 million, with no similar income recorded during fiscal 2023. The proceeds from this sale were recorded in other (expense) income, net in the Consolidated Statements of Operations as this transaction is not indicative of our normal revenue generating activities.

*Income taxes.* Income tax expense was \$33.2 million for fiscal 2024 and \$9.0 million for fiscal 2023.

The effective tax rate for fiscal 2024 differed from the statutory Federal income tax rate of 21.0%. The increase in the effective tax rate to 26.2% was primarily due to the impacts of state taxes and certain permanent items on the federal rate, which were partially offset by the impacts from federal and state tax credits (net of valuation allowances) and discrete period items.

The effective tax rate for fiscal 2023 differed from the statutory Federal income tax rate of 21.0%. The increase in the effective tax rate to 34.7% was primarily due to the impacts of state taxes and certain permanent items on the federal rate.

*Adjusted EBITDA.* Adjusted EBITDA was \$182.9 million, or 13.6% of net sales, for fiscal 2024, an increase of \$95.0 million, or 108.0%, compared to \$87.9 million, or 7.8% of net sales, for fiscal 2023. The increase in Adjusted EBITDA is primarily the result of the \$81.7 million increase in net income, as a result of the factors discussed above, as well as the corresponding \$24.3 million increase in income tax expense. Among other smaller offsetting items, these increases were partially offset by the \$10.5 million decrease in interest expense, net as a result of the factors discussed above.

The following table sets forth a reconciliation of net income to Adjusted EBITDA for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Net income	\$ 105,547	\$ 23,812
Adjustments:		
Interest expense, net (1)	6,847	17,380
Income tax expense	33,228	8,953
Depreciation, amortization, and disposals (2)	16,736	17,914
Operational transformation initiatives	—	1,757
Loss on debt refinancing or modification	1,558	537
Share-based compensation expense	8,609	4,173
Stockholder transaction costs	3,154	7,371
Micro Bird total interest expense, net; income tax expense or benefit; depreciation expense and amortization expense	7,362	5,456
Other	(132)	574
Adjusted EBITDA	\$ 182,909	\$ 87,927
Adjusted EBITDA Margin (percentage of net sales)	13.6 %	7.8 %

(1) Includes \$0.4 million for both fiscal 2024 and 2023, representing interest expense on operating lease liabilities, which are a component of lease expense and presented as a single operating expense in selling, general and administrative expenses on our Consolidated Statements of Operations.

(2) Includes \$1.6 million and \$1.8 million for fiscal 2024 and 2023, respectively, representing amortization on right-of-use operating lease assets, which are a component of lease expense and presented as a single operating expense in selling, general and administrative expenses on our Consolidated Statements of Operations.

## Consolidated Results of Operations for the fiscal years ended September 30, 2023 and October 1, 2022:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2023	2022
Net sales	\$ 1,132,793	\$ 800,637
Cost of goods sold	993,943	764,091
Gross profit	\$ 138,850	\$ 36,546
<b>Operating expenses</b>		
Selling, general and administrative expenses	87,193	77,246
Operating profit (loss)	\$ 51,657	\$ (40,700)
Interest expense	(18,012)	(14,675)
Interest income	1,004	9
Other (expense) income, net	(8,307)	2,947
Loss on debt modification	(537)	(632)
Income (loss) before income taxes	\$ 25,805	\$ (53,051)
Income tax (expense) benefit	(8,953)	11,451
Equity in net income (loss) of non-consolidated affiliate(s)	6,960	(4,159)
<b>Net income (loss)</b>	<b>\$ 23,812</b>	<b>\$ (45,759)</b>
Other financial data:		
Adjusted EBITDA	\$ 87,927	\$ (14,746)
Adjusted EBITDA Margin	7.8 %	(1.8)%

## The following provides the results of operations of Blue Bird's two reportable segments:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2023	2022
<b>Net Sales by Segment</b>		
Bus	\$ 1,034,625	\$ 723,505
Parts	98,168	77,132
Total	\$ 1,132,793	\$ 800,637
<b>Gross Profit by Segment</b>		
Bus	\$ 91,003	\$ 5,065
Parts	47,847	31,481
Total	\$ 138,850	\$ 36,546

*Net sales.* Net sales were \$1,132.8 million for fiscal 2023, an increase of \$332.2 million, or 41.5%, compared to \$800.6 million for fiscal 2022. The increase in net sales is primarily due to increased unit bookings, product and mix changes, as well as pricing actions taken by management in response to increased inventory purchase costs. Significant supply chain disruptions began limiting the availability of certain critical components primarily beginning towards the end of the third quarter of fiscal 2021 and continuing throughout fiscal 2022. However, during fiscal 2023, supply chain constraints began to improve slightly, allowing for increased production during fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022.

Bus sales increased \$311.1 million, or 43.0%, reflecting a 24.8% increase in units booked and a 14.6% increase in average sales price per unit. In fiscal 2023, 8,514 units were booked compared to 6,822 units booked for fiscal 2022. The increase in units sold was primarily due to constraints in the Company's ability to produce and deliver buses due to shortages of critical components in fiscal 2022. The 14.6% increase in average sales price per unit reflects pricing actions taken by management as well as product and customer mix changes.

Parts sales increased \$21.0 million, or 27.3%, for fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022. This increase is primarily attributed to pricing actions taken by management to offset increases in purchased parts costs and increased inventory availability as supply chain constraints began to improve during fiscal 2023 relative to fiscal 2022.

*Cost of goods sold.* Total cost of goods sold was \$993.9 million for fiscal 2023, an increase of \$229.9 million, or 30.1%, compared to \$764.1 million for fiscal 2022. As a percentage of net sales, total cost of goods sold decreased from 95.4% to 87.7%.

Bus segment cost of goods sold increased \$225.2 million, or 31.3%, for fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022. The increase was primarily driven by the 24.8% increase in units booked during fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022. Also contributing was increased inventory costs, as the average cost of goods sold per unit for fiscal 2023 was 5.2% higher compared to fiscal 2022, primarily due to increases in manufacturing costs attributable to a) increased raw materials costs resulting from ongoing inflationary pressures and b) ongoing supply chain disruptions that resulted in higher purchase costs for components and freight.

The \$4.7 million, or 10.2%, increase in parts segment cost of goods sold for fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022 was primarily due to increased purchased parts costs, driven by ongoing inflationary pressures and supply chain disruptions, as well as slight variations due to product and channel mix.

*Operating profit.* Operating profit was \$51.7 million for fiscal 2023, an increase of \$92.4 million, or 226.9%, compared to \$40.7 million of operating loss for fiscal 2022. Profitability was primarily impacted by an increase of \$102.3 million in gross profit, as outlined in the revenue and cost of goods sold discussions above. The increase in gross profit was partially offset by an increase of \$9.9 million in selling, general and administrative expenses, primarily due to an increase in labor costs..

*Interest expense.* Interest expense was \$18.0 million for fiscal 2023, an increase of \$3.3 million, or 22.7%, compared to \$14.7 million for fiscal 2022. The increase was primarily attributable to an increase in the stated term loan interest rate from 7.9% at October 1, 2022 to 10.0% at September 30, 2023 (which was higher for much of fiscal 2023 due to the spread we pay above the market rate, which is dependent on our TNLR at the end of each fiscal quarter), which was partially offset by lower borrowings during fiscal 2023 when compared with fiscal 2022.

*Other expense/income, net.* Other expense, net, was \$8.3 million for fiscal 2023, a change of \$11.3 million, or 381.9%, compared to \$2.9 million of other income, net, in fiscal 2022. We recorded \$0.7 million of net periodic pension expense during fiscal 2023 when compared with \$3.0 million of net periodic pension income recorded during the fiscal 2022.

Additionally, during fiscal 2023, the Company completed the 2023 Offerings. Although the Company did not sell any shares or receive any proceeds from the 2023 Offerings, it was required to pay certain expenses in connection with these transactions that totaled \$7.4 million, with no similar expense recorded during fiscal 2022.

*Income taxes.* Income tax expense was \$9.0 million for fiscal 2023 compared to a benefit of \$11.5 million for fiscal 2022.

The effective tax rate for fiscal 2023 differed from the statutory Federal income tax rate of 21.0%. The increase in the effective tax rate to 34.7% was primarily due to the impacts of state taxes and certain permanent items on the Federal rate.

The effective tax rate for fiscal 2022 differed from the statutory Federal income tax rate of 21.0%. The increase in the effective tax rate to 21.6% was primarily due to the impacts of state taxes on the Federal rate. This increase was partially offset by an increase in the valuation allowance.

*Adjusted EBITDA.* Adjusted EBITDA was \$87.9 million, or 7.8% of net sales, for fiscal 2023, an increase of \$102.7 million, or 696.3%, compared to \$(14.7) million, or (1.8)% of net sales, for fiscal 2022. The increase in Adjusted EBITDA is primarily the result of a \$69.6 million increase in net income, as a result of the factors discussed above, the corresponding \$20.4 million increase in income tax expense, the \$7.4 million in stockholder transaction costs that were incurred in fiscal 2023 with no similar costs incurred in fiscal 2022 and the \$5.5 million increase in Micro Bird's total interest expense, net; income tax expense or benefit; depreciation expense and amortization expense, which primarily resulted from a \$4.2 million increase in income tax expense as a result of Micro Bird reporting net income during fiscal 2023 and a net loss in fiscal 2022.

The following table sets forth a reconciliation of net income (loss) to Adjusted EBITDA for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2023	2022
Net income (loss)	\$ 23,812	\$ (45,759)
Adjustments:		
Interest expense, net (1)	17,380	14,973
Income tax expense (benefit)	8,953	(11,451)
Depreciation, amortization, and disposals (2)	17,914	15,212
Operational transformation initiatives	1,757	7,213
Loss on debt modification	537	632
Share-based compensation expense	4,173	3,690
Product redesign initiatives	—	549
Stockholder transaction costs	7,371	—
Micro Bird total interest expense, net; income tax expense or benefit; depreciation expense and amortization expense	5,456	(90)
Other	574	285
Adjusted EBITDA	\$ 87,927	\$ (14,746)
Adjusted EBITDA Margin (percentage of net sales)	7.8 %	(1.8)%

(1) Includes \$0.4 million and \$0.3 million for fiscal 2023 and 2022, respectively, representing interest expense on operating lease liabilities, which are a component of lease expense and presented as a single operating expense in selling, general and administrative expenses on our Consolidated Statements of Operations.

(2) Includes \$1.8 million and \$1.1 million for fiscal 2023 and 2022, respectively, representing amortization on right-of-use operating lease assets, which are a component of lease expense and presented as a single operating expense in selling, general and administrative expenses on our Consolidated Statements of Operations.

## Liquidity and Capital Resources

The Company's primary sources of liquidity are cash generated from its operations, available cash and cash equivalents, and borrowings under its revolving credit facility. At September 28, 2024, the Company had \$127.7 million of available cash and cash equivalents (net of outstanding checks) and \$143.3 million of additional borrowings available under the revolving line of credit portion of its credit facility. The Company's revolving line of credit is available for working capital requirements, capital expenditures and other general corporate purposes.

### Credit Agreement

On November 17, 2023 (the "Closing Date"), BBBC ("Borrower") executed a \$250.0 million five-year credit agreement with Bank of Montreal, acting as administrative agent and an issuing bank; several joint lead arranger partners and issuing banks, including Bank of America; and a syndicate of other lenders (the "Credit Agreement").

The credit facilities provided for under the Credit Agreement consist of a term loan facility in an aggregate initial principal amount of \$100.0 million (the "Term Loan Facility") and a revolving credit facility with aggregate commitments of \$150.0 million. The revolving credit facility includes a \$25.0 million letter of credit sub-facility and \$5.0 million swingline sub-facility (the "Revolving Credit Facility," and together with the Term Loan Facility, each a "Credit Facility" and collectively, the "Credit Facilities").

A minimum of \$100.0 million of additional term loans and/or revolving credit commitments may be incurred under the Credit Agreement, subject to certain limitations as set forth in the Credit Agreement, and which additional loans and/or commitments would require further commitments from existing lenders or from new lenders.

Borrower has the right to prepay the loans outstanding under the Credit Facilities without premium or penalty (subject to customary breakage costs, if applicable). Additionally, proceeds from asset sales, condemnation, casualty insurance and/or debt issuances (in certain circumstances) are required to be used to prepay borrowings outstanding under the Credit Facilities. Borrowings under the Term Loan Facility, which were made at the Closing Date, may not be reborrowed once they are repaid while borrowings under the Revolving Credit Facility may be repaid and reborrowed from time to time at our election.

The Term Loan Facility is subject to amortization of principal, payable in equal quarterly installments on the last day of each fiscal quarter, which commenced on March 30, 2024, with 5.0% of the \$100.0 million aggregate principal amount of all initial term loans outstanding at the Closing Date payable each year prior to the maturity date of the Term Loan Facility. The remaining initial aggregate principal amount outstanding under the Term Loan Facility, as well as any outstanding borrowings under the Revolving Credit Facility, will be payable on the November 17, 2028 maturity date of the Credit Agreement.

The Credit Facilities are guaranteed by all of the Company's wholly-owned domestic restricted subsidiaries (subject to customary exceptions) and are secured by a security agreement which pledges a lien on virtually all of the assets of Borrower, the Company and the Company's other wholly-owned domestic restricted subsidiaries, other than any owned or leased real property and subject to customary exceptions.

The \$100.0 million of Term Loan Facility proceeds and \$36.2 million of Revolving Credit Facility proceeds that were borrowed on the Closing Date were used to pay (i) the \$131.8 million of term loan indebtedness outstanding under the previous credit agreement ("Amended 2016 Credit Agreement"), which was also the amount outstanding as of September 30, 2023 (there were no amounts outstanding on the revolving credit facility portion of the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement on either date), (ii) interest and commitment fees accrued under the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement through the Closing Date and (iii) transaction costs associated with the consummation of the Credit Agreement. During fiscal 2024, we used cash generated from operations to make \$3.8 million of required quarterly principal payments on the Term Loan Facility and repay all \$36.2 million of Revolving Credit Facility borrowings from the Closing Date.

Under the terms of the Credit Agreement, Borrower, the Company and the Company's other wholly-owned domestic restricted subsidiaries are subject to customary affirmative and negative covenants and events of default for facilities of this type (with customary grace periods, as applicable, and lender remedies).

Borrowings under the Credit Facilities bear interest, at our option, at (i) base rate ("ABR") or (ii) the Secured Overnight Financing Rate as administered by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York ("SOFR") plus 0.10%, plus an applicable margin depending on the TNLR (which is defined in the Credit Agreement as the ratio of consolidated net debt to consolidated EBITDA on a trailing four quarter basis) of the Company as follows:

Level	TNLR	ABR Loans	SOFR Loans
I	Less than 1.00x	0.75%	1.75%
II	Greater than or equal to 1.00x and less than 1.50x	1.50%	2.50%
III	Greater than or equal to 1.50x and less than 2.25x	2.00%	3.00%
IV	Greater than or equal to 2.25x	2.25%	3.25%

Pricing on the Closing Date was set at Level III until receipt of the financial information and related compliance certificate for the first fiscal quarter ending after the Closing Date, with pricing as of September 28, 2024 set at Level I.

Borrower is also required to pay lenders an unused commitment fee of between 0.25% and 0.45% per annum on the undrawn commitments under the Revolving Credit Facility, depending on the TNLR, quarterly in arrears.

The Credit Agreement also includes a requirement that the Company comply with the following financial covenants on the last day of each fiscal quarter through maturity: (i) a pro forma TNLR of not greater than 3.00:1.00 and (ii) a pro forma fixed charge coverage ratio (as defined in the Credit Agreement) of not less than 1.20:1.00.

At September 28, 2024, Borrower and the guarantors under the Credit Agreement were in compliance with all covenants.

### Short-Term and Long-Term Liquidity Requirements

Our ability to make principal and interest payments on borrowings under our Credit Facilities and our ability to fund planned capital expenditures will depend on our ability to generate cash in the future, which, to a certain extent, is subject to general economic, financial, competitive, regulatory and other conditions. Based on the current level of operations, we believe that our existing cash and cash equivalent balances and expected cash flows from operations will be sufficient to meet our operating requirements for at least the next 12 months.

We have operating leases for office and warehouse space and finance leases for equipment. Our leases have remaining lease terms ranging from 0.2 years to 5.7 years with the option to extend certain leases for up to 1.0 year year. Finance leases run through fiscal 2025 and have total payments of approximately \$1.0 million, all of which is due in fiscal 2025. Operating leases have remaining terms up to 5.7 years and total payments of approximately \$5.4 million, of which approximately \$2.1 million is due in fiscal 2025.



In the ordinary course of business, the Company enters into short-term contractual purchase orders for manufacturing inventory and capital assets. At September 28, 2024, total purchase commitments were \$136.1 million, of which \$134.1 million is expected to be paid in fiscal 2025.

To increase our liquidity in future periods, we could pursue raising additional capital via an equity or debt offering utilizing a currently effective "shelf" registration statement. However, we can offer no assurance that we would be successful in raising this additional capital, which could also lead to increased expense and larger up-front fees when compared with our historical financial statements.

## Seasonality

In the years preceding the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, our business was highly seasonal with school districts buying their new school buses so that they would be available for use on the first day of the school year, typically in mid-August to early September. This historically resulted in our third and fourth fiscal quarters representing our two busiest quarters from a sales and production perspective, the latter ending on the Saturday closest to September 30. Our quarterly results of operations, cash flows, and liquidity have historically been, and are likely to be in future periods, impacted by seasonal patterns. Working capital has historically been a significant use of cash during the first fiscal quarter due to planned shutdowns and a significant source of cash generation in the fourth fiscal quarter. With the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent supply chain constraints, seasonality and working capital trends have become unpredictable. Seasonality and variations from historical seasonality have impacted the comparison of working capital and liquidity results between fiscal periods.

## Cash Flows

The following table sets forth general information derived from our statement of cash flows for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	\$ 78,988	\$ 10,479	\$ 11,709
Total cash provided by (used in) operating activities	111,112	119,928	(24,437)
Total cash used in investing activities	(15,815)	(8,520)	(6,453)
Total cash (used in) provided by financing activities	(46,598)	(42,899)	29,660
Change in cash and cash equivalents	48,699	68,509	(1,230)
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	<u>\$ 127,687</u>	<u>\$ 78,988</u>	<u>\$ 10,479</u>

### *Total cash provided by (used in) operating activities*

Cash provided by operating activities totaled \$111.1 million for fiscal 2024 and \$119.9 million for fiscal 2023. The primary drivers of the \$8.8 million decrease were the following:

The net decrease primarily resulted from the effect of net changes in operating assets and liabilities that negatively impacted operating cash flows by \$84.1 million during fiscal 2024 when compared with fiscal 2023. The primary drivers in this category were unfavorable changes in accounts receivable; accounts payable; and accrued expenses, pension and other liabilities of \$46.5 million, \$22.0 million, and 15.9 million, respectively, as follows:

- A shift in our customer mix resulted in an increase in the accounts receivable balance (a net use of cash) at the end of the fiscal 2024 when compared with fiscal 2023. Specifically, we had a significant increase in fleet orders, which make up the majority of orders on credit, during fiscal 2024 when compared with fiscal 2023.
- At the end of fiscal 2022 and during fiscal 2023, inflationary pressures and supply chain disruptions significantly increased our purchase costs for components and freight, which, when coupled with increased production and sales volumes during fiscal 2023, resulted in a significant increase in the accounts payable balance (a net source of cash). Although inflationary pressures continued during fiscal 2024, they were smaller when compared to fiscal 2023. This factor, when coupled with our production and sales volumes largely stabilizing during fiscal 2024, resulted in a smaller increase in the accounts payable balance during fiscal 2024 compared to fiscal 2023 (a smaller net source of cash).
- As of the end of fiscal 2023, we had received approximately \$18.5 million of advanced funds awarded by the U.S. EPA in administering the CSBP that were recorded as unearned revenue within other current liabilities (which is included within accrued expenses, pension and other liabilities). As we built and sold the underlying buses during fiscal 2024, we recognized

this amount in revenue. As of the end of fiscal 2024, we had a corresponding balance of \$2.2 million, representing a \$16.3 million net use of cash when comparing the two periods.

The above decreases were partially offset by the \$81.7 million increase in net income during fiscal 2024 when compared to fiscal 2023.

Cash provided by (used in) operating activities totaled \$119.9 million for fiscal 2023 and \$(24.4) million for fiscal 2022. The primary drivers of the \$144.4 million increase were the following:

- A year over year increase of \$69.6 million in net income.
- The effect of net changes in operating assets and liabilities positively impacted fiscal 2023 operating cash flows by \$79.0 million compared to fiscal 2022. The primary drivers in this category were favorable changes in accounts receivable, inventory, and accrued expenses, pension and other liabilities of \$2.5 million, \$34.2 million, and \$50.1 million respectively. These favorable changes were partially offset by unfavorable changes in accounts payable and other assets of \$6.4 million and \$1.5 million, respectively. At the end of fiscal 2022 and continuing into fiscal 2023, we became more efficient at managing supply chain disruptions, and thus building and selling buses. These efficiencies resulted in us consuming more inventory in production, which resulted in a decrease in the inventory balance at the end of fiscal 2023 (a net source of cash) when compared with an increase in the inventory balance at the end of fiscal 2022 (a net use of cash). The accounts payable balance is significantly influenced by the purchase of inventory that is required to produce buses during the last few weeks of each fiscal year. However, the supply chain disruptions that we experienced during fiscal 2022 resulted in us purchasing inventory (and therefore, increasing accounts payable) that was not consumed in the production process as we were missing certain critical components that prevented us from building and selling buses. Accordingly, the increase in the accounts payable balance (a net source of cash) was higher in fiscal 2022 than in fiscal 2023, which had an unfavorable impact on cash flows. Finally, in fiscal 2023 we began receiving deposits for school buses ordered under the terms the CSBP, which provided a net source of cash year over year as there was no similar activity in fiscal 2022.
- The impact of non-cash items (net source of cash) was \$4.2 million lower in fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022. Non-cash items impact net income or loss but do not have direct cash flows associated with them. The significant differences relate to the impact of an \$8.8 million lower of cost or net realizable value loss and \$1.4 million fixed assets impairment, both present in fiscal 2022, with no similar losses in fiscal 2023, as well as an \$11.1 million increase in equity in net income of non-consolidated affiliate(s), a \$2.6 million decrease in amortization of deferred actuarial pension losses and a \$1.9 million decrease in non-cash interest expense, in fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022. These decreases were partially offset by a \$19.1 million increase in deferred income tax expense and a \$1.9 million increase in depreciation and amortization expense, in fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022.

#### *Total cash used in investing activities*

Cash used in investing activities totaled \$15.8 million and \$8.5 million for fiscal 2024 and fiscal 2023, respectively. The \$7.3 million increase in cash used was primarily due to an increase in spending on fixed assets, as increased profitability in fiscal 2024 when compared fiscal 2023 allowed for more capital spending. During the first half of fiscal 2023, capital spending was reduced to lower than normal amounts in an effort to mitigate the impact of supply chain constraints on our operations, financial results and cash flows.

Cash used in investing activities totaled \$8.5 million and \$6.5 million for fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022, respectively. The \$2.1 million increase in cash used was primarily due to increased spending on fixed assets in fiscal 2023 as compared to fiscal 2022, as increased profitability in fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022 allowed for slightly more capital spending. During fiscal 2022, capital spending was reduced to lower than normal amounts in an effort to mitigate the impact of supply chain constraints on our operations, financial results and cash flows.

#### *Total cash (used in) provided by financing activities*

Cash used in financing activities totaled \$46.6 million for fiscal 2024 and \$42.9 million for fiscal 2023. The \$3.7 million increase in cash used was primarily attributable to a \$115.8 million increase in term loan repayments and \$9.9 million in purchases of Company stock. This was partially offset by \$100.0 million of proceeds received from term loan borrowings under the Credit Agreement, a \$20.0 million net increase in revolving line of credit borrowings, and a \$2.7 million increase in cash received from stock option exercises.

Cash (used in) provided by financing activities totaled \$(42.9) million for fiscal 2023 and \$29.7 million for fiscal 2022. In fiscal 2022, the private placement sale of our common stock provided \$74.8 million of net cash proceeds, with no similar activity in fiscal 2023. Also contributing to the increase in cash used was a \$5.0 million increase in term loan repayments in fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022. These were partially offset by a \$5.0 million decrease in net revolving credit facility repayments, and a \$1.3 million decrease in cash paid for the repurchase of shares of our common stock in connection with employee stock award exercises, in fiscal 2023 compared to fiscal 2022.

### *Free cash flow*

Management believes the non-GAAP measurement of Free Cash Flow, defined as net cash used in or provided by operating activities less cash paid for fixed assets and acquired intangible assets, fairly represents the Company's ability to generate surplus cash that could fund activities not in the ordinary course of business. See "Key Measures We Use to Evaluate Our Performance" for further discussion. The following table sets forth the calculation of Free Cash Flow for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
Total cash provided by (used in) operating activities	\$ 111,112	\$ 119,928	\$ (24,437)
Cash paid for fixed assets and acquired intangible assets	(15,263)	(8,520)	(6,453)
Free Cash Flow	<u>\$ 95,849</u>	<u>\$ 111,408</u>	<u>\$ (30,890)</u>

Free Cash Flow for fiscal 2024 was \$15.6 million lower than for fiscal 2023, due to an \$8.8 million decrease in cash provided by operating activities, as well as a \$6.7 million increase in cash paid for fixed assets, both as discussed above.

Free Cash Flow for fiscal 2023 was \$142.3 million higher than for fiscal 2022, due to a \$144.4 million increase in cash provided by (used in) operating activities, which was partially offset by a \$2.1 million increase in cash paid for fixed assets, both as discussed above.

### *Off-Balance Sheet arrangements*

We had outstanding letters of credit totaling \$6.7 million at September 28, 2024, the majority of which secure our self-insured workers compensation program, the collateral for which is regulated by the State of Georgia.

## **Share Repurchase Program and Treasury Stock Retirement**

On January 31, 2024, the Board of Directors of the Company authorized and approved a share repurchase program for up to \$60 million of outstanding shares of the Company's common stock over a period of 24 months, expiring January 31, 2026. Under the share repurchase program, the Company may repurchase shares through open market purchases, privately negotiated transactions, accelerated share repurchase transactions, block purchases or otherwise in accordance with applicable federal securities laws, including Rule 10b-18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

In the latter part of August and first half of September 2024, the Company repurchased 201,818 shares of its common stock for \$9.9 million, pursuant to the share repurchase plan. No such repurchases were made in fiscal 2023. The total remaining authorization for future common stock repurchases under the Company's share repurchase program was \$50.1 million as of September 28, 2024. Because of the timing of these share repurchases, they had no material impact on earnings per share for fiscal 2024.

In mid-September 2024, the Company constructively retired the shares of common stock it had recently repurchased by recording the \$9.9 million paid in excess of the \$0.0001 par value of each share as a reduction in retained earnings. Later that same month, the Company retired the shares of common stock that had previously been reflected as treasury stock within its historical consolidated financial statements by recording the amount paid in excess of the \$0.0001 par value of each share as a \$39.9 million reduction in retained earnings, which reduced the value in this account to zero, with the remaining \$10.4 million recorded as a reduction in additional paid-in capital.

## **Critical Accounting Policies and Estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with U.S. GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions. At the date of the financial statements, these estimates and assumptions affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities, and during the reporting period, these estimates and assumptions affect the reported amounts of revenues and expenses. For example, significant management judgments are required in determining excess, obsolete, or unsalable inventory; allowance for doubtful accounts; potential impairment of long-lived assets, goodwill and intangible assets; and the accounting for self-insurance reserves, warranty reserves, pension obligations, income taxes, environmental liabilities and

contingencies. Future events and their effects cannot be predicted with certainty, and, accordingly, the Company's accounting estimates require the exercise of judgment. The accounting estimates used in the preparation of the Company's consolidated financial statements may change as new events occur, as more experience is acquired, as additional information is obtained and as the Company's operating environment changes. The Company evaluates and updates its assumptions and estimates on an ongoing basis, based on historical experience and on various other assumptions that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, and may employ outside experts to assist in the Company's evaluations. Management has discussed the development, selection, and disclosure of accounting estimates with the Audit Committee of our Board of Directors. Actual results could differ from the estimates that the Company has used.

The estimates that require management to exercise the greatest extent of judgment in establishing assumptions and that could have a material impact on our consolidated financial statements should they change significantly in a future period are defined as "critical" in nature and include the following:

#### *Self-Insurance Reserves*

The Company is self-insured for the majority of its workers' compensation and medical claims. The expected ultimate cost for claims incurred as of the balance sheet date is not discounted and is recognized as a liability. Self-insurance losses for claims filed and claims incurred but not reported are accrued based upon estimates of the aggregate liability for uninsured claims using loss development factors and actuarial assumptions followed in the insurance industry and historical loss development experience. The establishment of the reserves utilizing such estimates and assumptions is based on the premise that historical claims experience, both in terms of the volume of claims activity and related cost, is indicative of current or future expected activity, which could differ significantly. At September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, reserves totaled approximately \$7.3 million and \$6.2 million, respectively.

#### *Goodwill and Intangible Assets*

Goodwill represents the excess of the purchase price of acquired businesses over the fair value of the assets acquired less liabilities assumed in connection with such acquisition. In accordance with the provisions of Accounting Standards Codification ("ASC") 350, *Intangibles—Goodwill and Other* ("ASC 350"), goodwill and intangible assets with indefinite useful lives acquired in an acquisition are not amortized, but instead are tested for impairment at least annually or more frequently should an event occur or circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may be impaired. Such events or circumstances may be a significant change in business climate, economic and industry trends, legal factors, negative operating performance indicators, significant competition, changes in strategy or disposition of a reporting unit or a portion thereof. Although management believes the assumptions used in the determination of the value of the enterprise are reasonable, no assurance can be given that these assumptions will be achieved. As a result, impairment charges may occur when goodwill and intangible assets with indefinite useful lives are tested for impairment in the future.

We have two reporting units for which we test goodwill for impairment: Bus and Parts. In the evaluation of goodwill for impairment, we have the option to perform a qualitative assessment to determine whether further impairment testing is necessary or to perform a quantitative assessment by comparing the fair value of a reporting unit to its carrying amount, including goodwill. Under the qualitative assessment, an entity is not required to calculate the fair value of a reporting unit unless the entity determines that it is more likely than not that its fair value is less than its carrying amount. If under the quantitative assessment the fair value of a reporting unit is less than its carrying amount, then the amount of the impairment loss, if any, must be measured under step two of the impairment analysis. In step two of the analysis, we would record an impairment loss equal to the excess of the carrying value of the reporting unit's goodwill over its implied fair value should such a circumstance arise.

Fair value of the reporting units is estimated primarily using the income approach, which incorporates the use of discounted cash flow ("DCF") analysis. A number of significant assumptions and estimates are involved in the application of the DCF model to forecast operating cash flows, including markets and market shares, sales volumes and prices, costs to produce, tax rates, capital spending, discount rate and working capital changes. The cash flow forecasts are based on approved strategic operating plans.

During the fourth quarter of each fiscal year presented, we performed our annual impairment assessment of goodwill that did not indicate that an impairment existed.

In the evaluation of indefinite lived assets for impairment, we have the option to perform a qualitative assessment to determine whether further impairment testing is necessary, or to perform a quantitative assessment by comparing the fair value of an asset to its carrying amount. The Company's intangible asset with an indefinite useful life is the Blue Bird trade name. Under the qualitative assessment, an entity is not required to calculate the fair value of the asset unless the entity determines that it is more likely than not that its fair value is less than its carrying amount. If a qualitative assessment is not performed or if a quantitative assessment is otherwise required, then the entity compares the fair value of an asset to its carrying amount and the amount of the impairment loss, if any, is the difference between fair value and carrying value. The fair value of our trade name is derived by using the relief from

royalty method, which discounts the estimated cash savings we realize by owning the name instead of otherwise having to license or lease it.

During the fourth quarter of each fiscal year presented, we performed our annual impairment assessment of our trade name that did not indicate that an impairment existed.

Our intangible assets with definite useful lives include customer relationships and engineering designs, which are amortized over their estimated useful lives of 7 or 20 years using the straight-line method. These assets are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate the carrying amount of the assets may not be recoverable. No impairments have been recorded.

The recorded balances for goodwill were \$15.1 million and \$3.7 million for the Bus and Parts segments, respectively, at both September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023. The recorded balances for intangible assets were \$43.6 million and \$45.4 million at September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, respectively.

### *Pensions*

We have pension benefit costs and obligations, which are developed from actuarial valuations. Actuarial assumptions attempt to anticipate future events and are used in calculating the expense and liability relating to our plan. These factors include assumptions we make about interest rates and expected investment return on plan assets. In addition, our actuarial consultants also use subjective factors such as mortality rates to develop our valuations. We review and update these assumptions on an annual basis at the beginning of each fiscal year. We are required to consider current market conditions, including changes in interest rates, in making these assumptions. Effective January 1, 2006, the benefit plan was frozen to all participants. No accrual of future benefits is earned or calculated beyond this date. Accordingly, our obligation estimate is based on benefits earned at that time discounted using an estimate of the single equivalent discount rate determined by matching the plan's future expected cash flows to spot rates from a yield curve comprised of high-quality corporate bond rates of various durations. The expected long-term rate of return on plan assets reflects the average rate of earnings expected on the funds invested, or to be invested, to provide for the pension benefit obligation. In estimating that rate, appropriate consideration is given to the returns being earned by the plan assets in the fund and rates of return expected to be available for reinvestment and we consider asset allocations, input from an external pension investment adviser, and risks and other factors adjusted for our specific investment strategy. The focus is on long-term trends and provides for the consideration of recent plan performance.

The actuarial assumptions that we use may differ materially from actual results due to changing market and economic conditions as well as longer or shorter life spans of participants. These differences may result in a significant impact to the measurement of our pension benefit obligations, and to the amount of pension benefits expense we may record. For example, at September 28, 2024, a one-half percent increase in the discount rate would reduce the projected benefit obligation of our pension plans by approximately \$4.9 million, while a one-half percent decrease in the discount rate would increase the projected benefit obligation of our pension plans by approximately \$5.3 million.

The projected benefit obligation for the pension plan was \$113.6 million and \$108.4 million at September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, respectively.

### *Product Warranty Costs*

The Company's products are generally warranted against defects in material and workmanship for a period of one to five years. A provision for estimated warranty costs is recorded at the time a unit is sold. The methodology to determine the warranty reserve calculates the average expected future warranty claims using historical warranty claims by body type, by month, over the life of the bus, which is then multiplied by remaining months under warranty, by warranty type. The establishment of the reserve utilizing such estimates and assumptions is based on the premise that historical claims experience, both in terms of the volume of claims activity and related cost, is indicative of future expected claims activity. Management believes the methodology is reasonable (i) since the Company's product offerings and manufacturing processes do not change quickly or significantly and (ii) given the significant investments that the Company has made, and expects to continue making, to improve the quality, reliability and safety of the school buses it manufactures. Accordingly, while management believes that this methodology provides an accurate reserve estimate, actual claims incurred could differ from the original estimates, requiring future adjustments. For example, at September 28, 2024, a 5% increase or decrease in the average lifetime historical warranty claims by body type, by month would increase or decrease accrued product warranty costs by approximately \$0.8 million.

At September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, accrued product warranty costs totaled approximately \$16.2 million and \$15.4 million, respectively.

## *Income Taxes*

The Company accounts for income taxes in accordance with the provisions of ASC 740, *Income Taxes* (“ASC 740”), which requires an asset and liability approach to financial accounting and reporting for income taxes. Under this approach, deferred income taxes represent the expected future tax consequences of temporary differences between the financial statement and tax basis of assets and liabilities. The Company evaluates its ability, based on the weight of evidence available, to realize future tax benefits from deferred tax assets and establishes a valuation allowance to reduce a deferred tax asset to a level which, more likely than not, will be realized in future years. At September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, deferred tax liabilities totaled approximately \$22.4 million and \$22.9 million, respectively, while deferred tax assets totaled approximately \$22.0 million and \$22.6 million, respectively.

The Company recognizes uncertain tax positions based on a cumulative probability assessment if it is more likely than not that the tax position will be sustained upon examination by an appropriate tax authority with full knowledge of all information. Recognized income tax positions are measured at the largest amount that is greater than 50% likely of being realized. Amounts recorded for uncertain tax positions are periodically assessed, including the evaluation of new facts and circumstances, to ensure sustainability of the positions. The Company records interest and penalties related to unrecognized tax benefits in income tax expense. There was no liability for uncertain tax positions at September 28, 2024 or September 30, 2023.

## *Recent Accounting Pronouncements*

A discussion of recently issued accounting standards applicable to the Company is described in Note 2, *Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and Recently Issued Accounting Standards*, in the Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements contained elsewhere in this Report, and we incorporate such discussion by reference herein.

## **Item 7A. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk**

The Company is exposed to market risk from changes in interest rates, currency exchange rates, and commodity prices.

### ***Interest Rate Risk***

We are charged variable rates of interest on our indebtedness outstanding under the Credit Agreement, which exposes us to fluctuations in interest rates. We monitor and manage interest rate exposure as part of our overall risk management program, which recognizes the unpredictability of interest rates and seeks to reduce potentially adverse effects on our business. However, changes in interest rates cannot always be predicted, hedged, or offset with price increases to eliminate earnings volatility. Based upon the balance of term loan and revolving credit facility borrowings outstanding as of September 28, 2024, a one percent change in market interest rates would increase or decrease, as applicable, annual interest expense, and ultimately cash flows from operations, by approximately \$1.0 million.

### ***Commodity Risk***

The Company and its suppliers incorporate raw and finished commodities such as steel, copper, aluminum, and other automotive type commodities into its products. We often bid on contracts weeks or months before school buses are delivered and enter into school bus sales contracts with fixed prices per bus. The sales bids historically have not included price escalation provisions to account for economic fluctuations between the bid date and the contract date. As a result, we have historically been unable to pass along increased costs due to economic fluctuations to our customers, which is not expected to continue as the Company now includes price escalation provisions when bidding on contracts. However, once a sales contract containing a fixed bus price is executed with a customer, we are generally unable to pass along increased costs resulting from economic fluctuations between the contract date and delivery date. We generally purchase steel up to four quarters in advance at fixed prices, but because we generally do not otherwise hedge steel or the other primary commodities we purchase (rubber, aluminum and copper), changes in prices of raw materials can significantly impact future operating margins.

### ***Currency Risk***

The Company transacts substantially all of its sales in U.S. Dollars. Our foreign customers have exposure to risks related to changes in foreign currency exchange rates on our sales in that region, due in part to the time that elapses between a fixed price order date and delivery/payment for the order. Foreign currency exchange rates can have material adverse effects on our foreign customers' ability to purchase our products. Therefore, at times, we may allow them to pay in their local currency and we may utilize derivative instruments to hedge changes in foreign currency exchange rates for those transactions.

## Item 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data

### Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

Stockholders and Board of Directors  
Blue Bird Corporation  
Macon, Georgia

#### Opinion on the Consolidated Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying consolidated balance sheets of Blue Bird Corporation (the “Company”) as of September 28, 2024, and September 30, 2023, the related consolidated statements of operations, comprehensive income (loss), stockholders’ (deficit) equity, and cash flows for each of the three years in the period ended September 28, 2024, and the related notes and schedule (collectively referred to as the “consolidated financial statements”). In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Company at September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for each of the three years in the period ended September 28, 2024, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

We also have audited, in accordance with the standards of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States) (“PCAOB”), the Company's internal control over financial reporting as of September 28, 2024, based on criteria established in *Internal Control – Integrated Framework (2013)* issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (“COSO”) and our report dated November 25, 2024 expressed an unqualified opinion thereon.

#### Basis for Opinion

These consolidated financial statements are the responsibility of the Company’s management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Company’s consolidated financial statements based on our audits. We are a public accounting firm registered with the PCAOB and are required to be independent with respect to the Company in accordance with the U.S. federal securities laws and the applicable rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the PCAOB.

We conducted our audits in accordance with the standards of the PCAOB. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free of material misstatement, whether due to error or fraud.

Our audits included performing procedures to assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to error or fraud, and performing procedures that respond to those risks. Such procedures included examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements. Our audits also included evaluating the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

#### Critical Audit Matter

The critical audit matter communicated below is a matter arising from the current period audit of the consolidated financial statements that was communicated or required to be communicated to the audit committee and that: (1) relates to accounts or disclosures that are material to the consolidated financial statements and (2) involved our especially challenging, subjective, or complex judgments. The communication of a critical audit matter does not alter in any way our opinion on the consolidated financial statements, taken as a whole, and we are not, by communicating the critical audit matter below, providing separate opinions on the critical audit matter or on the accounts or disclosures to which it relates.

##### *Evaluation of Warranty Reserve*

As discussed in Note 2 to the consolidated financial statements, the Company's warranty reserve is calculated based on the average expected warranty claims using warranty claims by body type, by month, over the life of the bus, which is then multiplied by remaining months under warranty, by warranty type. The total warranty reserve was \$16.2 million as of September 28, 2024.

We identified the evaluation of the methodology, including the assumptions for the average warranty costs per unit and the payment patterns over the term of the warranty, used in the evaluation of the warranty reserve as a critical audit matter.

The principle considerations for our determination were (i) the Company’s methodology and assumptions relating to the average warranty costs per unit and the payment patterns over the term of the warranty involved a higher degree of auditor judgment, and (ii) specialized actuarial skills were needed to assess the Company's process and evaluate the methodology and assumptions regarding the determination of the average expected warranty claims and the effect of those assumptions on the reserve.



The primary procedures we performed to address this critical audit matter included:

- Testing the design, implementation and operating effectiveness of controls over the Company's warranty claim process, and controls over the data, inputs, and methodology and assumptions utilized to estimate the warranty reserve;
- Testing management's process used to develop the warranty reserve, including the mathematical accuracy of the calculation and the relevance, reliability, and appropriateness of the methodology and assumptions and the sources of data from which the assumptions were derived;
- Utilizing actuarial professionals with specialized knowledge and skills to assist in: (i) reviewing the Company's actuarial methodology in calculating the warranty reserve, (ii) evaluating certain key assumptions related to the average warranty costs per unit and payment patterns over the term of the warranty, in the determination of the average expected warranty claims, and (iii) determining whether the methodology, assumptions, and calculation were consistent with historical evaluations and the aggregate impact of any changes to assumptions.

/s/ BDO USA, P.C.

We have served as the Company's auditor since 2016.

Atlanta, Georgia  
November 25, 2024

## Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

Stockholders and Board of Directors  
Blue Bird Corporation  
Macon, Georgia

### Opinion on Internal Control over Financial Reporting

We have audited Blue Bird Corporation's (the "Company's") internal control over financial reporting as of September 28, 2024, based on criteria established in *Internal Control – Integrated Framework (2013)* issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (the "COSO criteria"). In our opinion, the Company maintained, in all material respects, effective internal control over financial reporting as of September 28, 2024, based on the COSO criteria.

We also have audited, in accordance with the standards of the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (United States) ("PCAOB"), the consolidated balance sheets of the Company as of September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, the related consolidated statements of operations, comprehensive income (loss), stockholders' (deficit) equity, and cash flows for each of the three years in the period ended September 28, 2024, and the related notes and schedule and our report dated November 25, 2024 expressed an unqualified opinion thereon.

### Basis for Opinion

The Company's management is responsible for maintaining effective internal control over financial reporting and for its assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting, included in the accompanying "Item 9A, Management's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting." Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Company's internal control over financial reporting based on our audit. We are a public accounting firm registered with the PCAOB and are required to be independent with respect to the Company in accordance with U.S. federal securities laws and the applicable rules and regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the PCAOB.

We conducted our audit of internal control over financial reporting in accordance with the standards of the PCAOB. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether effective internal control over financial reporting was maintained in all material respects. Our audit included obtaining an understanding of internal control over financial reporting, assessing the risk that a material weakness exists, and testing and evaluating the design and operating effectiveness of internal control based on the assessed risk. Our audit also included performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

### Definition and Limitations of Internal Control over Financial Reporting

A company's internal control over financial reporting is a process designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting and the preparation of financial statements for external purposes in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. A company's internal control over financial reporting includes those policies and procedures that (1) pertain to the maintenance of records that, in reasonable detail, accurately and fairly reflect the transactions and dispositions of the assets of the company; (2) provide reasonable assurance that transactions are recorded as necessary to permit preparation of financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and that receipts and expenditures of the company are being made only in accordance with authorizations of management and directors of the company; and (3) provide reasonable assurance regarding prevention or timely detection of unauthorized acquisition, use, or disposition of the company's assets that could have a material effect on the financial statements.

Because of its inherent limitations, internal control over financial reporting may not prevent or detect misstatements. Also, projections of any evaluation of effectiveness to future periods are subject to the risk that controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions, or that the degree of compliance with the policies or procedures may deteriorate.

/s/ BDO USA, P.C.

Atlanta, Georgia  
November 25, 2024

**BLUE BIRD CORPORATION AND SUBSIDIARIES**  
**CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS**

(in thousands except for share data)

	<u>September 28, 2024</u>	<u>September 30, 2023</u>
<b>Assets</b>		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 127,687	\$ 78,988
Accounts receivable, net	59,099	12,574
Inventories	127,798	135,286
Other current assets	8,795	9,215
Total current assets	<u>\$ 323,379</u>	<u>\$ 236,063</u>
Property, plant and equipment, net	97,322	95,101
Goodwill	18,825	18,825
Intangible assets, net	43,554	45,424
Equity investment in affiliate(s)	32,089	17,619
Deferred tax assets	2,399	2,182
Finance lease right-of-use assets	332	1,034
Pension	4,649	—
Other assets	2,345	1,518
Total assets	<u><u>\$ 524,894</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 417,766</u></u>
<b>Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity</b>		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 143,156	\$ 137,140
Warranty	7,166	6,711
Accrued expenses	55,775	32,894
Deferred warranty income	9,421	8,101
Finance lease obligations	975	583
Other current liabilities	14,480	24,391
Current portion of long-term debt	5,000	19,800
Total current liabilities	<u>\$ 235,973</u>	<u>\$ 229,620</u>
Long-term liabilities		
Revolving credit facility	\$ —	\$ —
Long-term debt	89,994	110,544
Warranty	9,013	8,723
Deferred warranty income	18,541	15,022
Deferred tax liabilities	2,783	2,513
Finance lease obligations	6	987
Other liabilities	9,020	7,955
Pension	—	2,404
Total long-term liabilities	<u>\$ 129,357</u>	<u>\$ 148,148</u>
Guarantees, commitments and contingencies (Note 10)		
Stockholders' equity		
Preferred stock, \$0.0001 par value, 10,000,000 shares authorized, 0 issued with liquidation preference of \$0 at September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023	\$ —	\$ —
Common stock, \$0.0001 par value, 100,000,000 shares authorized, 32,268,022 and 32,165,225 shares outstanding at September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, respectively	3	3
Additional paid-in capital	185,977	177,861
Retained earnings (accumulated deficit)	—	(55,700)
Accumulated other comprehensive loss	(26,416)	(31,884)
Treasury stock, at cost, 0 and 1,782,568 shares at September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, respectively	—	(50,282)
Total stockholders' equity	<u>\$ 159,564</u>	<u>\$ 39,998</u>
Total liabilities and stockholders' equity	<u><u>\$ 524,894</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 417,766</u></u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

**BLUE BIRD CORPORATION AND SUBSIDIARIES**  
**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF OPERATIONS**

	Fiscal Years Ended		
	2024	2023	2022
<i>(in thousands except for share data)</i>			
<b>Net sales</b>	\$ 1,347,154	\$ 1,132,793	\$ 800,637
Cost of goods sold	1,090,998	993,943	764,091
Gross profit	\$ 256,156	\$ 138,850	\$ 36,546
<b>Operating expenses</b>			
Selling, general and administrative expenses	116,825	87,193	77,246
Operating profit (loss)	\$ 139,331	\$ 51,657	\$ (40,700)
Interest expense	(10,579)	(18,012)	(14,675)
Interest income	4,136	1,004	9
Other (expense) income, net	(4,394)	(8,307)	2,947
Loss on debt refinancing or modification	(1,558)	(537)	(632)
Income (loss) before income taxes	\$ 126,936	\$ 25,805	\$ (53,051)
Income tax (expense) benefit	(33,228)	(8,953)	11,451
Equity in net income (loss) of non-consolidated affiliate(s)	11,839	6,960	(4,159)
<b>Net income (loss)</b>	<u>\$ 105,547</u>	<u>\$ 23,812</u>	<u>\$ (45,759)</u>
<b>Earnings (loss) per share:</b>			
Basic weighted average shares outstanding	32,270,711	32,071,940	31,020,399
Diluted weighted average shares outstanding	33,349,221	32,258,652	31,020,399
Basic earnings (loss) per share	\$ 3.27	\$ 0.74	\$ (1.48)
Diluted earnings (loss) per share	\$ 3.16	\$ 0.74	\$ (1.48)

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

**BLUE BIRD CORPORATION AND SUBSIDIARIES**  
**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (LOSS)**

	Fiscal Years Ended		
	2024	2023	2022
<i>(in thousands)</i>			
Net income (loss)	\$ 105,547	\$ 23,812	\$ (45,759)
Other comprehensive income, net of tax			
Net change in defined benefit pension plan	5,468	10,046	2,864
Total other comprehensive income, net of tax	\$ 5,468	\$ 10,046	\$ 2,864
Comprehensive income (loss)	<u>\$ 111,015</u>	<u>\$ 33,858</u>	<u>\$ (42,895)</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

**BLUE BIRD CORPORATION AND SUBSIDIARIES**  
**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**

(in thousands)	Fiscal Years Ended		
	2024	2023	2022
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net income (loss)	\$ 105,547	\$ 23,812	\$ (45,759)
Adjustments to reconcile net income (loss) to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:			
Depreciation and amortization expense	14,820	15,978	14,050
Non-cash interest expense	390	1,470	3,400
Share-based compensation expense	8,609	4,173	3,690
Equity in net (income) loss of non-consolidated affiliate(s)	(11,839)	(6,960)	4,159
Dividend from equity investment in affiliate(s)	5,338	—	—
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	200	64	15
Impairment of fixed assets	—	—	1,354
Lower of cost or net realizable value loss	—	—	8,752
Deferred income tax (benefit) expense	(1,674)	8,065	(11,071)
Amortization of deferred actuarial pension losses	687	1,195	3,768
Loss on debt refinancing or modification	1,558	537	632
Changes in assets and liabilities:			
Accounts receivable	(46,525)	(40)	(2,567)
Inventories	7,488	7,691	(26,523)
Other assets	971	453	1,913
Accounts payable	6,665	28,712	35,075
Accrued expenses, pension and other liabilities	18,877	34,778	(15,325)
<b>Total adjustments</b>	<b>\$ 5,565</b>	<b>\$ 96,116</b>	<b>\$ 21,322</b>
<b>Total cash provided by (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>\$ 111,112</b>	<b>\$ 119,928</b>	<b>\$ (24,437)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Cash paid for fixed assets	\$ (15,263)	\$ (8,520)	\$ (6,453)
Equity investment in affiliate(s) (Note 17)	(552)	—	—
<b>Total cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>\$ (15,815)</b>	<b>\$ (8,520)</b>	<b>\$ (6,453)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Revolving credit facility borrowings (Note 8)	\$ 36,220	\$ 45,000	\$ 135,000
Revolving credit facility repayments	(36,220)	(65,000)	(160,000)
Term loan borrowings - new credit agreement (Note 8)	100,000	—	—
Term loan repayments (Note 8)	(135,550)	(19,800)	(14,850)
Principal payments on finance leases	(589)	(570)	(1,132)
Cash paid for debt costs (Note 8)	(3,128)	(3,272)	(2,751)
Sale of common stock (Note 13)	—	—	75,000
Cash paid for common stock issuance costs (Note 13)	—	—	(202)
Repurchase of common stock in connection with repurchase program (Note 13)	(9,938)	—	—
Repurchase of common stock in connection with stock award exercises	(1,178)	(376)	(1,708)
Cash received from stock option exercises	3,785	1,119	303
<b>Total cash (used in) provided by financing activities</b>	<b>\$ (46,598)</b>	<b>\$ (42,899)</b>	<b>\$ 29,660</b>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>48,699</b>	<b>68,509</b>	<b>(1,230)</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year</b>	<b>78,988</b>	<b>10,479</b>	<b>11,709</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 127,687</b>	<b>\$ 78,988</b>	<b>\$ 10,479</b>

(in thousands)

Fiscal Years Ended		
2024	2023	2022

**Supplemental disclosures of cash flow information**

**Cash paid or received during the period:**

Interest paid	\$ 9,932	\$ 16,053	\$ 15,180
Interest received	(3,783)	(1,004)	(9)
Income tax paid (received), net of tax refunds	29,401	(29)	(79)

**Non-cash investing and financing activities:**

Changes in accounts payable for capital additions to property, plant and equipment	\$ 721	\$ 941	\$ 948
Right-of-use assets obtained in exchange for operating lease obligations	1,682	626	1,424
Finance lease right-of-use assets removed due to non-renewal of lease	—	—	(2,451)
Finance lease obligations removed due to non-renewal of lease	—	—	2,593
Warrants issued for equity investment in affiliate (Note 17)	7,416	—	—

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.



**BLUE BIRD CORPORATION AND SUBSIDIARIES**  
**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF STOCKHOLDERS' (DEFICIT) EQUITY**

	Common Stock			Convertible Preferred Stock		Accumulated Other Comprehensive Loss	(Accumulated Deficit) Retained Earnings	Treasury Stock		Total Stockholders' (Deficit) Equity
	Shares	Par Value	Additional Paid-In-Capital	Shares	Amount			Shares	Amount	
<i>(in thousands except for share data)</i>										
<b>Balance, October 2, 2021</b>	27,205,269	\$ 3	\$ 96,170	—	\$ —	\$ (44,794)	\$ (33,753)	1,782,568	\$ (50,282)	\$ (32,656)
Sale of common stock (Note 13)	4,687,500	—	74,798	—	—	—	—	—	—	74,798
Restricted stock activity	116,556	—	(1,688)	—	—	—	—	—	—	(1,688)
Stock option activity	15,586	—	284	—	—	—	—	—	—	284
Share-based compensation expense	—	—	3,539	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,539
Net loss	—	—	—	—	—	—	(45,759)	—	—	(45,759)
Other comprehensive income, net of tax	—	—	—	—	—	2,864	—	—	—	2,864
<b>Balance, October 1, 2022</b>	<u>32,024,911</u>	<u>\$ 3</u>	<u>\$ 173,103</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ (41,930)</u>	<u>\$ (79,512)</u>	<u>1,782,568</u>	<u>\$ (50,282)</u>	<u>\$ 1,382</u>
Restricted stock activity	79,545	—	(376)	—	—	—	—	—	—	(376)
Stock option activity	60,769	—	1,119	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,119
Share-based compensation expense	—	—	4,015	—	—	—	—	—	—	4,015
Net income	—	—	—	—	—	—	23,812	—	—	23,812
Other comprehensive income, net of tax	—	—	—	—	—	10,046	—	—	—	10,046
<b>Balance, September 30, 2023</b>	<u>32,165,225</u>	<u>\$ 3</u>	<u>\$ 177,861</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ (31,884)</u>	<u>\$ (55,700)</u>	<u>1,782,568</u>	<u>\$ (50,282)</u>	<u>\$ 39,998</u>
Issuance of warrants (Note 17)	—	—	7,416	—	—	—	—	—	—	7,416
Restricted stock activity	65,495	—	(1,178)	—	—	—	—	—	—	(1,178)
Stock option activity	239,120	—	3,785	—	—	—	—	—	—	3,785
Share repurchase and retirement (Note 13)	(201,818)	—	—	—	—	—	(9,938)	—	—	(9,938)
Treasury stock retirement (Note 13)	—	—	(10,373)	—	—	—	(39,909)	(1,782,568)	50,282	—
Share-based compensation expense	—	—	8,466	—	—	—	—	—	—	8,466
Net income	—	—	—	—	—	—	105,547	—	—	105,547
Other comprehensive income, net of tax	—	—	—	—	—	5,468	—	—	—	5,468
<b>Balance, September 28, 2024</b>	<u>32,268,022</u>	<u>\$ 3</u>	<u>\$ 185,977</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ (26,416)</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 159,564</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

# **BLUE BIRD CORPORATION**

## **NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

### **1. Nature of Business and Basis of Presentation**

#### **Nature of Business**

Blue Bird Body Company ("BBBC"), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Blue Bird Corporation, was incorporated in 1958 and has manufactured, assembled and sold school buses to a variety of municipal, federal and commercial customers since 1927. The majority of BBBC's sales are made to an independent dealer network, which in turn sells buses to ultimate end users. References in these notes to financial statements to "Blue Bird," the "Company," "we," "our," or "us" refer to Blue Bird Corporation and its wholly-owned subsidiaries, unless the context specifically indicates otherwise. We are headquartered in Macon, Georgia.

#### **Basis of Presentation**

The accompanying consolidated financial statements include the accounts of the Company and its wholly-owned subsidiaries. All significant inter-company transactions and accounts have been eliminated in consolidation.

The Company's fiscal year ends on the Saturday closest to September 30 with its quarters consisting of thirteen weeks in most years. The fiscal years ended September 28, 2024, September 30, 2023 and October 1, 2022 are referred to herein as "fiscal 2024," "fiscal 2023" and "fiscal 2022," respectively. There were 52 weeks in fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022.

#### **Impacts of Supply Chain Constraints on our Business**

During the second half of our fiscal year that ended October 3, 2020 ("fiscal 2020") and first half of our fiscal year that ended on October 2, 2021 ("fiscal 2021"), the novel coronavirus known as "COVID-19" materially affected demand for new buses and replacement/maintenance parts, significantly impacting our business and operations. Although demand for school buses strengthened substantially during the second half of fiscal 2021, the Company, and automotive industry as a whole, began experiencing significant supply chain constraints around this same period of time. These supply chain disruptions had a significant adverse impact our operations and results due to higher purchasing costs, including freight costs incurred to expedite receipt of critical components, increased manufacturing inefficiencies and our inability to complete the production of buses to fulfill sales orders during most of fiscal 2022.

Additionally, Russian military forces launched a large-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, which further exacerbated global supply chain disruptions. While the Company has no assets or customers in either of these countries, this military conflict significantly impacted our financial results, primarily in an indirect manner since the Company does not sell to customers located in, or source goods directly from, either country. Specifically, it contributed to increased volatility in a) costs charged by suppliers for the purchase of inventory that is at least partially dependent on resources originating from either of the countries and b) freight costs, both of which negatively impacted the gross profit recognized on sales during the second half of fiscal 2022 and continuing into fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2024.

Towards the end of fiscal 2022 and continuing into fiscal 2023, there were slight improvements in the supply chain's ability to deliver the parts and components necessary to support our production operations, resulting in increased (i) manufacturing efficiencies and (ii) production of buses to fulfill sales orders during fiscal 2023. However, the higher costs charged by suppliers to procure inventory that continued into fiscal 2023 had a significant adverse impact on our operations and results. Specifically, such cost increases outpaced the increases in sales prices that we charged for the buses that were sold during the first quarter of fiscal 2023, many of which were included in the backlog of fixed price sales orders originating in fiscal 2021 and the early months of fiscal 2022 that carried forward into fiscal 2023. During the remainder of fiscal 2023, the buses that were sold were generally included in the backlog of fixed price sales orders originating more recently (i.e., the latter months of fiscal 2022 and in fiscal 2023), with the cumulative increases in sales prices we charged for those buses generally outpacing the higher costs we paid to procure inventory, resulting in gross profit during the quarters. While the gross margin on bus sales during the second quarter of fiscal 2023 lagged the historical gross margin reported prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, it returned to more normal historical levels during the latter half of fiscal 2023.

Supply chain disruptions continued into fiscal 2024 as there were still occasional shortages of certain critical components as well as ongoing increases in raw materials costs, both of which impacted our business and operations by limiting the number of school buses that we could produce and sell as well as increasing the costs to manufacture buses. Nonetheless, an increase in the number of school buses produced and sold, when coupled with periodic pricing actions taken by the Company to ensure that the increased sales prices charged for buses kept pace with increased costs to procure inventory to produce the buses, resulted in a significant increase in gross profit during fiscal 2024 when compared with fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022.

Significant uncertainty exists concerning the magnitude and duration of the ongoing supply chain constraints and accordingly, precludes any prediction as to the ultimate severity of the adverse impacts on our business, financial condition, results of operations, and liquidity.

## **2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and Recently Issued Accounting Standards**

### **Use of Estimates and Assumptions**

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the U.S. (“U.S. GAAP”) requires management to make estimates and assumptions. At the date of the financial statements, these estimates and assumptions affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent assets and liabilities, and during the reporting period, these estimates and assumptions affect the reported amounts of revenues and expenses. For example, significant management judgments are required in determining excess, obsolete, or unsalable inventory, allowance for doubtful accounts, potential impairment of long-lived assets, goodwill and intangible assets, the accounting for self-insurance reserves, warranty reserves, pension obligations, income taxes, environmental liabilities and contingencies. Future events, including continued supply chain constraints and their related economic impacts, and their effects cannot be predicted with certainty, and, accordingly, the Company’s accounting estimates require the exercise of judgment. The accounting estimates used in the preparation of the Company’s consolidated financial statements may change as new events occur, as more experience is acquired, as additional information is obtained and as the Company’s operating environment changes. The Company evaluates and updates its assumptions and estimates on an ongoing basis and may employ outside experts to assist in the Company’s evaluations. Actual results could differ from the estimates that the Company has used.

### **Cash and Cash Equivalents**

The Company considers all highly liquid investments purchased with an original maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents. The Company deposits its cash and cash equivalents, which are or may become in excess of federally insured limits, with many of the same high credit-quality financial institutions with which it has outstanding loans under the Credit Agreement (defined below) and evaluates and manages the risk of credit loss on a net basis. To date, the Company has not experienced any losses related to its cash and cash equivalents balances.

### **Allowance for Doubtful Accounts**

Accounts receivable consist of amounts owed to the Company by customers. The Company monitors collections and payments from customers, and generally does not require collateral. Accounts receivable are generally due within 30 to 90 days. The Company provides for the possible inability to collect accounts receivable by recording an allowance for doubtful accounts. The Company reserves for an account when it is considered potentially uncollectible. The Company estimates its allowance for doubtful accounts based on historical experience, aging of accounts receivable and information regarding the creditworthiness of its customers. To date, losses have been within the range of management’s expectations. The Company writes off accounts receivable if it determines that the account is uncollectible.

### **Revenue Recognition**

The Company records revenue when the following five steps have been completed:

1. Identification of the contract(s) with a customer;
2. Identification of the performance obligation(s) in the contract;
3. Determination of the transaction price;
4. Allocation of the transaction price to the performance obligation(s) in the contract; and
5. Recognition of revenue, when, or as, we satisfy performance obligations.

The Company records revenue when performance obligations are satisfied by transferring control of a promised good or service to the customer. The Company evaluates the transfer of control primarily from the customer’s perspective where the customer has the ability to direct the use of, and obtain substantially all of the remaining benefits from, that good or service.

Our product revenue includes sales of buses and bus parts, each of which are generally recognized as revenue at a point in time, once all conditions for revenue recognition have been met, as they represent our performance obligations in a sale. For buses, control is generally transferred and the customer has the ability to direct the use of and obtain substantially all of the remaining benefits of the product when the product is delivered or when the product has been completed, is ready for delivery, has been paid for, its title has transferred and it is awaiting pickup by the customer. For certain bus sale transactions, we may provide incentives including payment

of a limited amount of future interest charges our customers may incur related to their purchase and financing of the bus with third party financing companies. We reduce revenue at the recording date by the full amount of potential future interest we may be obligated to pay, which is an application of the "most likely amount" method. For parts sales, control is generally transferred when the customer has the ability to direct the use of and obtain substantially all of the remaining benefits of the products, which generally coincides with the point in time when the customer has assumed risk of loss and title has passed for the goods sold.

The Company sells extended warranties related to its products. Revenue related to these contracts is recognized based on the stand-alone selling price of the arrangement, on a straight-line basis over the contract period, and costs thereunder are expensed as incurred.

The Company includes shipping and handling revenues, which are costs billed to customers, in net sales on the Consolidated Statements of Operations. Shipping and handling costs incurred are included in cost of goods sold.

See Note 12, *Revenue*, for further revenue information. See Note 3, *Supplemental Financial Information*, for further information on warranties.

## **Self-Insurance**

The Company is self-insured for the majority of its workers' compensation and medical claims. The expected ultimate cost for claims incurred as of the balance sheet date is not discounted and is recognized as a liability. Self-insurance losses for claims filed and claims incurred but not reported are accrued based upon estimates of the aggregate liability for uninsured claims, using loss development factors and actuarial assumptions followed in the insurance industry and historical loss development experience. See Note 3, *Supplemental Financial Information*, and Note 16, *Benefit Plans*, for further information.

## **Financial Instruments**

The Company's financial instruments consist primarily of cash and cash equivalents, trade receivables, accounts payable, revolving credit facility and long-term debt. The carrying amounts of cash and cash equivalents, trade receivables and accounts payable approximate their fair values because of the short-term maturity and highly liquid nature of these instruments. The carrying value of the Company's revolving credit facility and long-term debt approximates fair value due to the variable rates of interest, which reset frequently, relating to these debt instruments. See Note 8, *Debt*, for further discussion.

## **Derivative Instruments**

In limited circumstances, we may utilize derivative instruments to manage certain exposures to changes in foreign currency exchange rates or interest rates relating to variable rate debt. The fair values of all derivative instruments are recognized as assets or liabilities at the balance sheet date. Changes in the fair value of these derivative instruments are recognized in our operating results or included in other comprehensive income, depending on whether the derivative instrument qualifies, and is appropriately designated, for hedge accounting treatment and if so, whether it represents a fair value or cash flow hedge. Gains and losses on derivative instruments are recognized in the operating results line item that reflects the underlying exposure that was mitigated either via a formal hedge accounting relationship or economically.

## **Inventories**

The Company values inventories at the lower of cost or net realizable value. The Company uses a standard costing methodology, which approximates cost on a first-in, first-out ("FIFO") basis. The Company reviews the standard costs of raw materials, work-in-process and finished goods inventory on a periodic basis to ensure that its inventories approximate current actual costs. Manufacturing cost includes raw materials, direct labor and manufacturing overhead. Obsolete inventory amounts are based on historical usage and assumptions about future demand.

## Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost, less accumulated depreciation and amortization. Depreciation and amortization is calculated on a straight-line basis using the following periods, which represent the estimated useful lives of the assets:

	Years
Buildings	15 - 33
Machinery and equipment	5 - 10
Office furniture, equipment and other	3 - 10
Computer equipment and software	3 - 7

Costs, including capitalized interest and certain design, construction and installation costs related to assets that are under construction and are in the process of being readied for their intended use, are recorded as construction in progress and are not depreciated until such time as the subject asset is placed in service. Repairs and maintenance that do not extend the useful life of the asset are expensed as incurred. Upon sale, retirement, or other disposition of these assets, the costs and related accumulated depreciation are removed from the respective accounts and any gain or loss on the disposition is included on our Consolidated Statements of Operations.

## Leases

We determine if an arrangement is or contains a lease at inception. The Company enters into lease arrangements primarily for office space, warehouse space, or a combination of both. We elected to account for leases with initial terms of 12 months or less by recording operating lease expense on a straight-line basis instead of recording lease assets or liabilities. For a lease with an initial term greater than 12 months, the Company records a right-of-use ("ROU") asset and lease liability on the Consolidated Balance Sheets. ROU assets represent our right to use an underlying asset for the lease term and lease liabilities represent our obligation to make lease payments arising from the lease.

We determine whether the lease is an operating or finance lease at inception based on the information and expectations for the lease at that time. Operating lease ROU assets are included in property, plant and equipment and the lease liabilities are included in other current liabilities and other liabilities on our Consolidated Balance Sheets. Finance lease ROU assets are included in finance lease ROU assets and the lease liabilities are included in finance lease obligations (current) and finance lease obligations (long-term) on our Consolidated Balance Sheets.

Lease ROU assets and liabilities are recorded at commencement date based on the present value of lease payments over the lease term. As the leases recorded typically do not provide an implicit rate, we use our incremental borrowing rate based on the information available at commencement date in determining the present value of lease payments. Our lease terms may include options to extend or terminate the lease when it is reasonably certain that we will exercise that option. Operating lease ROU assets also include any base rental or lease payments made and exclude lease incentives.

The two components of operating lease expense, amortization and interest, are recognized on a straight-line basis over the lease term as a single expense element within selling, general and administrative expenses on the Consolidated Statements of Operations. Under the finance lease model, interest on the lease liability is recognized in interest expense and amortization of ROU assets is recorded on the Consolidated Statements of Operations based on the underlying use of the assets.

## Impairment of Long-Lived Assets

The Company reviews its long-lived assets, including property, plant and equipment, for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate the carrying amount of an asset may not be recoverable. If we are required to analyze recoverability based on a triggering event, undiscounted future cash flows over the estimated remaining life of the asset, or asset group, are projected. If these projected cash flows are less than the carrying amount, an impairment loss is recognized to the extent the fair value of the asset less any costs of disposition is less than the carrying amount of the asset. Judgments regarding the existence of impairment indicators are based on market and operational performance. Evaluating potential impairment also requires estimates of future operating results and cash flows.

## Goodwill and Intangible Assets

Goodwill represents the excess of the purchase price of acquired businesses over the fair value of the assets acquired less liabilities assumed in connection with such acquisition. In accordance with the provisions of Accounting Standards Codification Topic ("ASC") 350, *Intangibles—Goodwill and Other*, goodwill and intangible assets with indefinite useful lives acquired in an acquisition are not

amortized, but instead are tested for impairment at least annually or more frequently should an event occur or circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may be impaired. Such events or circumstances may include a significant change in business climate, economic and industry trends, legal factors, negative operating performance indicators, significant competition, changes in strategy or disposition of a reporting unit or a portion thereof.

We have two reporting units for which we test goodwill for impairment: Bus and Parts. In the evaluation of goodwill for impairment, we have the option to perform a qualitative assessment to determine whether further impairment testing is necessary or to perform a quantitative assessment by comparing the fair value of a reporting unit to its carrying amount, including goodwill. When performing a qualitative assessment, an entity is not required to calculate the fair value of a reporting unit unless the entity determines that it is more likely than not that its fair value is less than its carrying amount. If, when performing a quantitative assessment, the fair value of a reporting unit is less than its carrying amount, then the amount of the impairment loss, if any, must be measured using step two of the impairment analysis. In step two of the analysis, we would record an impairment loss equal to the excess of the carrying value of the reporting unit's goodwill over its implied fair value, should such a circumstance arise.

The fair value of the reporting units is estimated primarily using the income approach, which incorporates the use of discounted cash flow ("DCF") analysis. A number of significant assumptions and estimates are involved in the application of the DCF model to forecast operating cash flows, including markets and market shares, sales volumes and prices, costs to produce, tax rates, capital spending, discount rate and working capital changes. The cash flow forecasts are based on approved strategic operating plans and long-term forecasts.

In the evaluation of indefinite lived assets for impairment, we have the option to perform a qualitative assessment to determine whether further impairment testing is necessary, or to perform a quantitative assessment by comparing the fair value of an asset to its carrying amount. The Company's intangible asset with an indefinite useful life is the "Blue Bird" trade name. When performing a qualitative assessment, an entity is not required to calculate the fair value of the asset unless the entity determines that it is more likely than not that its fair value is less than its carrying amount. If a qualitative assessment is not performed or if a quantitative assessment is otherwise required, then the entity compares the fair value of an asset to its carrying amount and the amount of the impairment loss, if any, is the difference between fair value and carrying value. The fair value of our trade name is derived by using the relief from royalty method, which discounts the estimated cash savings we realized by owning the name instead of otherwise having to license or lease it.

Our intangible assets with a definite useful life are amortized over their estimated useful lives, 7 or 20 years, using the straight-line method. The useful lives of our intangible assets are reassessed annually and they are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate the carrying amount of the asset may not be recoverable.

## **Debt Issue Costs**

Amounts paid directly to lenders or as an original issue discount and amounts classified as issuance costs are recorded as a reduction in the carrying value of the debt, for which the Company had deferred financing costs totaling \$1.3 million and \$1.5 million at September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, respectively, incurred in connection with its debt facilities and related amendments.

All deferred financing costs are amortized to interest expense. The effective interest method is used for debt discounts related to the term loan. The Company's amortization of these costs was \$0.4 million, \$1.5 million and \$1.5 million for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022, respectively, and is reflected as a component of interest expense on the Consolidated Statements of Operations. See Note 8, *Debt*, for a discussion of the Company's indebtedness.

## **Pensions**

The Company accounts for its pension benefit obligations using actuarial models. The measurement of plan obligations and assets was made at September 30, 2024. Effective January 1, 2006, the benefit plan was frozen to all participants. No accrual of future benefits is earned or calculated beyond this date. Accordingly, our obligation estimate is based on benefits earned at that time discounted using an estimate of the single equivalent discount rate determined by matching the plan's future expected cash flows to spot rates from a yield curve comprised of high-quality corporate bond rates of various durations. The Company recognizes the funded status of its pension plan obligations on the Consolidated Balance Sheet and records in other comprehensive income certain gains and losses that arise during the period, but are deferred under pension accounting rules. Pension expense is recognized as a component of other (expense) income, net on our Consolidated Statements of Operations.

## **Product Warranty Costs**

The Company's products are generally warranted against defects in material and workmanship for a period of one year to five years. A provision for estimated warranty costs is recorded at the time a unit is sold. The methodology to determine the warranty reserve calculates the average expected warranty claims using warranty claims by body type, by month, over the life of the bus, which is then multiplied by remaining months under warranty, by warranty type. Management believes the methodology provides an accurate reserve estimate. Actual claims incurred could differ from the original estimates, requiring future adjustments.

The Bus segment also sells extended warranties related to its products. Revenue related to these contracts is recognized on a straight-line basis over the contract period and costs thereunder are expensed as incurred. All warranty expenses are recorded in the cost of goods sold line on the Consolidated Statements of Operations. The current methodology to determine short-term extended warranty income reserve is based on twelve months of the remaining warranty value for each effective extended warranty at the balance sheet date. See Note 3, *Supplemental Financial Information*, for further information.

## **Research and Development**

Research and development costs are expensed as incurred and included in selling, general and administrative expenses on our Consolidated Statements of Operations. For fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022, the Company expensed \$9.4 million, \$6.6 million and \$6.1 million, respectively.

## **Income Taxes**

The Company accounts for income taxes in accordance with the provisions of ASC 740, *Income Taxes* ("ASC 740"), which requires an asset and liability approach to financial accounting and reporting for income taxes. Under this approach, deferred income taxes represent the expected future tax consequences of temporary differences between the financial statement and tax basis of assets and liabilities. The Company evaluates its ability, based on the weight of evidence available, to realize future tax benefits from deferred tax assets and establishes a valuation allowance to reduce a deferred tax asset to a level which, more likely than not, will be realized in future years.

The Company recognizes uncertain tax positions based on a cumulative probability assessment if it is more likely than not that the tax position will be sustained upon examination by an appropriate tax authority with full knowledge of all information. Recognized income tax positions are measured at the largest amount that is greater than 50% likely of being realized. Amounts recorded for uncertain tax positions are periodically assessed, including the evaluation of new facts and circumstances, to ensure sustainability of the positions. The Company records interest and penalties related to unrecognized tax benefits in income tax expense.

The Company's policy for releasing income tax effects from accumulated other comprehensive loss is to use a specific identification approach.

## **Environmental Liabilities**

The Company records reserves for environmental liabilities on a discounted basis when environmental investigation and remediation obligations are probable and related costs are reasonably estimable. See Note 10, *Guarantees, Commitments and Contingencies*, for further information.

## **Retirement of Common Stock**

When the Company decides to actually or constructively retire the shares of common stock it has repurchased, including those repurchases that have been previously reflected as treasury stock within its historical consolidated financial statements, it records the amount paid in excess of par value as a reduction in retained earnings, to the extent such recording does not reduce retained earnings to an amount below zero. In those instances in which such recording would reduce retained earnings below zero, it records the difference as a reduction in additional paid-in capital. See Note 13, *Stockholders' (Deficit) Equity*, for further information.

## **Segment Reporting**

Operating segments are components of an entity that engage in business activities with discrete financial information available that is regularly reviewed by the chief operating decision maker ("CODM") in order to assess performance and allocate resources. The Company's CODM is its President and Chief Executive Officer. As discussed further in Note 11, *Segment Information*, the Company determined its operating and reportable segments to be Bus and Parts. The Bus segment includes the manufacturing and assembly of school buses to be sold to a variety of customers across the U.S., Canada and in certain limited international markets. The Parts



segment consists primarily of the purchase of parts from third parties to be sold to dealers within the Company's network and certain large fleet customers.

## Statement of Cash Flows

We classify distributions received from our equity method investment(s), if any, using the nature of distribution approach, such that distributions received are classified based on the nature of the activity of the investee that generated the distribution. Returns on investment are classified within operating activities, while returns of investment are classified within investing activities.

The exchange of cash, if any, associated with derivative transactions is classified in the same category as the cash flows from the underlying items giving rise to the foreign currency or interest rate exposures.

## Recently Issued Accounting Standards

**ASU 2023-07** On November 27, 2023, the Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") issued Accounting Standards Update ("ASU") 2023-07, *Segment Reporting (Topic 280): Improvements to Reportable Segment Disclosures*, which requires public entities to disclose information about their reportable segments' significant expenses on an interim and annual basis. The ASU is effective for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2023, and interim periods within fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2024, with early adoption permitted.

**ASU 2023-09** On December 14, 2023, the FASB issued ASU 2023-09, *Income Taxes (Topic 740): Improvements to Income Tax Disclosures*, which requires entities to disclose more detailed information in their reconciliation of their statutory tax rate to their effective tax rate. Public business entities ("PBEs") are required to provide this incremental detail in a numerical, tabular format. The ASU also requires entities to disclose more detailed information about income taxes paid, including by jurisdiction; pretax income (or loss) from continuing operations; and income tax expense (or benefit). The ASU is effective for PBEs in fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2024, with early adoption permitted.

**ASU 2024-03** On November 4, 2024, the FASB issued ASU 2024-03, *Income Statement — Reporting Comprehensive Income — Expense Disaggregation Disclosures (Subtopic 220-40): Disaggregation of Income Statement Expenses*, which requires PBEs to disclose disaggregated information about certain income statement expense line items. The ASU is effective for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2026, and interim periods within fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2027.

The new ASUs will not impact amounts recorded in the consolidated financial statements, but, instead, will require more detailed disclosures in the footnotes to the financial statements. The Company plans to provide the updated disclosures required by the ASUs in the periods in which they are effective.

Any recently issued accounting standards not identified above do not apply to the Company or the impact is expected to be immaterial.

## 3. Supplemental Financial Information

### Accounts Receivable

Accounts receivable, net, consisted of the following at the dates indicated:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	September 28, 2024	September 30, 2023
Accounts receivable	\$ 59,199	\$ 12,674
Allowance for doubtful accounts	(100)	(100)
Accounts receivable, net	<u>\$ 59,099</u>	<u>\$ 12,574</u>

## Product Warranties

The following table reflects activity in accrued warranty cost (current and long-term portion combined) for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
Balance at beginning of period	\$ 15,434	\$ 15,970	\$ 18,550
Add: current period accruals	9,985	9,084	7,348
Less: current period reductions of accrual	(9,240)	(9,620)	(9,928)
Balance at end of period	<u>\$ 16,179</u>	<u>\$ 15,434</u>	<u>\$ 15,970</u>

## Extended Warranties

The following table reflects activity in deferred warranty income (current and long-term portions combined), for the sale of extended warranties of two years to five years, for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
Balance at beginning of period	\$ 23,123	\$ 18,795	\$ 20,144
Add: current period deferred income	13,245	12,013	6,847
Less: current period recognition of income	(8,406)	(7,685)	(8,196)
Balance at end of period	<u>\$ 27,962</u>	<u>\$ 23,123</u>	<u>\$ 18,795</u>

The outstanding balance of deferred warranty income in the table above is considered a "contract liability," and represents a performance obligation of the Company that we satisfy over the term of the arrangement but for which we have been paid in full at the time the warranty was sold. We expect to recognize \$9.4 million of the outstanding contract liability in fiscal 2025, and the remaining balance thereafter.

## Other Current Liabilities

The balance in other current liabilities as of September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023 includes approximately \$2.2 million and \$18.5 million, respectively, of funds awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in administering the Clean School Bus Program ("CSBP") that was signed into law in mid-November 2021. The CSBP allocates federal funds to help local school jurisdictions purchase zero- and low-emission school buses over a five year period. The Company recorded the receipt of these funds as deferred revenue. The balance at September 30, 2023 was largely recognized as revenue during the first half of 2024 and the Company expects to recognize the vast majority of the September 28, 2024 balance as revenue during the first half of fiscal 2025, as the underlying buses are produced and delivered.

## Self-Insurance

The following table reflects the total accrued self-insurance liability, comprised of workers' compensation and health insurance related claims, at the dates indicated:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	September 28, 2024	September 30, 2023
Current portion	\$ 5,008	\$ 4,475
Long-term portion	2,248	1,771
Total accrued self-insurance	<u>\$ 7,256</u>	<u>\$ 6,246</u>

The current and long-term portions of the accrued self-insurance liability are included in accrued expenses and other liabilities, respectively, on the accompanying Consolidated Balance Sheets.

## Shipping and Handling

Shipping and handling revenues recognized were \$21.7 million, \$18.5 million and \$16.0 million for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022, respectively. The related cost of goods sold were \$19.9 million, \$16.6 million and \$14.3 million for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022, respectively.

## Derivative Instruments

On October 24, 2018, the Company entered into a four year interest rate collar with a \$150.0 million notional value with an effective date of November 30, 2018. The collar was entered into in order to partially mitigate our exposure to interest rate fluctuations on our variable rate debt. The collar established a range where we paid the counterparty if the three month U.S. Dollar London Interbank Offered Rate ("LIBOR") fell below the established floor rate of 1.5%, and the counterparty paid us if the three month LIBOR exceeded the ceiling rate of 3.3%. The collar settled quarterly through the termination date of September 30, 2022. No payments or receipts were exchanged on the interest rate collar contracts unless interest rates rose above or fell below the contracted ceiling or floor rates. Throughout much of fiscal 2022, the three month LIBOR fell below the established floor, which required us to make \$1.2 million in total cash payments to the counterparty.

## 4. Inventories

The following table presents components of inventories at the dates indicated:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>September 28, 2024</b>	<b>September 30, 2023</b>
Raw materials	\$ 83,027	\$ 88,116
Work in process	32,556	45,875
Finished goods	12,215	1,295
Total inventories	<u>\$ 127,798</u>	<u>\$ 135,286</u>

At October 1, 2022, certain Bus segment inventory had an approximate \$8.8 million cumulative cost in excess of net realizable value, which was recognized as a loss in fiscal 2022. No such cumulative loss in excess of net realizable value was present at September 28, 2024 or September 30, 2023 and no such losses were recognized in fiscal 2024 or fiscal 2023.

## 5. Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment, net, consisted of the following at the dates indicated:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>September 28, 2024</b>	<b>September 30, 2023</b>
Land	\$ 2,504	\$ 2,504
Buildings	65,237	64,206
Machinery and equipment	121,048	115,248
Office furniture, equipment and other	2,467	2,355
Computer equipment and software	20,718	20,662
Construction in process	12,408	7,151
Property, plant and equipment, gross	<u>224,382</u>	<u>212,126</u>
Accumulated depreciation and amortization	(131,413)	(121,323)
Operating lease right-of-use assets (1)	<u>4,353</u>	<u>4,298</u>
Property, plant and equipment, net	<u>\$ 97,322</u>	<u>\$ 95,101</u>

(1) Further information is included in Note 10, *Guarantees, Commitments and Contingencies*.

Depreciation and amortization expense for property, plant and equipment was \$12.2 million, \$13.3 million, and \$10.9 million for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023, and fiscal 2022, respectively.

We capitalized \$0.3 million of interest expense in fiscal 2024 related to the construction of plant manufacturing assets.

A \$1.4 million impairment loss for certain equipment that was no longer used in the Bus segment production process was recognized in fiscal 2022. No impairment loss was recognized in fiscal 2024 or fiscal 2023.

## 6. Goodwill

The carrying amounts of goodwill by reporting unit are as follows at the dates indicated:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>Gross Goodwill</b>	<b>Accumulated Impairments</b>	<b>Net Goodwill</b>
<b>September 28, 2024</b>			
Bus	\$ 15,139	\$ —	\$ 15,139
Parts	3,686	—	3,686
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 18,825</b>	<b>\$ —</b>	<b>\$ 18,825</b>
<b>September 30, 2023</b>			
Bus	\$ 15,139	\$ —	\$ 15,139
Parts	3,686	—	3,686
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 18,825</b>	<b>\$ —</b>	<b>\$ 18,825</b>

In the fourth quarters of fiscal 2024 and fiscal 2023, we performed our annual impairment assessment of goodwill that did not indicate that an impairment existed; therefore, no impairments of goodwill have been recorded.

## 7. Intangible Assets

The gross carrying amounts and accumulated amortization of intangible assets are as follows at the dates indicated:

	<b>September 28, 2024</b>			<b>September 30, 2023</b>		
<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>Gross Carrying Amount</b>	<b>Accumulated Amortization</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Gross Carrying Amount</b>	<b>Accumulated Amortization</b>	<b>Total</b>
Finite lived: Engineering designs	\$ 3,156	\$ 3,156	\$ —	\$ 3,156	\$ 3,156	\$ —
Finite lived: Customer relationships	37,425	33,687	3,738	37,425	31,817	5,608
<b>Total amortized intangible assets</b>	<b>40,581</b>	<b>36,843</b>	<b>3,738</b>	<b>40,581</b>	<b>34,973</b>	<b>5,608</b>
Indefinite lived: Trade name	39,816	—	39,816	39,816	—	39,816
<b>Total intangible assets</b>	<b>\$ 80,397</b>	<b>\$ 36,843</b>	<b>\$ 43,554</b>	<b>\$ 80,397</b>	<b>\$ 34,973</b>	<b>\$ 45,424</b>

Management considers the "Blue Bird" trade name to have an indefinite useful life and, accordingly, it is not subject to amortization. Management reached this conclusion principally due to the longevity of the Blue Bird name and because management considers renewal upon reaching the legal limit of the trademarks related to the trade name as perfunctory. The Company expects to maintain usage of the trade name on existing products and introduce new products in the future that will also display the trade name. During the fourth quarters of fiscal 2024 and fiscal 2023, we performed our annual impairment assessment of our trade name, which did not indicate that an impairment existed; therefore, no impairment of our indefinite lived intangible asset has been recorded.

Customer relationships are amortized on a straight-line basis over an estimated life of 20 years. Engineering designs are amortized on a straight-line basis over an estimated life of 7 years. Total amortization expense for intangible assets was \$1.9 million, \$2.0 million, and \$2.0 million for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023, and fiscal 2022, respectively.

Remaining amortization expense for finite lived intangible assets is expected to be as follows:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>Amortization Expense</b>
<b>Fiscal Years Ending</b>	
2025	\$ 1,869
2026	1,869
<b>Total amortization expense</b>	<b>\$ 3,738</b>

## 8. Debt

### 2016 Credit Agreement

On December 12, 2016, BBBC ("Borrower"), executed a \$235.0 million five-year credit agreement with Bank of Montreal, which acted as the administrative agent and an issuing bank, Fifth Third Bank, as co-syndication agent and an issuing bank, and Regions Bank, as co-syndication agent, together with other lenders ("2016 Credit Agreement").

The credit facilities provided for under the 2016 Credit Agreement consisted of a term loan facility in an aggregate initial principal amount of \$160.0 million (the "2016 Term Loan Facility") and a revolving credit facility with aggregate commitments of \$75.0 million. The revolving credit facility included a \$15.0 million letter of credit sub-facility and a \$5.0 million swing-line sub-facility ("2016 Revolving Credit Facility," and together with the 2016 Term Loan Facility, each a "2016 Credit Facility" and collectively, the "2016 Credit Facilities"). The obligations under the 2016 Credit Agreement and the related loan documents (including without limitation, the borrowings under the 2016 Credit Facilities and obligations in respect of certain cash management and hedging obligations owing to the agents, the lenders or their affiliates), were, in each case, secured by a lien on and security interest in substantially all of the assets of the Company and its subsidiaries including the Borrower, with certain exclusions as set forth in a collateral agreement entered into on the closing date.

### First Amendment to the 2016 Credit Agreement

On September 13, 2018, the Company entered into a first amendment to the 2016 Credit Agreement ("First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement"). The First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement provided for additional funding of \$50.0 million and was funded in the first quarter of the fiscal year that ended September 28, 2019. Substantially all of the proceeds were used to complete a tender offer to purchase shares of our common and preferred stock.

The First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement also increased the revolving credit facility to \$100.0 million from \$75.0 million, a \$25.0 million increase. The amendment extended the maturity date to September 13, 2023, five years from the effective date of the first amendment. The first amendment also amended the interest rate pricing matrix (as follows) as well as the principal payment schedule (which was subsequently amended as discussed below). In connection with the First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, we incurred \$2.0 million of debt discount and issuance costs, which were recorded as contra-debt and were being amortized over the life of the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement (defined below) using the effective interest method.

The interest rate on the 2016 Term Loan Facility was (i) from the first amendment effective date until the first quarter ended on or about September 30, 2018, LIBOR plus 2.25%, and (ii) commencing with the fiscal quarter ended on or about September 30, 2018 and thereafter, dependent on the Total Net Leverage Ratio ("TNLR") of the Company, an election of either base rate ("ABR") or LIBOR pursuant to the table below:

Level	Total Net Leverage Ratio	ABR Loans	LIBOR Loans
I	Less than 2.00x	0.75%	1.75%
II	Greater than or equal to 2.00x and less than 2.50x	1.00%	2.00%
III	Greater than or equal to 2.50x and less than 3.00x	1.25%	2.25%
IV	Greater than or equal to 3.00x and less than 3.25x	1.50%	2.50%
V	Greater than or equal to 3.25x and less than 3.50x	1.75%	2.75%
VI	Greater than 3.50x	2.00%	3.00%

### Second Amendment to the 2016 Credit Agreement

On May 7, 2020, the Company entered into a second amendment to the 2016 Credit Agreement and First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement ("Second Amended 2016 Credit Agreement"). The Second Amended 2016 Credit Agreement provided \$41.9 million in additional revolving commitments bringing the total revolving commitments to \$141.9 million. The revolving commitments under the Second Amended 2016 Credit Agreement were scheduled to mature on September 13, 2023, which was the fifth anniversary of the effective date of the First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement. The interest rate pricing grid remained unchanged, but the LIBOR floor was amended from 0% to 0.75%. We incurred \$0.9 million in fees related to the amendment. The fees were capitalized to other assets on the Consolidated Balance Sheets and were being amortized on a straight-line basis to interest expense until maturity of the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement (defined below).

### **Third Amendment to the 2016 Credit Agreement**

On December 4, 2020, the Company executed a third amendment to the 2016 Credit Agreement, First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement and Second Amended 2016 Credit Agreement ("Third Amended 2016 Credit Agreement"). The Third Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, among other things, provided for certain temporary amendments to the 2016 Credit Agreement from the third amendment effective date through and including the first date on which (a)(i) a compliance certificate was timely delivered with respect to a fiscal quarter ending on or after March 31, 2022 demonstrating compliance with certain financial performance covenants for such fiscal quarter (the "Limited Availability Period"), or (ii) the Borrower elected to terminate the Limited Availability Period; and (b) the absence of a default or event of default.

Amendments to the financial performance covenants provided that during the Limited Availability Period, a higher maximum TNLR was permitted, and required the Company to maintain liquidity (in the form of undrawn availability under the 2016 Revolving Credit Facility and unrestricted cash and cash equivalents) of at least \$15.0 million. For the duration between the fiscal quarter ended on or around December 31, 2020 and the fiscal quarter ended on or around September 30, 2021 that fell within the Limited Availability Period, a quarterly minimum consolidated EBITDA covenant applied instead of a maximum TNLR.

The pricing grid in the First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, which was based on the ratio of the Company's consolidated net debt to consolidated EBITDA, remained unchanged. However, during the Limited Availability Period, an additional margin of 0.50% applied.

During the Limited Availability Period, the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement required that Borrower prepay existing revolving loans and, if undrawn and unreimbursed letters of credit exceeded \$7.0 million, cash collateralize letters of credit if unrestricted cash and cash equivalents exceeded \$20.0 million, as determined on a semimonthly basis. Any issuance, amendment, renewal, or extension of credit during the Limited Availability Period could not cause unrestricted cash and cash equivalents to exceed \$20.0 million, or cause the aggregate outstanding 2016 Revolving Credit Facility principal to exceed \$100.0 million. The Third Amended 2016 Credit Agreement also implemented a cap on permissible investments, restricted payments, certain payments of indebtedness and the fair market value of all assets subject to permitted dispositions during the Limited Availability Period.

For the duration of the Limited Availability Period, the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement (defined below) set forth additional monthly reporting requirements, and required subordination agreements and intercreditor arrangements for certain other indebtedness and liens subject to administrative agent approval.

The Company incurred approximately \$2.5 million in lender fees and other issuance costs relating to the third amendment. Of such total, approximately \$1.1 million and \$0.9 million was capitalized within other assets and long-term debt (as a contra-balance), respectively, on the Consolidated Balance Sheets and were being amortized as an adjustment to interest expense on a straight-line basis and utilizing the effective interest method, respectively, until maturity of the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement (defined below). The remaining approximate \$0.5 million was recorded to loss on debt modification on the Consolidated Statements of Operations.

In conjunction with executing the third amendment, previously capitalized lender fees and other issuance costs incurred in prior periods totaling approximately \$0.1 million were expensed to loss on debt modification on the Consolidated Statements of Operations.

### **Fourth Amendment to the 2016 Credit Agreement**

On November 24, 2021, the Company executed a fourth amendment to the 2016 Credit Agreement, First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, Second Amended 2016 Credit Agreement and Third Amended 2016 Credit Agreement (the "Fourth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement"). The Fourth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, among other things, provided for certain temporary amendments to the 2016 Credit Agreement from the third amendment effective date through and including (a) April 1, 2023 (the "Amended Limited Availability Period"), or (b) the first date on which Borrower elected to terminate the Amended Limited Availability Period, in each case, subject to (x) the absence of a default or event of default and (y) pro forma compliance with the financial covenant performance covenants under the Fourth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement.

With respect to the financial performance covenants, during the Amended Limited Availability Period for the fiscal quarters ended January 1, 2022 through October 1, 2022, the TNLR requirement was not applicable, although it continued to impact the interest rate that was charged on outstanding borrowings as discussed below. Instead, the minimum consolidated EBITDA that the Company was required to maintain during the Amended Limited Availability Period was updated to include fiscal 2022 as set forth in the table below (in millions):

<b>Period</b>	<b>Minimum Consolidated EBITDA</b>
Fiscal quarter ending January 1, 2022	\$14.5
Fiscal quarter ending April 2, 2022	\$(4.5)
Fiscal quarter ending July 2, 2022	\$(6.8)
Fiscal quarter ending October 1, 2022	\$20.0

However, in the event that Borrower elected to terminate the Amended Limited Availability Period in fiscal 2022, the maximum TNLR permitted was 3.50x.

The minimum liquidity (in the form of undrawn availability under the 2016 Revolving Credit Facility and unrestricted cash and cash equivalents) that the Company was required to maintain during the Amended Limited Availability Period was amended as set forth in the table below (in millions):

<b>Period</b>	<b>Minimum Liquidity</b>
Fourth amendment effective date through January 1, 2022	\$10.0
January 2, 2022 through April 2, 2022	\$5.0
April 3, 2022 through July 2, 2022	\$15.0
Thereafter	\$20.0

Additionally, a new financial performance covenant was added in the Fourth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, requiring that school bus units manufactured by the Company (“Units”) not fall below the pre-set thresholds set forth in the table below on a three month trailing basis (“Units Covenant”). The Units Covenant was triggered only if the Company’s liquidity for the most-recently ended fiscal month was less than \$50 million during the Amended Limited Availability Period:

<b>Period</b>	<b>Minimum Units Manufactured</b>
Three month period ending November 27, 2021	1,128
Three month period ending January 1, 2022	776
Three month period ending January 29, 2022	748
Three month period ending February 26, 2022	727
Three month period ending April 2, 2022	763
Three month period ending April 30, 2022	1,111
Three month period ending May 28, 2022	1,525
Three month period ending July 2, 2022	2,053
Three month period ending July 30, 2022	2,072
Three month period ending August 27, 2022	2,199
Three month period ending October 1, 2022	2,306

If the Units during any three fiscal month period set forth above was less than the minimum required by the Units Covenant, Borrower could elect to carry forward up to 50% of certain applicable excess Units to satisfy the Units Covenant requirement. However, Borrower could not make such election in two consecutive three fiscal month periods.

The pricing grid in the Fourth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, which was based on the TNLR, was determined in accordance with the amended pricing matrix set forth below:

Level	Total Net Leverage Ratio	ABR Loans	LIBOR Loans
I	Less than 2.00x	0.75%	1.75%
II	Greater than or equal to 2.00x and less than 2.50x	1.00%	2.00%
III	Greater than or equal to 2.50x and less than 3.00x	1.25%	2.25%
IV	Greater than or equal to 3.00x and less than 3.25x	1.50%	2.50%
V	Greater than or equal to 3.25x and less than 3.50x	1.75%	2.75%
VI	Greater than or equal to 3.50x and less than 4.50x	2.00%	3.00%
VII	Greater than or equal to 4.50x and less than 5.00x	3.25%	4.25%
VIII	Greater than 5.00x	4.25%	5.25%

During the Amended Limited Availability Period (notwithstanding the pricing grid set forth above), the applicable rate was (a) solely to the extent that the aggregate revolving exposures exceeded \$100.0 million, 5.75% with respect to such excess and (b) with respect to all other revolving exposures, the sum of the rate determined by the administrative agent in accordance with the pricing grid set forth above, plus 0.50%.

Additional allowances were made in the Fourth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement for the Company to issue or incur up to \$100.0 million of qualified equity interests issued by the Company, unsecured subordinated indebtedness or unsecured convertible indebtedness (collectively, "Junior Capital"). Upon the issuance or incurrence of any Junior Capital, the Company was required to prepay the outstanding revolving loans (with no permanent reduction in the revolving commitments) in an amount equal to the lesser of (a) 100% of the net proceeds from such Junior Capital and (b) the aggregate of revolving exposures then outstanding. Prior to the initial issuance or incurrence of any Junior Capital, any issuance, amendment, renewal, or extension of credit during the Amended Limited Availability Period could not cause the aggregate outstanding 2016 Revolving Credit Facility principal to exceed \$110.0 million ("Availability Cap"). Following the issuance and sale of \$75.0 million of common stock in a private placement transaction on December 15, 2021 (see Note 13, *Stockholders' (Deficit) Equity*, for further details), the Availability Cap was permanently reduced to \$100.0 million.

For the duration of the Amended Limited Availability Period, the Fourth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement set forth additional monthly reporting requirements in connection with the manufactured school bus units required by the financial performance covenants, when applicable.

The Company incurred approximately \$2.5 million in lender fees and other issuance costs relating to the fourth amendment. Of such total, approximately \$1.1 million and \$0.8 million was capitalized within other assets and long-term debt (as a contra-balance), respectively, on the Consolidated Balance Sheets and was being amortized as an adjustment to interest expense on a straight-line basis and utilizing the effective interest method, respectively, until maturity of the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement (defined below). The remaining approximate \$0.5 million was recorded to loss on debt modification on the Consolidated Statements of Operations.

In conjunction with executing the fourth amendment, previously capitalized lender fees and other issuance costs incurred in prior periods totaling approximately \$0.1 million were also expensed to loss on debt modification on the Consolidated Statements of Operations.

#### **Fifth Amendment and Limited Waiver to the 2016 Credit Agreement**

On September 2, 2022, the Company executed a fifth amendment and limited waiver to the 2016 Credit Agreement, First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, Second Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, Third Amended 2016 Credit Agreement and Fourth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement ("Fifth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement"). The Fifth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, among other things, resulted in Borrower and administrative agent jointly electing an early opt-in to change one of the market interest rate indices that Borrower could elect to accrue interest on outstanding borrowings from LIBOR, which was discontinued subsequent to June 30, 2023, to the Secured Overnight Financing Rate as administered by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York ("SOFR"). Such change became effective at the end of the applicable interest period for any LIBOR borrowings outstanding on the fifth amendment effective date.

The Fifth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement also provided covenant relief, through December 31, 2022, via a waiver of the \$20.0 million minimum consolidated EBITDA covenant calculated on a four quarter trailing basis for the fiscal quarter ended October 1, 2022 and the 2,306 minimum Units Covenant calculated on a three fiscal month trailing basis for the fiscal month ended October 1, 2022. The Company requested such covenant relief given the supply chain disruptions that continued to challenge the Company throughout fiscal 2022.

Finally, the Fifth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement required the Company to provide a rolling thirteen week cash flow forecast to the administrative agent, on a monthly basis, beginning with the fiscal month ended August 27, 2022 and ending with the fiscal month ending April 1, 2023.



The Company incurred approximately \$0.3 million in lender fees and other issuance costs relating to the fifth amendment. Of such total, approximately \$0.1 million and \$0.1 million was capitalized within other assets and long-term debt (as a contra-balance), respectively, on the Consolidated Balance Sheets and was being amortized as an adjustment to interest expense on a straight-line basis and utilizing the effective interest method, respectively, until maturity of the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement (defined below). The remaining approximate \$0.1 million was recorded to loss on debt modification on the Consolidated Statements of Operations.

### **Sixth Amendment to the 2016 Credit Agreement**

On November 21, 2022, the Company executed a sixth amendment to the 2016 Credit Agreement, First Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, Second Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, Third Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, Fourth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement and Fifth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement ("Sixth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement" and collectively, the "Amended 2016 Credit Agreement"). The Sixth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, among other things, extended the maturity date for both the 2016 Term Loan Facility and 2016 Revolving Credit Facility from September 13, 2023 to December 31, 2024. The total 2016 Revolving Credit Facility commitment was reduced to an aggregate principal amount of \$90.0 million, of which \$80.0 million was available for Borrower to draw, with the remaining \$10.0 million subject to written approval from the lenders, which, once obtained, was irrevocable. There was no change in the 2016 Term Loan Facility commitment; however, the Sixth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement required principal repayments approximating \$5.0 million on a quarterly basis through September 30, 2024, with the remaining balance due upon maturity. There were \$151.6 million of term loan borrowings outstanding on the sixth amendment effective date.

The Sixth Amended 2016 Credit Agreement also provided for temporary amendments to certain financial performance covenants during the Amended Limited Availability Period, which terminated on the date on which the Company's TNLR for the two fiscal quarters most recently ended was each less than 4.00x and no default or event of default had occurred and was continuing. However, the Amended Limited Available Period could re-occur upon a default or event of default or if the TNLR for the immediately preceding fiscal quarter was equal to or greater than 4.00x.

The minimum consolidated EBITDA that the Company was required to maintain during the Amended Limited Availability Period was updated as set forth in the table below (in millions):

<b>Period</b>	<b>Minimum Consolidated EBITDA</b>
Fiscal quarter ending July 1, 2023	\$50.0
Fiscal quarter ending September 30, 2023	\$60.0

For purposes of complying with the above minimum consolidated EBITDA covenant, the Company's consolidated EBITDA for the (i) two fiscal quarter period ending July 1, 2023 was multiplied by 2 and (ii) three fiscal quarter period ending September 30, 2023 was multiplied by 4/3.

The minimum liquidity (in the form of undrawn availability under the 2016 Revolving Credit Facility and unrestricted cash and cash equivalents) that the Company was required to maintain at the end of each fiscal month during the Amended Limited Availability Period was amended as set forth in the table below (in millions):

<b>Period</b>	<b>Minimum Liquidity</b>
Sixth amendment effective date through December 30, 2023	\$30.0

Additionally, the Units Covenant was amended for Units to be calculated at the end of each applicable fiscal month on a cumulative basis, with the minimum cumulative threshold that the Company was required to maintain during the Amended Limited Availability Period amended as set forth in the table below. The Units Covenant was triggered only if the Company's liquidity for the most-recently ended fiscal month was less than \$50.0 million during the Amended Limited Availability Period:

<b>Period</b>	<b>Minimum Units Manufactured</b>
Period from October 2, 2022 and ending October 29, 2022	450
Period from October 2, 2022 and ending November 26, 2022	900
Period from October 2, 2022 and ending December 31, 2022	1,400
Period from October 2, 2022 and ending January 28, 2023	1,900
Period from October 2, 2022 and ending February 25, 2023	2,400
Period from October 2, 2022 and ending April 1, 2023	3,000

The Company was not required to comply with a maximum TNLR financial maintenance covenant for any fiscal quarters from the sixth amendment effective date through September 30, 2023, with the maximum threshold amended thereafter as follows:

<b>Period</b>	<b>Maximum Total Net Leverage Ratio</b>
Fiscal Quarter ending December 30, 2023 through the fiscal quarter ending March 30, 2024	4.00:1.00
Fiscal quarter ending June 29, 2024 and thereafter	3.50:1.00

The pricing grid in the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, which was based on the TNLR, was applicable to both term loan and revolving borrowings and was determined in accordance with the amended pricing matrix set forth below:

<b>Level</b>	<b>Total Net Leverage Ratio</b>	<b>ABR Loans</b>	<b>SOFR Loans</b>
I	Less than 2.00x	0.75%	1.75%
II	Greater than or equal to 2.00x and less than 2.50x	1.00%	2.00%
III	Greater than or equal to 2.50x and less than 3.00x	1.25%	2.25%
IV	Greater than or equal to 3.00x and less than 3.25x	1.50%	2.50%
V	Greater than or equal to 3.25x and less than 3.50x	1.75%	2.75%
VI	Greater than or equal to 3.50x and less than 4.00x	2.00%	3.00%
VII	Greater than or equal to 4.00x and less than 4.50x	2.75%	3.75%
VIII	Greater than or equal to 4.50x and less than 5.00x	3.75%	4.75%
IX	Greater than 5.00x	4.75%	5.75%

Further, the pricing margins for levels VII through IX above were each increased (x) by 0.25% if the aggregate revolving borrowings were equal to or greater than \$50.0 million and less than or equal to \$80.0 million and (y) by 0.50% if the aggregate revolving borrowings were greater than \$80.0 million. On the sixth amendment effective date, the interest rate was set at SOFR plus 5.75% and was adjusted, as applicable, for the fiscal quarter ending December 31, 2022 and subsequently in accordance with the amended pricing grid set forth above.

Finally, the Company was required to deliver to the administrative agent, on a quarterly basis, a projected consolidated balance sheet and consolidated statements of projected operations and cash flows for the next four fiscal quarter period.

The Company incurred approximately \$3.3 million in lender fees and other issuance costs relating to the sixth amendment. Of such total, approximately \$1.2 million and \$1.5 million was capitalized within other assets and long-term debt (as a contra-balance), respectively, on the Consolidated Balance Sheets and was being amortized as an adjustment to interest expense on a straight-line basis and utilizing the effective interest method, respectively, until maturity of the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement. The remaining approximate \$0.5 million was recorded to loss on debt modification on the Consolidated Statements of Operations.

#### **Fiscal 2024 Credit Agreement**

On November 17, 2023 (the "Closing Date"), BBBC, as Borrower, executed a \$250.0 million five-year credit agreement with Bank of Montreal, acting as administrative agent and an issuing bank; several joint lead arranger partners and issuing banks, including Bank of America; and a syndicate of other lenders (the "Credit Agreement").

The credit facilities provided for under the Credit Agreement consist of a term loan facility in an aggregate initial principal amount of \$100.0 million (the "Term Loan Facility") and a revolving credit facility with aggregate commitments of \$150.0 million. The

revolving credit facility includes a \$25.0 million letter of credit sub-facility and \$5.0 million swingline sub-facility (the “Revolving Credit Facility,” and together with the Term Loan Facility, each a “Credit Facility” and collectively, the “Credit Facilities”).

A minimum of \$100.0 million of additional term loans and/or revolving credit commitments may be incurred under the Credit Agreement, subject to certain limitations as set forth in the Credit Agreement, and which additional loans and/or commitments would require further commitments from existing lenders or from new lenders.

Borrower has the right to prepay the loans outstanding under the Credit Facilities without premium or penalty (subject to customary breakage costs, if applicable). Additionally, proceeds from asset sales, condemnation, casualty insurance and/or debt issuances (in certain circumstances) are required to be used to prepay borrowings outstanding under the Credit Facilities. Borrowings under the Term Loan Facility, which were made on the Closing Date, may not be reborrowed once they are repaid while borrowings under the Revolving Credit Facility may be repaid and reborrowed from time to time at our election.

The Term Loan Facility is subject to amortization of principal, payable in equal quarterly installments on the last day of each fiscal quarter, which commenced on March 30, 2024, with 5.0% of the \$100.0 million aggregate principal amount of all initial term loans outstanding at the Closing Date payable each year prior to the maturity date of the Term Loan Facility. The remaining initial aggregate principal amount outstanding under the Term Loan Facility, as well as any outstanding borrowings under the Revolving Credit Facility, will be payable on the November 17, 2028 maturity date of the Credit Agreement.

The Credit Facilities are guaranteed by all of the Company’s wholly-owned domestic restricted subsidiaries (subject to customary exceptions) and are secured by a security agreement which pledges a lien on virtually all of the assets of Borrower, the Company and the Company’s other wholly-owned domestic restricted subsidiaries, other than any owned or leased real property and subject to customary exceptions.

The \$100.0 million of Term Loan Facility proceeds and \$36.2 million of Revolving Credit Facility proceeds that were borrowed on the Closing Date were used to pay (i) the \$131.8 million of term loan indebtedness outstanding under the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement, (ii) interest and commitment fees accrued under the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement through the Closing Date and (iii) transaction costs associated with the consummation of the Credit Agreement.

Under the terms of the Credit Agreement, Borrower, the Company and the Company’s other wholly-owned domestic restricted subsidiaries are subject to customary affirmative and negative covenants and events of default for facilities of this type (with customary grace periods, as applicable, and lender remedies).

Borrowings under the Credit Facilities bear interest, at our option, at (i) ABR or (ii) SOFR plus 0.10%, plus an applicable margin depending on the TNLR (which is defined in the Credit Agreement as the ratio of consolidated net debt to consolidated EBITDA on a trailing four quarter basis) of the Company as follows:

Level	TNLR	ABR Loans	SOFR Loans
I	Less than 1.00x	0.75%	1.75%
II	Greater than or equal to 1.00x and less than 1.50x	1.50%	2.50%
III	Greater than or equal to 1.50x and less than 2.25x	2.00%	3.00%
IV	Greater than or equal to 2.25x	2.25%	3.25%

Pricing on the Closing Date was set at Level III until receipt of the financial information and related compliance certificate for the first fiscal quarter that ended after the Closing Date, with pricing as of September 28, 2024 set at Level I.

Borrower is also required to pay lenders an unused commitment fee of between 0.25% and 0.45% per annum on the undrawn commitments under the Revolving Credit Facility, depending on the TNLR, quarterly in arrears.

The Credit Agreement also includes a requirement that the Company comply with the following financial covenants on the last day of each fiscal quarter through maturity: (i) a pro forma TNLR of not greater than 3.00:1.00 and (ii) a pro forma fixed charge coverage ratio (as defined in the Credit Agreement) of not less than 1.20:1.00. The Company was in compliance with such covenants as of September 28, 2024.

The Company incurred approximately \$3.1 million in lender fees and other issuance costs relating to the Credit Agreement. Of such total, approximately \$1.9 million and \$0.8 million was capitalized within other assets and long-term debt (as a contra-balance), respectively, on the Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets and is being amortized as an adjustment to interest expense on a straight-line basis and utilizing the effective interest method, respectively, until maturity of the Credit Agreement. The remaining approximate \$0.4 million was recorded to loss on debt refinancing or modification on the Condensed Consolidated Statements of Operations.

In conjunction with executing the Credit Agreement, previously capitalized lender fees and other issuance costs relating to the Amended 2016 Credit Agreement and incurred in prior periods totaling \$1.1 million were also expensed to loss on debt refinancing or modification on the Condensed Consolidated Statements of Operations.

### Additional Disclosures

Debt consisted of the following at the dates indicated:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>September 28, 2024</b>	<b>September 30, 2023</b>
Term loans, net of deferred financing costs of \$1,256 and \$1,456, respectively	\$ 94,994	\$ 130,344
Less: Current portion of long-term debt	5,000	19,800
Long-term debt, net of current portion	<u>\$ 89,994</u>	<u>\$ 110,544</u>

Term loan borrowings are recognized on the Consolidated Balance Sheets at the unpaid principal balance, and are not subject to fair value measurement; however, given the variable rates on the loans, the Company estimates the unpaid principal balance to approximate fair value. If measured at fair value in the financial statements, the term loans would be classified as Level 2 in the fair value hierarchy. At September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, \$96.3 million and \$131.8 million, respectively, were outstanding on the term loans.

At September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, the stated interest rates on the term loans were 6.9% and 10.0%, respectively. At September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, the weighted-average annual effective interest rates for the term loans were 8.2% and 10.9%, respectively, which included amortization of the deferred debt issuance costs.

There were no borrowings outstanding on the Revolving Credit Facility at September 28, 2024. Additionally, there were \$6.7 million of Letters of Credit outstanding on September 28, 2024, providing the Company the ability to borrow \$143.3 million on the revolving line of credit.

Interest expense on all indebtedness for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022 was \$10.6 million, \$18.0 million, and \$14.7 million, respectively.

The schedule of remaining principal maturities for the term loans is as follows at September 28, 2024:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>Principal Payments</b>
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	
2025	\$ 5,000
2026	5,000
2027	5,000
2028	5,000
2029	5,000
Thereafter	71,250
Total remaining principal payments	<u>\$ 96,250</u>

## 9. Income Taxes

The components of income tax (expense) benefit were as follows for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
<b>Current tax provision:</b>			
Federal	\$ (30,188)	\$ (645)	\$ 380
State	(4,447)	(243)	—
Foreign	(267)	—	—
Total current tax (expense) benefit	\$ (34,902)	\$ (888)	\$ 380
<b>Deferred tax provision:</b>			
Federal	\$ 2,046	\$ (6,230)	\$ 10,862
State	(372)	(1,835)	209
Total deferred tax benefit (expense)	1,674	(8,065)	11,071
Income tax (expense) benefit	<u>\$ (33,228)</u>	<u>\$ (8,953)</u>	<u>\$ 11,451</u>

At September 28, 2024, the Company had \$8.0 million (tax effected) in total state tax attributes, primarily comprised of \$6.7 million (tax effected) in state tax credit carryforwards and \$0.6 million (tax effected) in state net operating loss ("NOL") carryforwards. The Company maintains a partial valuation allowance on these state tax attributes. Specifically, the Company estimates that approximately \$5.3 million (tax effected) of state tax credit carryforwards will expire unused between 2025 and 2032 and approximately \$0.5 million (tax effected) of state NOL carryforwards will expire unused between 2028 and 2033.

At September 28, 2024, the Company had no federal NOL carryforwards.

The effective tax rates for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022 were 26.2%, 34.7% and 21.6%, respectively.

The effective tax rate for fiscal 2024 differed from the statutory federal income tax rate of 21.0%. The increase in the effective tax rate to 26.2% was primarily due to the impacts of state taxes and certain permanent items on the federal rate, which were partially offset by the impacts from federal and state tax credits (net of valuation allowances) and discrete period items.

The effective tax rate for fiscal 2023 differed from the statutory federal income tax rate of 21.0%. The increase in the effective tax rate to 34.7% was primarily due to the impacts of state taxes and certain permanent items on the federal rate.

The effective tax rate for fiscal 2022 differed from the statutory federal income tax rate of 21.0%. The increase in the effective tax rate to 21.6% was primarily due to the impacts of state taxes on the federal rate. This increase was partially offset by an increase in the valuation allowance.

A reconciliation between the reported income tax (expense) benefit and the amount computed by applying the statutory federal income tax rate is as follows:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
Federal tax (expense) benefit at statutory rate	\$ (26,594)	\$ (5,419)	\$ 11,141
(Increase) reduction in income tax expense resulting from:			
State taxes, net	(4,808)	(1,700)	2,240
Change in uncertain tax positions	—	240	395
Share-based compensation	(675)	(95)	(513)
Permanent items	(700)	(1,582)	(31)
Valuation allowance	(17)	(319)	(2,050)
Tax credits	273	330	285
Return to accrual adjustments	4	3	(212)
Investor tax on non-consolidated affiliate income	(700)	(404)	231
Other	(11)	(7)	(35)
Income tax (expense) benefit	<u>\$ (33,228)</u>	<u>\$ (8,953)</u>	<u>\$ 11,451</u>

The guidance for accounting for uncertainty in income taxes requires that a determination be made regarding whether a tax position, based solely on its technical merits, is more likely than not to be sustained upon examination, which is the threshold required for

recognition of the tax position in the financial statements. The Company's liability arising from uncertain tax positions ("UTPs"), including accrued interest and penalties, is recorded in other liabilities in the Consolidated Balance Sheets. A reconciliation of the beginning and ending amount of unrecognized tax benefits is as follows:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
Balance, beginning of year	\$ —	\$ 110	\$ 370
Additions for tax positions of prior years	—	—	—
Lapses of applicable statute of limitations	—	(110)	(260)
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 110</u>

The Company recognizes accrued interest and penalties related to unrecognized tax benefits as income tax expense. There were no accrued interest and penalties at September 28, 2024 or September 30, 2023.

The Company is subject to taxation mostly in the U.S. and various state jurisdictions. At September 28, 2024, tax years prior to 2020 are generally no longer subject to examination by federal and most state tax authorities.

The following table sets forth the sources of and differences between the financial accounting and tax bases of the Company's assets and liabilities which give rise to the net deferred tax liabilities at the dates indicated:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	September 28, 2024	September 30, 2023
<b>Deferred tax liabilities</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	\$ (9,894)	\$ (10,880)
Other intangible assets	(10,679)	(11,167)
Investor tax on non-consolidated affiliate income	(1,261)	(866)
Other	(566)	—
Total deferred tax liabilities	<u>\$ (22,400)</u>	<u>\$ (22,913)</u>
<b>Deferred tax assets</b>		
NOL carryforward	\$ 731	\$ 1,168
Accrued expenses	8,017	5,586
Compensation	2,257	2,839
Interest limitation carryforward	—	5,235
Inventories	812	743
Capitalized research & development	5,035	3,052
Unearned income	4,301	3,096
Tax credits	6,702	6,685
Total deferred tax assets	<u>\$ 27,855</u>	<u>\$ 28,404</u>
Less: valuation allowance	(5,839)	(5,822)
Deferred tax assets less valuation allowance	<u>\$ 22,016</u>	<u>\$ 22,582</u>
<b>Net deferred tax liabilities</b>	<u><u>\$ (384)</u></u>	<u><u>\$ (331)</u></u>

## 10. Guarantees, Commitments and Contingencies

### Litigation

At September 28, 2024, the Company had a number of product liability and other cases pending. Management believes that, considering the Company's insurance coverage and its intention to vigorously defend its positions, the ultimate resolution of these matters will not have a material adverse impact on the Company's financial statements.

### Environmental

The Company is subject to a variety of environmental regulations relating to the use, storage, discharge and disposal of hazardous materials used in its manufacturing processes. Failure by the Company to comply with present and future regulations could subject it to future liabilities. In addition, such regulations could require the Company to acquire costly equipment or to incur other significant expenses to comply with environmental regulations. The Company is currently not involved in any material environmental

proceedings and therefore, management believes that the resolution of environmental matters will not have a material adverse effect on the Company's financial statements. Our environmental liability, included in current accrued expenses and other long-term liabilities on the Consolidated Balance Sheets, was \$0.5 million and \$0.3 million at September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, respectively. Cash flows over the next five years are expected to be immaterial each year, with no material difference between total cash flows and our accrued balance.

## Lease Commitments

We have operating leases for office and warehouse space and finance leases for equipment. Our leases have remaining lease terms ranging from 0.2 years to 5.7 years with the option to extend certain leases for up to 1 year.

The components of lease costs included on the Consolidated Statements of Operations are as follows:

<i>(in thousands)</i>		<b>Fiscal Years Ended</b>	
<b>Lease cost</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Operating leases	Selling, general and administrative expenses	\$ 2,031	\$ 2,188
Finance leases			
Amortization of lease assets	Cost of goods sold	702	702
Interest on lease liabilities	Interest expense	40	60
Short-term leases (1)	Cost of goods sold or selling, general and administrative expenses	1,720	1,993
Total lease cost		<u>\$ 4,493</u>	<u>\$ 4,943</u>

(1) Short-term lease cost includes both leases and rentals with initial terms of one year or less. Classification depends on the purpose of the underlying lease.

The following table summarizes the lease amounts included on the Consolidated Balance Sheets as follows:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	Balance Sheet Location	September 28, 2024	September 30, 2023
<b>Assets</b>			
Operating	Property, plant and equipment	\$ 4,353	\$ 4,298
Finance (1)	Finance lease right-of-use	332	1,034
<b>Total lease assets</b>		<u>\$ 4,685</u>	<u>\$ 5,332</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Current			
Operating	Other current liabilities	\$ 1,873	\$ 1,593
Finance	Finance lease obligations	975	583
Long-term			
Operating	Other liabilities	2,971	3,608
Finance	Finance lease obligations	6	987
<b>Total lease liabilities</b>		<u>\$ 5,825</u>	<u>\$ 6,771</u>

(1) Net of accumulated amortization of \$3.2 million and \$2.5 million, respectively.

The financing and operating leases recorded do not assume renewal based on our analysis of those leases and their contractual terms.

Lease liability maturities are presented in the following table:

Fiscal Years Ended	September 28, 2024		
	Operating	Finance	Total
2025	\$ 2,149	\$ 994	\$ 3,143
2026	1,852	—	1,852
2027	866	—	866
2028	301	—	301
2029	184	—	184
Thereafter	65	—	65
Total future minimum lease payments	5,417	994	6,411
Less: imputed interest	573	13	586
Total lease liabilities	\$ 4,844	\$ 981	\$ 5,825

Lease terms and discount rates are presented in the following table:

	September 28, 2024	
	Operating	Finance
Weighted average remaining lease term	2.8	0.5
Weighted average discount rate	6.0 %	3.2 %

Supplemental cash flow information is presented in the following table:

	Fiscal Years Ended	
	2024	2023
<b>Cash paid for amounts included in the measurement of lease liabilities</b>		
Operating cash flows - operating leases	\$ 2,442	\$ 2,688
Operating cash flows - finance leases	40	60
Financing cash flows - finance leases	589	570
<b>Right-of-use assets exchanged for lease liabilities</b>		
Operating leases	\$ 1,682	\$ 626

## Purchase Commitments

In the ordinary course of business, the Company enters into short-term contractual purchase orders for manufacturing inventory and capital assets. The amount of these commitments is expected to be as follows:

Fiscal Years Ended	Amount
2025	\$ 134,121
2026	1,953
Total purchase commitments	\$ 136,074

## 11. Segment Information

We manage our business in two operating segments: (i) the Bus segment, which includes the manufacture and assembly of buses to be sold to a variety of customers across the U.S., Canada, and in certain limited international markets; and (ii) the Parts segment, which consists primarily of the purchase of parts from third parties to be sold to dealers within the Company's network and certain large fleet customers. Management evaluates the segments based primarily upon revenues and gross profit, which are reflected in the tables below for the periods presented:



## Net sales

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
Bus (1)	\$ 1,242,885	\$ 1,034,625	\$ 723,505
Parts (1)	104,269	98,168	77,132
Segment net sales	<u>\$ 1,347,154</u>	<u>\$ 1,132,793</u>	<u>\$ 800,637</u>

(1) Parts segment revenue includes \$9.3 million, \$5.6 million, and \$3.9 million for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022, respectively, related to inter-segment sales of parts that was eliminated by the Bus segment upon consolidation.

## Gross profit

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
Bus	\$ 203,791	\$ 91,003	\$ 5,065
Parts	52,365	47,847	31,481
Segment gross profit	<u>\$ 256,156</u>	<u>\$ 138,850</u>	<u>\$ 36,546</u>

The following table is a reconciliation of segment gross profit to consolidated income (loss) before income taxes for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
Segment gross profit	\$ 256,156	\$ 138,850	\$ 36,546
Adjustments:			
Selling, general and administrative expenses	(116,825)	(87,193)	(77,246)
Interest expense	(10,579)	(18,012)	(14,675)
Interest income	4,136	1,004	9
Other (expense) income, net	(4,394)	(8,307)	2,947
Loss on debt refinancing or modification	(1,558)	(537)	(632)
Income (loss) before income taxes	<u>\$ 126,936</u>	<u>\$ 25,805</u>	<u>\$ (53,051)</u>

Sales are attributable to geographic areas based on customer location and were as follows for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
United States	\$ 1,199,527	\$ 1,048,279	726,227
Canada	146,609	78,907	69,683
Rest of world	1,018	5,607	4,727
Total net sales	<u>\$ 1,347,154</u>	<u>\$ 1,132,793</u>	<u>800,637</u>

## 12. Revenue

The following table disaggregates revenue by product category for the periods presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	Fiscal Years Ended		
	2024	2023	2022
Diesel buses	\$ 461,222	\$ 341,969	\$ 276,395
Alternative powered buses (1)	726,083	648,900	407,599
Other (2)	58,074	46,246	41,858
Parts	101,775	95,678	74,785
Net sales	<u>\$ 1,347,154</u>	<u>\$ 1,132,793</u>	<u>\$ 800,637</u>

(1) Includes buses sold with any power source other than diesel (e.g., gasoline, propane, compressed natural gas ("CNG"), or electric).

(2) Includes shipping and handling revenue, extended warranty income, surcharges, chassis, and bus shell sales.

### 13. Stockholders' (Deficit) Equity

#### Sale of Common Stock

On December 15, 2021, the Company issued and sold through a private placement an aggregate 4,687,500 shares of its common stock at \$16.00 per share ("Private Placement") to Coliseum Capital Partners, L.P. and Blackwell Partners LLC – Series A (collectively, "Coliseum"), with net proceeds of \$74.8 million. Subsequent to the sale, Coliseum owned an approximate 15% equity interest in the Company. During the second half of fiscal 2023, Coliseum sold all of its shares of common stock purchased through the Private Placement (see Note 19, *Stockholder Transaction Costs*, for further information).

#### Share Repurchase Program and Common Stock Retirement

On January 31, 2024, the Board of Directors of the Company authorized and approved a share repurchase program for up to \$60 million of outstanding shares of the Company's common stock over a period of 24 months, expiring January 31, 2026. Under the share repurchase program, the Company may repurchase shares through open market purchases, privately negotiated transactions, accelerated share repurchase transactions, block purchases or otherwise in accordance with applicable federal securities laws, including Rule 10b-18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

In the latter part of August and first half of September 2024, the Company repurchased 201,818 shares of its common stock for \$9.9 million, pursuant to the share repurchase plan. No such repurchases were made in fiscal 2023. The total remaining authorization for future common stock repurchases under the Company's share repurchase program was \$50.1 million as of September 28, 2024.

In mid-September 2024, the Company constructively retired the shares of common stock it had recently repurchased by recording the \$9.9 million paid in excess of the \$0.0001 par value of each share as a reduction in retained earnings. Later that same month, the Company retired the shares of common stock that had previously been reflected as treasury stock within its historical consolidated financial statements by recording the amount paid in excess of the \$0.0001 par value of each share as a \$39.9 million reduction in retained earnings, which reduced the value in this account to zero, with the remaining \$10.4 million recorded as a reduction in additional paid-in capital.

### 14. Earnings (Loss) Per Share

The following table presents the basic and diluted earnings per share computation for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands except share data)</i>	2024	2023	2022
<b>Numerator:</b>			
Net income (loss)	\$ 105,547	\$ 23,812	\$ (45,759)
<b>Basic earnings (loss) per share:</b>			
Weighted average common shares outstanding	32,270,711	32,071,940	31,020,399
Basic earnings (loss) per share	\$ 3.27	\$ 0.74	\$ (1.48)
<b>Diluted earnings (loss) per share (1):</b>			
Weighted average common shares outstanding	32,270,711	32,071,940	31,020,399
Weighted average dilutive securities, restricted stock	407,773	166,720	—
Weighted average dilutive securities, stock options	283,061	19,992	—
Weighted average dilutive securities, warrants	387,676	—	—
Weighted average shares and dilutive potential common shares	33,349,221	32,258,652	31,020,399
Diluted earnings (loss) per share	\$ 3.16	\$ 0.74	\$ (1.48)

(1) There were no potentially dilutive securities for fiscal 2024 while potentially dilutive securities representing 0.7 million and 0.5 million shares of common stock were excluded from the computation of diluted earnings per share for fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022, respectively, as their effect would have been anti-dilutive.

Because of the timing of the share repurchases discussed in Note 13 above, they had no material impact on earnings per share for fiscal 2024.

## 15. Share-Based Compensation

In fiscal 2015, we adopted the Omnibus Equity Incentive Plan ("Plan") and in fiscal 2020, amended and restated it. The Plan is administered by the Compensation Committee of our Board of Directors and the Committee may grant awards for the issuance of up to an aggregate of 5,200,000 shares of common stock in the form of non-qualified stock options, incentive stock options, stock appreciation rights (collectively, "SARs," and each individually, a "SAR"), restricted stock, restricted stock units, performance shares, performance units, incentive bonus awards, other cash-based awards and other stock-based awards. The exercise price of a share subject to a stock option may not be less than 100% of the fair market value of a share of the Company's common stock with respect to the grant date of such stock option. No portion of the options vest and become exercisable after the date on which the optionee's service with the Company and its subsidiaries terminates. The vesting of all unvested shares of common stock subject to an option will automatically be accelerated in connection with a "Change in Control," as defined in the Plan.

New shares of the Company's common stock are issued upon stock option exercises, or at the time of vesting for restricted stock. We have granted performance awards as part of our overall compensation plans. The vesting of these awards is primarily based upon the attainment of certain performance metrics established under our annual Management Incentive Plan ("MIP"), with the Compensation Committee of the Board of Directors maintaining final discretion over vesting amounts.

Stock-based payments to employees, including grants of stock options, restricted stock and restricted stock units ("RSU"), are recognized in the financial statements based on their fair value. The fair value of each stock option award on the grant date is estimated using the Black-Scholes option-pricing model with the following assumptions: expected dividend yield, expected stock price volatility, weighted-average risk-free interest rate and weighted average expected term of the options. Because we do not have sufficient history with respect to stock option activity and post-vesting cancellations, the expected term assumption is based on the simplified method under U.S. GAAP, which is based on the vesting period and contractual term for each vesting tranche of awards. The mid-point between the vesting date and the expiration date is used as the expected term under this method. The risk-free interest rate used in the Black-Scholes model is based on the implied yield curve available on U.S. Treasury zero-coupon issues at the date of grant with a remaining term equal to the Company's expected term assumption. The Company has never declared or paid a cash dividend on its common stock. Restricted stock and RSUs are valued based on the intrinsic value of the difference between the exercise price, if any, of the award and the fair market value of our common stock on the grant date.

Beginning in fiscal 2024, the Compensation Committee decided that all new annual stock awards issued in accordance with the terms of the Plan would be RSUs.

We expense any award with graded-vesting features using a straight-line attribution method and account for forfeitures in recording share-based compensation expense as they occur.

### RSU Awards

The following table summarizes the Company's RSU activity for the fiscal year presented:

RSU Activity	2024	
	Number of Shares	Weighted-Average Grant Date Fair Value
Balance, beginning of year	584,063	\$ 22.99
Granted	209,708	21.35
Vested	(93,766)	15.96
Forfeited	(64,357)	23.19
Balance, end of year	635,648	23.07

The weighted-average grant date fair value of RSU awards granted in fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022 was \$23.41 and \$17.35, respectively.

Compensation expense for RSU awards, recognized in selling, general and administrative expenses on the Consolidated Statements of Operations, was \$7.2 million, \$3.2 million, and \$2.6 million for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023, and fiscal 2022, respectively, with associated tax benefits of \$1.8 million, \$0.8 million, and \$0.7 million, respectively. At September 28, 2024, unrecognized compensation cost related to RSU awards totaled \$6.1 million and is expected to be recognized over a weighted-average period of 0.9 years.

## Stock Option Awards

The following table summarizes the Company's stock option activity for the fiscal year presented:

	2024	
	Number of Options	Weighted Average Exercise Price per Share (\$)
Outstanding options, beginning of year	640,353	\$ 16.38
Granted	63,300	14.45
Exercised (1)	(248,015)	16.27
Expired	(4,442)	15.62
Forfeited	(15,769)	13.62
Outstanding options, end of year (2)	435,427	\$ 16.27
Fully vested and exercisable options, end of year (3)	278,678	\$ 17.58

(1) Stock options exercised during the fiscal year had an aggregate intrinsic value totaling \$6.2 million.

(2) Stock options outstanding at the end of the fiscal year had \$14.0 million intrinsic value.

(3) Fully vested and exercisable options at the end of the fiscal year had \$8.6 million intrinsic value.

The total aggregate intrinsic value of stock options exercised during fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022 was \$0.3 million and less than \$0.1 million, respectively.

Compensation expense for stock option awards, recognized in selling, general and administrative expenses on the Consolidated Statements of Operations, was \$1.2 million, \$0.8 million, and \$0.9 million for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023, and fiscal 2022, respectively, with associated tax benefits of \$0.3 million, \$0.2 million, and \$0.2 million, respectively. At September 28, 2024, unrecognized compensation cost related to stock option awards totaled \$0.5 million and is expected to be recognized over a weighted-average period of 0.7 years.

The fair value of each option award at grant date was estimated using the Black-Scholes option-pricing model with the following assumptions made and resulting grant-date fair values during the fiscal years presented:

	2024	2023	2022
Expected volatility	62 %	51 %	46 %
Expected dividend yield	0 %	0 %	0 %
Risk-free interest rate	4.24 %	3.78 %	1.30 %
Expected term (in years)	4.5 - 5.0	4.5 - 6.0	4.5 - 6.0
Weighted-average grant-date fair value	\$ 16.30	\$ 6.17	\$ 7.04

## 16. Benefit Plans

### Defined Benefit Pension Plan

The Company has a defined benefit pension plan ("Defined Benefit Plan") covering U.S. hourly and salaried personnel. On May 13, 2002, the Defined Benefit Plan was amended to freeze new participation as of May 15, 2002, and therefore, any new employees who started on or after May 15, 2002 were not permitted to participate in the Defined Benefit Plan. Effective January 1, 2006, the benefit plan was frozen to all participants. No accrual of future benefits is calculated beyond this date.

The Company made no contributions to the Defined Benefit Plan during fiscal 2024 and made \$1.1 million of contributions in fiscal 2023. For fiscal 2024 and fiscal 2023, benefits paid were \$8.8 million and \$13.2 million, respectively. The fiscal 2023 benefit payments included \$5.2 million paid to certain participants who met certain specified criteria (including that they were former employees of the Company who earned enough service to qualify for pension benefits under the terms of the Defined Benefit Plan while they were employed but were not otherwise receiving retirement payments on the date that the benefits were paid) and elected to receive a single lump-sum payment in lieu of future retirement payments, with no similar payments made in fiscal 2024. The projected benefit obligation ("PBO") for the Defined Benefit Plan was \$113.6 million and \$108.4 million at September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, respectively.

The reconciliation of the beginning and ending balances of the PBO for the Defined Benefit Plan for the fiscal years indicated is presented in the following table:

(in thousands)	Benefit Obligation	
	2024	2023
Projected benefit obligation balance, beginning of year	\$ 108,393	\$ 122,571
Interest cost	5,936	6,035
Actuarial loss (gain) <sup>(1)</sup>	8,091	(7,038)
Benefits paid	(8,786)	(13,175)
Projected benefit obligations balance, end of year	<u>\$ 113,634</u>	<u>\$ 108,393</u>

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes assumption changes, as applicable, resulting from (i) changes in the utilized discount rate to value the future obligations, and (ii) updates to the mortality table projections used in the calculation of the benefit obligations.

*Plan Assets:* The summary and reconciliation of the beginning and ending balances of the fair value of the Defined Benefit Plan assets are as follows:

(in thousands)	Plan Assets	
	2024	2023
Fair value of plan assets, beginning of year	\$ 105,989	\$ 106,547
Actual return on plan assets	21,080	11,504
Employer contribution	—	1,113
Benefits paid	(8,786)	(13,175)
Fair value of plan assets, end of year	<u>\$ 118,283</u>	<u>\$ 105,989</u>

*Funded Status:* The following table reconciles the benefit obligations, plan assets, funded status and net asset (liability) information of the Defined Benefit Plan at the dates indicated. The net pension asset or liability is reflected in long-term assets or liabilities, respectively, on the Consolidated Balance Sheets.

(in thousands)	Funded Status	
	September 28, 2024	September 30, 2023
Benefit obligation	\$ 113,634	\$ 108,393
Fair value of plan assets	118,283	105,989
Funded status	4,649	(2,404)
Net pension asset (liability) recognized	<u>\$ 4,649</u>	<u>\$ (2,404)</u>

*Fair Value of Plan Assets:* The Company determines the fair value of its financial instruments in accordance with the Fair Value Measurements and Disclosures Topic of the ASC. Fair value represents the price to hypothetically sell an asset or transfer a liability in an orderly manner in the principal market for that asset or liability. This topic provides a hierarchy that gives highest priority to unadjusted quoted market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities. This topic requires that financial assets and liabilities are classified into one of the following three categories:

- Level 1 Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities
- Level 2 Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for similar assets or liabilities, or unadjusted quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in markets that are not active, or inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability
- Level 3 Unobservable inputs for the asset or liability

The Company evaluates fair value measurement inputs on an ongoing basis in order to determine if there is a change of sufficient significance to warrant a transfer between levels. Transfers between levels of the fair value hierarchy are recognized on the actual date of the event or circumstances that caused the transfer, which generally coincides with the Company's valuation process.

The Defined Benefit Plan assets are comprised of various investment funds, which are valued based upon their quoted market prices. The invested pension plan assets of the Defined Benefit Plan are all Level 2 assets under the provisions of ASC 820, *Fair Value Measurements* ("ASC 820"). During fiscal 2024 and fiscal 2023, there were no transfers between levels. There are no sources of significant concentration risk in the invested assets at September 30, 2024.

The following table sets forth, by level within the fair value hierarchy, a summary of the Defined Benefit Plan's investments measured at fair value:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
<b>September 28, 2024</b>				
<b>Assets:</b>				
Equity securities	\$ —	\$ 77,817	\$ —	\$ 77,817
Debt securities	—	40,466	—	40,466
Total assets at fair value	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 118,283</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 118,283</u>
<b>September 30, 2023</b>				
<b>Assets:</b>				
Equity securities	\$ —	\$ 60,055	\$ —	\$ 60,055
Debt securities	—	45,934	—	45,934
Total assets at fair value	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 105,989</u>	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>\$ 105,989</u>

The following table represents net periodic benefit expense (income) and changes in plan assets and benefit obligations recognized in other comprehensive income, before tax effect, for the fiscal years presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	2024	2023	2022
Interest cost	\$ 5,936	\$ 6,035	\$ 4,368
Expected return on plan assets	(6,481)	(6,518)	(8,491)
Amortization of net loss	687	1,195	1,163
Net periodic benefit expense (income)	<u>\$ 142</u>	<u>\$ 712</u>	<u>\$ (2,960)</u>
Net gain	\$ (6,507)	\$ (12,024)	\$ (2,605)
Amortization of net loss	(687)	(1,195)	(1,163)
Total recognized in other comprehensive income	<u>\$ (7,194)</u>	<u>\$ (13,219)</u>	<u>\$ (3,768)</u>
Total recognized in net periodic pension benefit expense (income) and other comprehensive income	<u>\$ (7,052)</u>	<u>\$ (12,507)</u>	<u>\$ (6,728)</u>

The estimated net loss for the Defined Benefit Plan that will be amortized from accumulated other comprehensive loss into net periodic benefit cost over the next fiscal year is \$0.3 million. The unrecognized gain or loss is amortized as follows: the total unrecognized gain or loss, less the larger of 10% of the liability or 10% of the assets, is divided by the average future working lifetime of active plan participants.

The following actuarial assumptions were used to determine the benefit obligations at the dates indicated:

Weighted-average assumptions used to determine benefit obligations:	September 28, 2024	September 30, 2023
Discount rate	4.80 %	5.70 %
Rate of compensation increase	N/A	N/A
Weighted-average assumptions used to determine net periodic benefit cost:	September 28, 2024	September 30, 2023
Discount rate	5.70 %	5.10 %
Expected long-term return on plan assets	6.37 %	6.37 %
Rate of compensation increase	N/A	N/A

The benchmark for the discount rates is an estimate of the single equivalent discount rate determined by matching the Defined Benefit Plan's future expected cash flows to spot rates from a yield curve comprised of high-quality corporate bond rates of various durations.

The Defined Benefit Plan asset allocations at the dates indicated are as follows:

	September 28, 2024	September 30, 2023
Equity securities	66 %	57 %
Debt securities	34 %	43 %
Total securities	<u>100 %</u>	<u>100 %</u>

There was no Company common stock included in equity securities. Assets of the Defined Benefit Plan are invested primarily in funds that further invest in equity or debt securities. Assets are valued using quoted prices in active markets.

The expected long-term rate of return on plan assets reflects the average rate of earnings expected on the funds invested, or to be invested, to provide for the benefits included in the PBO. In estimating that rate, appropriate consideration is given to the returns being earned by the plan assets in the fund and rates of return expected to be available for reinvestment and a building block method. The expected rate of return on each asset class is broken down into three components: (1) inflation, (2) the real risk-free rate of return (i.e., the long-term estimate of future returns on default free U.S. government securities), and (3) the risk premium for each asset class (i.e., the expected return in excess of the risk-free rate).

The investment strategy for pension plan assets is to limit risk through asset allocation, diversification, selection and timing. Assets are managed on a total return basis, with dividends and interest reinvested in the account.

The Company expects to make \$0.8 million of contributions to its Defined Benefit Plan in fiscal 2025 in accordance with required IRS minimums. The following benefit payments are expected to be paid out of the Company's pension assets to the plan participants in the fiscal years indicated:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>Expected Payments</b>
2025	\$ 8,676
2026	8,701
2027	8,682
2028	8,624
2029	8,547
2030 - 2034	40,614
Total expected future benefit payments	<u>\$ 83,844</u>

### **Defined Contribution Plan**

The Company offers a defined contribution 401(k) plan covering substantially all U.S. employees and a defined contribution plan for Canadian employees. During fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023 and fiscal 2022, the Company offered a 50% match on the first 6% of the employee's contributions. However, due to the impacts of supply chain constraints on the Company's operations and cash flows, the Company temporarily paused this match from August 2022 through December 2022. The plans also provide for an additional discretionary match depending on Company performance. Compensation expense related to defined contribution plans totaled \$2.3 million, \$1.3 million and \$1.6 million for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023, and fiscal 2022, respectively.

### **Health Benefits**

The Company provides and is predominantly self-insured for medical, dental, and accident and sickness benefits. A liability related to this obligation is recorded on the Company's Consolidated Balance Sheets as accrued expenses. Total expense related to this plan recorded for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023, and fiscal 2022, was \$13.7 million, \$15.3 million, and \$13.6 million, respectively.

### **Employee Compensation Plans**

The MIP compensates certain salaried employees and is derived based upon the "Adjusted EBITDA" (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization, as adjusted) and "Free Cash Flow" metrics, as and when applicable. There was \$17.4 million in MIP bonus liabilities included in accrued expenses on the Consolidated Balance Sheets at September 28, 2024 and \$8.3 million at September 30, 2023.

## **17. Equity Investment in Affiliate(s)**

### **Micro Bird Holdings, Inc.**

On October 14, 2009, Blue Bird and Girardin MiniBus JV Inc. entered into a joint venture, Micro Bird Holdings, Inc. ("Micro Bird"), to combine the complementary expertise of the two separate manufacturers. Blue Bird Micro Bird by Girardin Type A buses are produced in Drummondville, Quebec by Micro Bird.

The Company holds a 50% equity interest in Micro Bird, utilizing the equity method of accounting as the Company does not have control to direct the activities that most significantly impact Micro Bird's financial performance based on the shared powers of the

venture partners. The carrying amount of the equity method investment is adjusted for the Company's proportionate share of net earnings or losses and any dividends received. At September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023, the carrying value of the Company's investment in Micro Bird was \$24.4 million and \$17.6 million, respectively. During fiscal 2024, Micro Bird paid each venture partner \$5.3 million in dividends. No dividends were paid by Micro Bird in fiscal 2023.

In recognizing the Company's 50% portion of Micro Bird net income or loss, the Company recorded \$12.1 million, \$7.0 million, and \$(4.2) million in equity in net income (loss) of non-consolidated affiliate(s) for fiscal 2024, fiscal 2023, and fiscal 2022, respectively.

Micro Bird's summarized balance sheet information at its September 30 year end is as follows (denominated in U.S. Dollars):

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>Balance Sheet</b>	
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
Current assets	\$ 100,974	\$ 72,232
Non-current assets	25,097	21,220
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 126,071</b>	<b>\$ 93,452</b>
Current liabilities	86,788	64,230
Non-current liabilities	1,201	2,359
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 87,989</b>	<b>\$ 66,589</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>\$ 38,082</b>	<b>\$ 26,863</b>

Micro Bird's summarized financial results for its three fiscal years ended September 30 are as follows (denominated in U.S. Dollars):

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>Income Statement</b>		
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Revenues	\$ 280,943	\$ 203,086	\$ 128,343
Gross profit	54,599	35,453	2,071
Operating income (loss)	32,075	18,310	(10,453)
<b>Net income (loss)</b>	<b>21,726</b>	<b>13,244</b>	<b>(8,924)</b>

### **Clean Bus Solutions, LLC**

On December 7, 2023, the Company, through its wholly owned subsidiary, BBBC, and GC Mobility Investments I, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Generate Capital, PBC ("Generate Capital"), a sustainable investment company focusing on clean energy, transportation, water, waste, agriculture, smart cities and industrial decarbonization, executed a definitive agreement ("Joint Venture Agreement") establishing a joint venture, Clean Bus Solutions, LLC, to provide a fleet-as-a-service ("FaaS") offering using electric school buses manufactured and sold by the Company ("CBS"). The service will be offered to qualified customers of the Company. Through CBS, the Company will provide its end customers with turnkey electrification solutions, including a wide product range consisting of, among others, electric school buses, financing of electric buses and supporting charging infrastructure, project planning and management, and fleet optimization.

The Company and Generate Capital will initially have an equal common ownership interest in CBS, and will initially jointly share management responsibility and control, with each party having certain customary consent and approval rights and control triggers. The parties have each agreed to contribute up to \$10.0 million to CBS, as agreed from time to time, for common interests to fund administrative expenses, and up to an additional \$100.0 million of capital in the form of preferred interests to fund the purchase, delivery, installation, operation and maintenance of FaaS projects, inclusive of Blue Bird electric school buses and associated charging infrastructure. Of this amount, the Company has committed to provide up to \$20.0 million and Generate Capital has committed to provide up to \$80.0 million, with the Company's aggregate commitment in any one year not to exceed \$10.0 million without its consent.

In accordance with the terms of the Joint Venture Agreement, the Company will promote CBS as its preferred FaaS offering for electric school buses and has agreed to not participate as a joint venture partner in any other similar FaaS offering for electric school buses, except as an original equipment manufacturer of buses. The Company's obligations do not prevent or limit any activities of its dealers.

CBS has a perpetual duration subject to the right of either party to terminate early upon the occurrence of certain events of default or the failure to achieve certain milestones set forth in the terms of the Joint Venture Agreement.

The Company utilizes the equity method of accounting in recording its interest in CBS as it does not have control to direct the activities that most significantly impact CBS' financial performance based on the shared powers of the venture partners. The carrying



amount of the equity method investment is adjusted for the Company's proportionate share of net earnings or losses and any dividends received.

In connection with the execution of the Joint Venture Agreement, the Company granted Generate Capital warrants to purchase an aggregate of 1,000,000 shares of Company common stock at an exercise price of \$25.00 per share during a five-year exercise period ("Warrants"). Two-thirds of the Warrants were immediately exercisable while the remaining Warrants became exercisable upon Generate Capital satisfying certain funding conditions during our fiscal 2024. The exercise price and the number of shares issuable upon exercise of the Warrants are subject to adjustment in the event of a recapitalization, stock dividend or similar event.

The Company recorded the \$7.4 million fair value of the Warrants upon issuance as permanent equity within additional paid-in capital on the Consolidated Balance Sheets and is not required to subsequently record changes in fair value as long as the Warrants continue to be classified within stockholders' equity. Additionally, since the Warrants were provided in exchange for an investment in CBS, the Company recorded the cost of its investment based on the fair value of the Warrants upon issuance, which increased the balance of equity investment in affiliate(s) on the Consolidated Balance Sheets by a corresponding \$7.4 million.

During fiscal 2024, the Company also made a \$0.6 million contribution to CBS, which was recorded to equity investment in affiliate(s). CBS paid no dividends during fiscal 2024. In recognizing the Company's proportionate percentage of CBS' net income or loss, the Company recorded \$(0.3) million in equity in net income (loss) of non-consolidated affiliate(s) for fiscal 2024. At September 28, 2024, the carrying value of the Company's investment in CBS was \$7.7 million.

## 18. Accumulated Other Comprehensive Loss

The following table provides information on changes in accumulated other comprehensive loss ("AOCL") for the periods presented:

<i>(in thousands)</i>	<b>Defined Benefit Pension Plan</b>	<b>Total AOCL</b>
<b>Balance, October 2, 2021</b>	\$ (44,794)	\$ (44,794)
Other comprehensive loss, gross	2,605	2,605
Amounts reclassified and included in earnings	1,163	1,163
Total before taxes	3,768	3,768
Income taxes	(904)	(904)
<b>Balance, October 1, 2022</b>	\$ (41,930)	\$ (41,930)
Other comprehensive income, gross	12,024	12,024
Amounts reclassified and included in earnings	1,195	1,195
Total before taxes	13,219	13,219
Income taxes	(3,173)	(3,173)
<b>Balance, September 30, 2023</b>	\$ (31,884)	\$ (31,884)
Other comprehensive income, gross	6,507	6,507
Amounts reclassified and included in earnings	687	687
Total before taxes	7,194	7,194
Income taxes	(1,726)	(1,726)
<b>Balance, September 28, 2024</b>	<u>\$ (26,416)</u>	<u>\$ (26,416)</u>

## 19. Stockholder Transaction Costs

On June 7, 2023, the Company entered into an underwriting agreement with BofA Securities, Inc. and Barclays Capital Inc., as representatives of the several underwriters and American Securities LLC and Coliseum ("2023 Selling Stockholders"), pursuant to which the 2023 Selling Stockholders agreed to sell 5,175,000 shares of common stock, including the sale of 675,000 shares pursuant to the underwriters' exercise of their over-allotment option, at a purchase price of \$20.00 per share. On September 11, 2023, the Company entered into another underwriting agreement with Barclays Capital, Inc. and the 2023 Selling Stockholders, pursuant to which the 2023 Selling Stockholders agreed to sell 2,500,000 shares of common stock, at purchase price of \$21.00 per share (collectively, the "2023 Offerings").

The 2023 Offerings were conducted pursuant to prospectus supplements, dated June 7, 2023 and September 11, 2023, respectively, to the prospectus, dated December 22, 2021 included in the Company's registration statement on Form S-3 (File No. 333-261858) that

was initially filed with the SEC on December 23, 2021 (the "December 2021 Prospectus"). The 2023 Offerings closed on June 12, 2023 and September 14, 2023, respectively.

On December 14, 2023, the Company entered into an underwriting agreement with BofA Securities, Inc. and Barclays Capital Inc., as representatives of the several underwriters and American Securities LLC ("2024 Selling Stockholder"), pursuant to which the 2024 Selling Stockholder agreed to sell 2,500,000 shares of common stock at a purchase price of \$25.10 per share. On February 15, 2024, the Company entered into an underwriting agreement with Barclays Capital Inc., as representative of the several underwriters and the 2024 Selling Stockholder, pursuant to which the 2024 Selling Stockholder agreed to sell 4,042,650 shares of common stock at a purchase price of \$32.90 per share (collectively, the "2024 Offerings").

The 2024 Offerings were conducted pursuant to prospectus supplements, dated December 14, 2023 and February 15, 2024, respectively, to the December 2021 Prospectus. The 2024 Offerings closed on December 19, 2023 and February 21, 2024, respectively.

Although the Company did not sell any shares or receive any proceeds from the 2024 Offerings or 2023 Offerings, it was required to pay certain expenses in connection with these transactions that totaled approximately \$3.2 million and \$7.4 million during fiscal 2024 and fiscal 2023, respectively. These expenses are included within other (expense) income, net on the Consolidated Statements of Operations.

## **Item 9. Changes in and Disagreements with Accountants on Accounting and Financial Disclosure**

None.

### **Item 9A. Controls and Procedures**

#### **Evaluation of Disclosure Controls and Procedures**

The Company maintains disclosure controls and procedures that are designed to ensure that information required to be disclosed in the reports the Company files or submits under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended ("Exchange Act"), is recorded, processed, summarized and reported within the time periods specified in the SEC's rules and forms and that such information is accumulated and communicated to the Company's management, including its Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer, as appropriate, to allow timely decisions regarding required disclosure. In designing and evaluating the disclosure controls and procedures, management recognizes that any controls and procedures, no matter how well designed and operated, can provide only reasonable assurance of achieving the desired control objectives.

In connection with the preparation of this Annual Report on Form 10-K, the Company carried out an evaluation under the supervision of and with the participation of the Company's management, including the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer, as of September 28, 2024 on the effectiveness of the design and operation of the Company's disclosure controls and procedures, as such term is defined in Rules 13a-15(e) and 15d-15(e) under the Exchange Act. Based on their evaluation, our Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer concluded that our disclosure controls and procedures were effective.

#### **Management's Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting**

Our management is responsible for establishing and maintaining adequate internal control over financial reporting as such term is defined in Rule 13a-15(f) under the Exchange Act. Our internal control over financial reporting is designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting and the preparation of financial statements for external purposes in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. A company's internal control over financial reporting includes those policies and procedures that (i) pertain to the maintenance of records that, in reasonable detail, accurately and fairly reflect the transactions and dispositions of the assets of the company; (ii) provide reasonable assurance that transactions are recorded as necessary to permit preparation of financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and that receipts and expenditures of the company are being made only in accordance with authorizations of management and directors of the company; and (iii) provide reasonable assurance regarding prevention or timely detection of unauthorized acquisition, use, or disposition of the company's assets that could have a material effect on the financial statements.

Because of its inherent limitations, internal control over financial reporting may not prevent or detect misstatements. Also, projections of any evaluation of effectiveness to future periods are subject to the risk that controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions, or that the degree of compliance with the policies or procedures may deteriorate.

Management assessed the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of the end of the period covered by this Report. In making this assessment, management used the criteria set forth by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission ("COSO") in *Internal Control – Integrated Framework (2013)*. Based on management's assessment and those criteria, management concluded that our internal control over financial reporting was effective as of September 28, 2024.

Our independent registered public accounting firm has issued its report on the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of September 28, 2024, which appears in this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

#### **Changes in Internal Control over Financial Reporting**

There have been no changes in our internal control over financial reporting that occurred during the fourth fiscal quarter ended September 28, 2024 that have materially affected, or are reasonably likely to materially affect, our internal control over financial reporting.

## **Item 9B. Other Information**

(a) Not applicable

(b) Insider Trading Arrangements

On September 13, 2024, Philip Horlock, the Company's President and Chief Executive Officer and member of the Board of Directors, entered into a trading plan intended to satisfy the affirmative defense conditions of Rule 10b5-1(c) under the Exchange Act, providing for the sale of up to 100,000 shares of the Company's Common Stock. Pursuant to this plan, Mr. Horlock may sell shares beginning December 16, 2024 and ending September 13, 2025.

During the fourth quarter of fiscal 2024, the previously disclosed Rule 10b5-1 trading plan for Razvan Radulescu, the Company's Chief Financial Officer, expired in accordance with its terms as all shares covered under such plan have been sold. On August 12, 2024, Mr. Radulescu entered into a trading plan intended to satisfy the affirmative defense conditions of Rule 10b5-1(c) under the Exchange Act, providing for the sale of up to 46,171 shares of the Company's Common Stock. Pursuant to this plan, Mr. Radulescu may sell shares beginning December 17, 2024 and ending August 30, 2025.

No other directors or officers of the Company adopted or terminated any "Rule 10b5-1 trading arrangement" or any "non-Rule 10b5-1 trading arrangement," as each term is defined in Item 408 of Regulation S-K, during the last fiscal quarter.

## **Item 9C. Disclosure Regarding Foreign Jurisdictions That Prevent Inspections**

Not applicable.

## **PART III**

Certain information required by Part III of this Annual Report on Form 10-K is incorporated by reference from the Company's definitive proxy statement (the "Proxy Statement") to be filed pursuant to Regulation 14A for the Company's Annual Meeting of Stockholders to be held in March 2025. The Company will, within 120 days of the end of its fiscal year, file the Proxy Statement with the SEC or supply the information required by this Part III by amendment to this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

### **Item 10. Directors, Executive Officers and Corporate Governance**

The information responsive to this item is incorporated by reference from the sections entitled "Election of Directors," "Information Concerning Management," "Corporate Governance and Board Matters," and "Delinquent Section 16(a) Reports" contained in the Proxy Statement.

### **Item 11. Executive Compensation**

The information responsive to this item is incorporated by reference from the section entitled "Director and Executive Compensation" and related sections "Compensation Discussion and Analysis," "Fiscal 2024 Director Compensation," and "Named Executive Officer Compensation" contained in the Proxy Statement.

### **Item 12. Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management and Related Stockholder Matters**

The information responsive to this item is incorporated by reference from the section entitled "Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management" contained in the Proxy Statement. Also see the section entitled "Securities Authorized for Issuance under Equity Compensation Plans" in Item 5 of this Report, which is incorporated herein by reference.

### **Item 13. Certain Relationships and Related Transactions, and Director Independence**

The information responsive to this item is incorporated by reference from the sections entitled "Corporate Governance and Board Matters - Director Independence" and "Certain Relationships and Related Transactions" contained in the Proxy Statement.

### **Item 14. Principal Accountant Fees and Services**

The information responsive to this item is incorporated by reference from the section entitled "Certain Accounting and Audit Matters" contained in the Proxy Statement.

## PART IV

### Item 15. Exhibits and Financial Statement Schedules

(a) Index

(1) Financial Statements.

The following financial statements are located in Item 8 of this Annual Report on Form 10-K:

Report of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

Consolidated Balance Sheets at September 28, 2024 and September 30, 2023

Consolidated Statements of Operations for the fiscal years ended September 28, 2024, September 30, 2023 and October 1, 2022

Consolidated Statements of Comprehensive Income (Loss) for the fiscal years ended September 28, 2024, September 30, 2023 and October 1, 2022

Consolidated Statements of Stockholders' (Deficit) Equity for the fiscal years ended September 28, 2024, September 30, 2023 and October 1, 2022

Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows for the fiscal years ended September 28, 2024, September 30, 2023 and October 1, 2022

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

(2) Financial Statement Schedules.

Financial Statement Schedule II - Valuation and Qualifying Accounts

All other schedules are not required under the related instructions or are not applicable.

(3) Exhibits. See paragraph (b) below.

(b) Exhibits

<u>Exhibit No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
3.1	<u>The registrant's Second Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on February 26, 2015).</u>
3.2	<u>The registrant's Bylaws, as amended, effective February 2, 2023 (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.2 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on February 3, 2023).</u>
4.1	<u>Specimen stock certificate for the registrant's common stock (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on March 2, 2015).</u>
4.2	<u>Credit Agreement, dated as of November 17, 2023, by and among the Company, School Bus Holdings, Inc. and certain of its subsidiaries, including Blue Bird Body Company as the borrower, Bank of Montreal, as Administrative Agent and certain other financial institutions party thereto (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K, filed by the registrant with the SEC on November 20, 2023).</u>
4.3	<u>Warrant to Purchase Common Stock of Blue Bird Corporation, dated as of December 7, 2023, by and among Blue Bird Corporation and Generate Capital, PBC (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.3 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on February 7, 2024).</u>

- 4.4** Warrant to Purchase Common Stock of Blue Bird Corporation, dated as of December 7, 2023, by and among Blue Bird Corporation and Generate Capital, PBC (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.4 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on February 7, 2024).
- 4.5\*** Description of the registrant's securities.
- 10.1†** Blue Bird Corporation Amended and Restated 2015 Omnibus Equity Incentive Plan (the "Incentive Plan") (incorporated by reference to Appendix A to the registrant's definitive Proxy Statement, as filed on January 27, 2020).
- 10.2†** Form of grant agreement for incentive stock options granted under the registrant's Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.16 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on March 2, 2015).
- 10.3†** Form of grant agreement for non-qualified stock options granted under the registrant's Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.17 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on March 2, 2015).
- 10.4†** Form of grant agreement for restricted stock granted under the registrant's Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.18 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on March 2, 2015).
- 10.5†** Form of grant agreement for restricted stock units granted under the registrant's Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.19 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on March 2, 2015).
- 10.6†** Revised form of grant agreement for non-qualified stock options granted under the registrant's Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.8 to the registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K filed by the registrant on December 12, 2019).
- 10.7†** Revised form of grant agreement for restricted stock units granted under the registrant's Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.9 to the registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K filed by the registrant on December 12, 2019).
- 10.8** Form of indemnity agreement between the registrant and each of its directors and executive officers (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.23 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on March 2, 2015).
- 10.9†** Form of Restricted Stock Unit Grant Agreement for directors under the registrant's Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q/A filed by the registrant on August 18, 2015).
- 10.10** Credit Agreement dated as of December 12, 2016 by and among Blue Bird Corporation, School Bus Holdings, Inc. and certain of its subsidiaries and affiliates and Bank of Montreal, as Administrative Agent and an Issuing Bank, Fifth Third Bank, as Co-Syndication Agent and an Issuing Bank and Regions Bank, as Co-Syndication Agent, and the other lenders party thereto, together with certain exhibits (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on December 15, 2016).
- 10.11** First Amendment to Credit Agreement, dated as of September 13, 2018, by and among the Company, School Bus Holdings, Inc. and certain of its subsidiaries, including Blue Bird Body Company as the borrower, Bank of Montreal, as Administrative Agent and certain other financial institutions party thereto (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 of the Company's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the Company on September 13, 2018).
- 10.12** Second Amendment to Credit Agreement, dated as of May 7, 2020, by and among Blue Bird Corporation, School Bus Holdings, Inc. and certain of its subsidiaries, including Blue Bird Body Company as the borrower, Bank of Montreal, as Administrative Agent, and certain other financial institutions party thereto (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on May 8, 2020).

- 10.13** Third Amendment to Credit Agreement, dated as of December 4, 2020, by and among the Blue Bird Corporation, School Bus Holdings, Inc. and certain of its subsidiaries, including Blue Bird Body Company as the borrower, Bank of Montreal, as Administrative Agent and certain other financial institutions party thereto (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K, filed by the registrant with the SEC on December 9, 2020).
- 10.14** Fourth Amendment to Credit Agreement, dated as of November 24, 2021, by and among the Company, School Bus Holdings, Inc. and certain of its subsidiaries, including Blue Bird Body Company as the borrower, Bank of Montreal, as Administrative Agent and an Issuing Bank, Fifth Third Bank, as Co-Syndication Agent and an Issuing Bank, and Regions Bank, as Co-Syndication Agent, and certain other financial institutions from time to time party thereto (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on November 29, 2021).
- 10.15** Fifth Amendment and Limited Waiver to Credit Agreement, dated as of September 2, 2022, by and among the Blue Bird Corporation, School Bus Holdings, Inc. and certain of its subsidiaries, including Blue Bird Body Company as the borrower, and Bank of Montreal, as Administrative Agent and an Issuing Bank, Fifth Third Bank and Truist Bank, each an Issuing Bank, and certain other financial institutions from time to time party thereto (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.20 to the registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K filed by the registrant on December 12, 2022).
- 10.16** Sixth Amendment to Credit Agreement, dated as of November 21, 2022, by and among the Company, School Bus Holdings, Inc. and certain of its subsidiaries, including Blue Bird Body Company as the borrower, Bank of Montreal, as Administrative Agent and certain other financial institutions party thereto (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K filed by the registrant on November 28, 2022).
- 10.17†** Revised form of grant agreement for non-qualified stock options granted to employees under the registrant's Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.2 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on February 13, 2020).
- 10.18†** Revised form of grant agreement for restricted stock units granted to employees under the registrant's Incentive Plan (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.3 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on February 13, 2020).
- 10.19** Credit Agreement, dated as of November 17, 2023, by and among the Company, School Bus Holdings, Inc. and certain of its subsidiaries, including Blue Bird Body Company as the borrower, Bank of Montreal, as Administrative Agent and certain other financial institutions party thereto (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the registrant's Current Report on Form 8-K, filed by the registrant with the SEC on November 20, 2023).
- 10.20** Limited Liability Company Agreement of Clean Bus Solutions, LLC, dated as of December 7, 2023, by and among Blue Bird Body Company, Clean Bus Solutions, LLC, and GC Mobility Investments I, LLC (portions of the exhibit have been omitted) (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.2 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on February 7, 2024).
- 10.21** Warrant to Purchase Common Stock of Blue Bird Corporation, dated as of December 7, 2023, by and among Blue Bird Corporation and Generate Capital, PBC (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.3 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on February 7, 2024).
- 10.22** Warrant to Purchase Common Stock of Blue Bird Corporation, dated as of December 7, 2023, by and among Blue Bird Corporation and Generate Capital, PBC (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.4 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on February 7, 2024).
- 10.23†** Change in Control Plan, effective as of January 25, 2024 (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.1 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on May 8, 2024).
- 10.24†** Omnibus Amendment to Outstanding Stock Option and Restricted Stock Unit Awards Under the Amended and Restated Blue Bird Corporation 2015 Omnibus Equity Incentive Plan, effective as of January 25, 2024 (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.2 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on May 8, 2024).



<b>10.25†</b>	<u>Employment Agreement effective May 15, 2023, between Phil Horlock and Blue Bird Corporation (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.3 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on May 8, 2024).</u>
<b>10.26†</b>	<u>Employment Agreement effective July 1, 2023, between Britton Smith and Blue Bird Corporation (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.4 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on May 8, 2024).</u>
<b>10.27†</b>	<u>Employment Agreement effective October 1, 2023, between Razvan Radulescu and Blue Bird Corporation (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.5 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on May 8, 2024).</u>
<b>10.28†</b>	<u>Employment Agreement effective October 1, 2023, between Ted Scartz and Blue Bird Corporation (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.6 to the registrant's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed by the registrant on May 8, 2024).</u>
<b>10.29*</b>	<u>Amended and Restated Limited Liability Company Agreement of Clean Bus Solutions, LLC, dated as of August 8, 2024, by and among Blue Bird Body Company, Clean Bus Solutions, LLC, and GC Mobility Investments I, LLC (portions of the exhibit have been omitted)</u>
<b>10.30†*</b>	<u>Separation and Release Agreement effective September 28, 2024, between Britton Smith, Blue Bird Corporation, and Blue Bird Body Company.</u>
<b>10.31†*</b>	<u>Separation and Release Agreement ADEA/OWPA effective September 28, 2024, between Britton Smith, Blue Bird Corporation, and Blue Bird Body Company.</u>
<b>19.1</b>	<u>Registrant's Insider Trading Policy and Guidelines for Rule 10b5-1 Plans (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 19.1 to the registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K filed by the registrant on December 11, 2023).</u>
<b>21.1*</b>	<u>Subsidiaries of the registrant.</u>
<b>23.1*</b>	<u>Consent of BDO USA, P.C.</u>
<b>31.1*</b>	<u>Chief Executive Officer's Certification Pursuant to Rule 13a-14(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.</u>
<b>31.2*</b>	<u>Chief Financial Officer's Certification Pursuant to Rule 13a-14(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.</u>
<b>32.1*</b>	<u>Chief Executive Officer's Certification Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. Section 1350, as adopted pursuant to Section 906 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.</u>
<b>32.2*</b>	<u>Chief Financial Officer's Certification Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. Section 1350, as adopted pursuant to Section 906 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.</u>
<b>97.1</b>	<u>Registrant's Policy Relating to Recovery of Erroneously Awarded Compensation (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 97.1 to the registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K filed by the registrant on December 11, 2023).</u>
<b>101*</b>	The following materials from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended September 28, 2024 formatted in XBRL (eXtensible Business Reporting Language) and furnished electronically herewith: (i) Consolidated Balance Sheets; (ii) Consolidated Statements of Operations; (iii) Consolidated Statements of Comprehensive Income (Loss); (iv) Consolidated Statements of Stockholders' (Deficit) Equity; (iv) Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows; and (v) Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements.
<b>104</b>	Cover Page Interactive Data File (formatted as Inline XBRL and contained in Exhibit 101)

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\*Filed herewith.

†Management contract or compensatory plan or arrangement.

(c) Not applicable.

## Item 16. Form 10-K Summary

Omitted at registrant's option.

### SCHEDULE II- VALUATION AND QUALIFYING ACCOUNTS

(in thousands)

Fiscal Year Ended	Allowance for Doubtful Accounts			
	Beginning Balance	Charges to Expense/(Income)	Doubtful Accounts Written Off, Net	Ending Balance
October 1, 2022	\$ 100	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 100
September 30, 2023	100	—	—	100
September 28, 2024	100	—	—	100

(in thousands)

Fiscal Year Ended	Deferred Tax Valuation Allowance			
	Beginning Balance	Charges to Expense/(Income)	Charges utilized/ Write offs	Ending Balance
October 1, 2022	\$ 3,453	\$ 2,050	\$ —	\$ 5,503
September 30, 2023	5,503	319	—	5,822
September 28, 2024	5,822	17	—	5,839

## SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Registrant has duly caused this Report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

### Blue Bird Corporation

Dated: November 25, 2024      By: /s/ Philip Horlock  
Philip Horlock  
President & Chief Executive Officer

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, this Report has been signed below by the following persons on behalf of the Registrant and in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

<u>Person</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>/s/ Philip Horlock</u> Philip Horlock	President, Chief Executive Officer and Director (Principal Executive Officer)	November 25, 2024
<u>/s/ Razvan Radulescu</u> Razvan Radulescu	Chief Financial Officer (Principal Financial and Accounting Officer)	November 25, 2024
<u>/s/ Mark Blaufuss</u> Mark Blaufuss	Director	November 25, 2024
<u>/s/ Julie A. Fream</u> Julie A. Fream	Director	November 25, 2024
<u>/s/ Douglas Grimm</u> Douglas Grimm	Director	November 25, 2024
<u>/s/ Edward T. Hightower</u> Edward T. Hightower	Director	November 25, 2024
<u>/s/ Simon J. Newman</u> Simon J. Newman	Director	November 25, 2024
<u>/s/ Kevin Penn</u> Kevin Penn	Director	November 25, 2024
<u>/s/ Dan Thau</u> Dan Thau	Director	November 25, 2024

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## Corporate Information

### Management Team

**Phil Horlock**  
President & Chief Executive Officer

**Razvan Radulescu**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Ted Scartz**  
Senior Vice President, General Counsel,  
and Corporate Secretary

### Board of Directors

**Douglas Grimm —Chairman**  
Owner and President  
V-to-X, LLC

**Mark Blaufuss**  
Managing Director and Founder  
Green & White Advisory

**Julie Fream**  
President and CEO  
MEMA Original Equipment Suppliers  
(Retired)

**Edward Hightower**  
Founder and Managing Director  
Motoring Ventures LLC

**Phil Horlock**  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
Blue Bird Corporation

**Simon Newman**  
Chairman  
MW Components and Paragon Medical

**Kevin Penn**  
Managing Director  
American Securities LLC

**Dan Thau**  
Chief Financial Officer  
ACES

### Corporate Office

Blue Bird Corporation  
3920 Arkwright Road, Suite 200  
Macon, Georgia 31210  
(478) 825-2021

### General Investor Inquiries

Blue Bird Investor Relations  
3920 Arkwright Road, 2nd Floor  
Macon, Georgia 31210  
Phone: (478) 822-2315  
E-mail: [investors@blue-bird.com](mailto:investors@blue-bird.com)

### Transfer Agent

Continental Stock Transfer &  
Trust Company  
1 State Street  
30th Floor  
New York, NY 10004  
Phone: (800) 509-5586  
Email: [cstmail@continentalstock.com](mailto:cstmail@continentalstock.com)

### Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm

BDO USA, LLP  
1100 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 700  
Atlanta, GA 30309-4516

### Legal Counsel

Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP  
1105 West Peachtree St. NE #1000  
Atlanta, GA 30309

### Disclaimer

The information contained in this report has been prepared or obtained by the company from its books and records and other sources that the company believes to be reasonably accurate and reliable. However, such information necessarily incorporates significant assumptions and estimates including, but not limited to, forward looking projections and other statements, that involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other important factors that could cause the actual results, performance or achievements of the company or the industry in which it operates, to differ materially from any future results, performance or achievements implied by such forward- looking statements.

Statements in this report that are forward looking in nature are based on the company's current beliefs regarding a large number of factors affecting the company's business. Actual results may differ materially from expected results. There can be no assurance that (i) the company has correctly identified or assessed all of the factors affecting its business or the extent of their likely impact, (ii) the publicly available information on which the company's analysis is based is complete or accurate, (iii) the company's analysis is correct, or (iv) the company's strategy, which is based in part on this analysis, will be successful.



LISTED ON NASDAQ: BLBD





GWINNETT  
COUNTY  
PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS

**DEPARTMENT OF PURCHASING  
& PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

**General Instructions & Conditions**



**Gwinnett County Public Schools  
General Instructions & Conditions**

The following General Instructions and Conditions are standard to all Gwinnett County Public County (GCPS) Invitation for Bids (IFB), Request for Proposals (RFP), and Request for Information (RFI) documents. **If more specific instructions are given in the individual bid package, those instructions should prevail.** Taking exceptions to these terms and conditions or submitting conflicting language may cause the vendor's response to be rejected.

**1.0      PREPARATION OF RESPONSES**

- 1.1 GCPS cannot guarantee that all vendors will be sent an announcement each time a solicitation is released. Invitation for Bids and Request for Proposals issued by GCPS are advertised on the GCPS Bonfire Interactive Portal located on the Purchasing and Property Management website ([www.gcps.org](http://www.gcps.org)) and the Georgia Procurement Registry if applicable. It is the vendor's responsibility to review the GCPS Bonfire Interactive Portal frequently for a listing of open solicitations. To view it on the internet, go to [www.gcpsk12.org](http://www.gcpsk12.org). From this screen, select Quick Links, then select Purchasing/Property Management. Under Purchasing Bids, find the link to the Bonfire Interactive Portal on the page's right side.
- 1.2 **All responses must be entered into Bonfire.** Each bidder shall furnish all information required by the solicitation form or document. An authorized agent of the company must sign bids. The firm's name and telephone number must be shown, and obligations assumed by such signature must be fulfilled.
- 1.3 Individuals, firms, and businesses seeking an award of a Gwinnett County Public School's (GCPS) contract may not initiate or continue any verbal or written communications regarding a solicitation with any School Board Member, employee, or other GCPS representative without permission of the Buyer named in the solicitation between the date of the issuance of the solicitation and the date of the final contract award by the Board of Education. The Director of Purchasing will review violations. If it is determined that such communication has compromised the competitive process, the offer submitted by the individual, firm, or business may be disqualified from consideration for the award.
- 1.4 Each vendor is responsible for having knowledge and understanding of any Federal laws and regulations, Georgia laws, Department of Education regulations or policies, and GCPS policies and/or regulations pertaining to GCPS procurement.
- 1.5 Each bidder shall examine the drawings, specifications, schedule, and all instructions. Failure to do so will be at the bidder's risk, as the bidder will be held accountable for their bid response.
- 1.6 An electronic price worksheet will be provided online to prospective bidders through the solicitation link and should be completed by an authorized agent of the company. Unit price should not exceed two decimal points and should include freight charges.

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Prices submitted on the electronic price worksheet should be in number format. Other prices in the Bid should be stated in words and numbers. In the event of a conflict, the word version will prevail.

- 1.7 Time of delivery is part of the bid and must be adhered to. If it is impossible to meet the delivery specified in the bid, the bidder shall state the best delivery possible in the space provided on the Bid Request. Words such as “immediate,” “as soon as possible,” etc shall not be used. Time shall be stated in days, and days shall mean “calendar days” (Saturday, Sunday, and holidays are to be included in that number).
- 1.8 GCPS assumes no responsibility or obligation to the vendors. GCPS will not pay for any costs associated with preparing or submitting a response. This provision applies whether or not a dispute arises.
- 1.9 Bidder, Contractor, Offeror, Supplier, and/or Vendor are synonymous in this document and refer to the person, entity, or firm that submits a response to a solicitation.
- 1.10 GCPS reserves the right to revise processes as needed during extenuating circumstances. Processes may include but not be limited to pre-bid/pre-proposal conferences and bid submittal/ proposal submittal.
- 1.11 When responding to a GCPS solicitation, if an item is to be bid at “zero cost” to the district, supporting documentation must be provided under the “Additional Supplier Information –If needed” section within Bonfire.
- 1.12 Alterations of GCPS documents are strictly prohibited and will result in automatic disqualification of the firm’s solicitation response. If there are “exceptions” or comments to any of the solicitation requirements or other language, then the firm may make notes to those areas but may not materially alter any document language.

**2.0 AUTHORITY**

Each party warrants that such party has full power and authority to enter into and perform this contract. The person signing on behalf of each party represents that such person is duly authorized to enter into this contract on behalf of such party.

Signatures on bids are binding for pricing and all terms and must be signed by an authorized agent of the company.

**3.0 SPECIFICATIONS**

- 3.1 Each bid shall be submitted online in Bonfire before the cutoff date and time as indicated in the solicitation. **Please note: All required documentation MUST be**

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***uploaded and confirmed before the bid due date and time for your submission to be accepted/completed within Bonfire. Please keep in mind this is a web-based program, and your firm should allow sufficient time to upload all required documents within the system. Once your submission is completed, a confirmation code and a confirmation email to the address on file are provided. A video tutorial is also available under the "Submission" section within Bonfire.***

Sealed hard copies/telephone/faxed bids will not be considered. Any addenda should be submitted with the electronic bid response.

- 3.2** For Goods: Manufacturers listed as "Model Equivalent" or "GCPS Approved Equivalent" in the solicitation documents are set forth to establish the general quality required. Items from other manufacturers of equal or better specifications may be considered. GCPS will be the sole determiner of whether the substituted item is an equal or better specification.
- 3.3** The vendor must clearly identify Any deviation from the appropriate response form(s) specifications. If the vendor wishes to provide additional detail regarding the variations in an accompanying letter, it should be noted on the proper response form(s). The furnishing of cuts, catalogs, or printed descriptions will not relieve the vendor of this requirement. GCPS shall determine at its sole discretion whether substitutions or modifications of the requested specifications are comparable to those contained within these solicitation documents. If GCPS determines that the modifications or deviations from the specifications are not compliant, the response may be rejected.
- 3.4** An awarded vendor's failure to deliver any items/services according to specifications outlined in their response may result in cancellation of the purchase without liability to GCPS and suspension or disqualification from doing business with GCPS. If any item(s) does (do) not meet these specifications, the item(s) will be picked up and removed from the premises of GCPS at the sole cost of the vendor.
- 3.5** If there is an error in the description or specifications contained in this solicitation documents, GCPS reserves the right to notify each vendor separately from this solicitation documents of such specification or description change and may require all responses to comply with such modification. In the case of an error in the specifications or the descriptions, GCPS further reserves the right to cancel this solicitation and re-issue.
- 3.6** If an awarded brand/model is discontinued during the award period, the awarded vendor may offer a replacement item. The replacement brand/model must meet or exceed the minimum specifications listed in the awarded vendor's response as well as current industry standards. The item must be offered at the same or better discount/fee structure level as the originally awarded item or a lower price than the original item. Replacement units must be made available to GCPS for review and approval before the awarded model's end of life. GCPS reserves the right to accept or reject the proposed replacement item and to negotiate with the awarded vendor to purchase different

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brands/models when in the District's best interest.

- 3.7** Items offered must meet required specifications and must be of a quality that will adequately serve the use and purpose for which they are intended.
- 3.8** The awarded vendor's assigned project team must be available to communicate in real-time during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.
- 3.9** GCPS reserves the right to require that the vendor must be presently using and/or providing the requested products and/or services.
- 3.10** The bidder must certify that the items to be furnished are new and that the quality has not deteriorated so as to impair its usefulness.

**4.0 APPROXIMATE ANNUAL QUANTITIES**

Most bids are "demand usage" contracts, and the estimated quantities listed on the attached pricing schedules are an approximate amount based on prior, or current, or next year's usage. The quantities during the bid term may change as the district needs to change, and in some instances, GCPS will have under or overestimated quantities or amounts of items to be purchased. Please note all prices quoted should be firm until the last order within the term, and any price increase may affect renewal options for the bid. Estimates in this bid are not a commitment to purchase the same amount as originally specified.

**5.0 SAMPLES**

- 5.1** When required, samples must be furnished at the vendor's expense and at no cost to GCPS within the times specified.
- 5.2** Samples are to be tagged or labeled with the bidder's name and Bid number as directed in the solicitation information.
- 5.3** Samples not used or destroyed during testing will be available for return to the vendor at the vendor's request and expense. If the vendor does not arrange for the pick-up of samples as defined in the solicitation information, samples will become the property of GCPS.
- 5.4** GCPS will assume no responsibility for items lost or destroyed when being inspected or tested.

**6.0 VENDOR'S EVIDENCE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

GCPS reserves the right to require a financial statement and/or Dun and Bradstreet rating from any vendor who submits a response. The vendor must submit a current financial statement and/or Dun and Bradstreet rating within 48 hours after notification of such requirement.

**7.0 DEBARRED, SUSPENDED, AND INELIGIBLE STATUS**

- 7.1** Vendor certifies that the vendor and/or any of its subcontractors (if applicable) have not been debarred, suspended, or declared ineligible by an agency of the

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State of Georgia or as defined in the 2 CFR 200.214 which states “Non-federal entities are subject to the non-procurement debarment and suspension regulations, implementing Executive Orders 12549 and 12689, 2 CFR part 180.” The vendor will immediately notify GCPS in writing if the vendor is debarred by the State of Georgia or placed on a Consolidated List of Debarred, Suspended, and Ineligible Contractors by a federal entity.

- 7.2** 2 C.F.R. Section 180.300 requires that when the School District enters into a covered transaction with an entity at a lower tier, the School District must verify that the entity is not suspended, debarred, or otherwise excluded or disqualified. “Covered transactions” include those procurement contracts for goods and/or services awarded under a grant or cooperative agreement that are expected to equal or exceed \$25,000. Furthermore, grantees and sub-grantees must not make any award or permit any award at any tier to any party that is debarred or suspended or is otherwise excluded or disqualified. By signing this contract, you affirm that neither you, the vendor, nor any principal of the vendor is suspended, debarred, or otherwise excluded or disqualified at the date of your signature.

**8.0 NON-COLLUSION**

The vendor, by affixing its signature to a solicitation, certifies that the vendor’s response is made without prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm, or person submitting a response for the same materials, supplies, or equipment and is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. The vendor understands that collusive bidding violates State and Federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.

**9.0 OBLIGATION TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 9.1** Vendor acknowledges that some material and information which may come into its possession or knowledge in connection with the solicitation documents or in connection with its performance under any resulting contract may consist of confidential information of GCPS, its students, or employees, the disclosure of which to, or use by, third parties may be damaging to GCPS, its students or employees and/or may violate applicable law(s). Vendor accordingly agrees to hold all such confidential information, together with all material containing confidential information, in strictest confidence, not to make use thereof other than as reasonably necessary to respond to this solicitation and/or to perform under any resulting contract, and not to release or disclose any confidential information to any other person or entity except as may be required by law. The vendor shall inform and instruct all employees, subcontractors, or other agents or representatives of this obligation of confidentiality. The vendor shall immediately remove any of its employees, subcontractors, or other agents or representatives from performing work in connection with any contract resulting from a solicitation upon request of notice from GCPS that GCPS reasonably believes such person or entity has failed to comply with the confidentiality obligations hereunder. Any employee, subcontractor, or other agent or representative so removed shall be replaced as provided for in the staffing requirements of this solicitation and/or the resulting contract.

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- 9.2** For the purposes hereof, "Confidential Information" includes, without limitation, all educational records, student data, student personally identifiable data, trade secrets, copyrighted material, and other confidential and proprietary information not subject to disclosure or use, as such terms may be respectively defined in O.C.G.A. § 10-1-761, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-662, O.C.G.A. § 50-18-72, 34 C.F.R. § 5b.9, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, 34 C.F.R. §99.3, 45 C.F.R. §164.524, 45 C.F.R. § 84.14(d) and 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400-1482. "Confidential Information" further includes, without limitation, all employee data, personnel records, health records, physician and provider notes, medical bills, claims, and other written information of a personal nature.
- 9.3** Vendor acknowledges and agrees that vendor's response hereto, the terms of any contract awarded according to this solicitation, and information concerning the goods and/or services provided in connection with any contract awarded according to this solicitation are generally subject to the requirements of the Georgia Open Records Act, O.C.G.A. §50-18-70 *et seq.*
- 9.4** Should vendor contend that it has submitted any records to GCPS which constitute "trade secrets" (as such term is defined in O.C.G.A. § 10-1-761) and desires to exempt such trade secrets from the requirements of the Open Records Act according to O.C.G.A. §50-18-72(a) (34), vendor shall submit and attach to any such records it contends constitute trade secrets an affidavit affirmatively declaring that specific information in the records constitutes trade secrets. Should the vendor attach such an affidavit, GCPS shall notify the vendor at least ten (10) days before disclosing such information, should GCPS determine that such information does not rise to the level of a "trade secret" (again, as such term is defined in O.C.G.A. § 10-1-761). Should the vendor fail to move for an appropriate court order within such ten (10) day period, or should the vendor fail to provide an affidavit as required by O.C.G.A. §50-18-72(a) (34), GCPS may disclose such information as it deems appropriate.

**10.0 ORIGINALITY AND TITLE TO CONCEPTS, MATERIALS AND GOODS PRODUCED**

The vendor represents and warrants that all the concepts, materials, goods, and services produced or provided to GCPS shall be wholly original with the vendor or that the vendor has secured all applicable interests, rights, licenses, permits, or other intellectual property rights in such concepts, materials, and works. The vendor represents and warrants that the concepts, materials, goods, and services provided by the vendor to GCPS and GCPS's use of same shall not infringe upon any other work or violate the rights of publicity or privacy of, or constitute a libel or slander against, any person, firm or corporation and that the concepts, materials, and works will not infringe upon the copyright, trademark, trade name, trade dress patent, literary, dramatic, statutory, common law or any other rights of any person, firm or corporation or other entity.

**11.0 RECORDS**

- 11.1 Retention** - The vendor must retain all books, records, and documents per generally accepted accounting principles and procedures and which sufficiently and adequately document and calculate all charges billed to GCPS throughout the term of the contract and for at least five (5) years following the date of final payment or completion of any required audit, whichever is later. Records to be maintained include both financial

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records and service records.

- 11.2 Access** - The vendor shall permit GCPS or any duly authorized representative from the Department of Education, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and/or where federal funds are involved, the Comptroller General of the United States or any other authorized representative of the United States government to access and examine, audit, excerpt and transcribe any directly pertinent books, documents, papers, electronically or optically stored and created records or other records of the vendor relating to orders, invoices or payments or any other documentation or materials about the contract where such records may be located during normal business hours. The vendor shall not impose a charge for auditing or examining the vendor's books and records. If an audit discloses incorrect billings or improprieties, GCPS reserves the right to charge the vendor for the cost of the audit and appropriate reimbursement.

**12.0 CIVIL RIGHTS AND ASSURANCE**

- 12.1** GCPS hereby agrees that it will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.); Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794); the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. § 6101 et seq.); Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as amended by the ADA Amendment Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. § 12131-12189); Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency." (August 11, 2000); all provisions required by the implementing regulations of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) (7 CFR Part 15 et seq.); Department of Justice Enforcement Guidelines (28 CFR Part 35, 42 and 50.3); and Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) directives and guidelines, to the effect that, no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Program applicant receives Federal financial assistance from USDA; and hereby gives assurance that it will immediately take measures necessary to effectuate this Agreement.
- 12.2** The USDA non-discrimination statement that in accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs).
- 12.3** This assurance is given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any Federal financial assistance, grants, and loans of Federal funds, reimbursable expenditures, grants, or donation of Federal property and interest in the property, the detail of Federal personnel, the sale, and lease of, and the permission to use Federal property or interest in such property or the furnishing of services without consideration or at a nominal consideration, or at a consideration that is reduced for the purpose of assisting the

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recipient, or in recognition of the public interest to be served by such sale, lease, or furnishing of services to the recipient, or any improvements made with Federal financial assistance extended to the Program applicant by USDA. This includes any Federal agreement, arrangement, or other contract that has as one of its purposes the provision of cash assistance for the purchase of food and cash assistance for the purchase or rental of food service equipment or any other financial assistance extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in this assurance.

- 12.4** By accepting this assurance, GCPS agrees to compile data, maintain records, and submit records and reports as required to permit the effective enforcement of nondiscrimination laws and permit authorized USDA personnel during hours of program operation to review and copy such records, books, and accounts, access such facilities and interview such personnel as needed to ascertain compliance with the nondiscrimination laws. If there are any violations of this assurance, the Department of Agriculture, FNS, shall have the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance. This assurance is binding on Gwinnett County Public Schools, its transferees, and assignees as long as it receives assistance or retains possession of any assistance from USDA.

**13.0 AWARDS**

- 13.1** GCPS reserves the right to award by line item to more than one vendor and/or to award by group or any combination thereof. The award will be made in the best interest of GCPS.
- 13.2** In case of a tie and subject to compliance with state and federal regulations and guidelines, the award will be made as follows:
- 13.2.1** The award will be to the in-county vendor.
  - 13.2.2** The award will be to the in-state vendor.
  - 13.2.3** If applicable, the award will be to the vendor with goods made in Georgia.
  - 13.2.4** If applicable, the award will be to the vendor with the lesser total dollar volume within this solicitation.
  - 13.2.5** If these preferences are insufficient for resolution, drawing lots in a public forum will resolve the tie.
- 13.3** GCPS reserves the right to negotiate a lower price than the award price on any line item with the successful vendor. If GCPS is unable to negotiate an acceptable price, it reserves the right to re-solicit the item(s)/service(s) involved.
- 13.4** GCPS reserves the right to review and accept or deny requests for price changes due to extenuating circumstances in the economy, marketplace, or acts of God. This option will only be exercised if it is deemed in the District's best interest.
- 13.5** GCPS reserves the right to purchase related items/services from the awarded vendor(s) when necessary, provided the pricing granted is in accordance with the cost structure awarded for similar items/services.



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- 13.6** Purchases by GCPS are not subject to Federal Excise Tax or State and Local Sales Tax. Tax Exemption Certificates will be furnished upon request.
- 13.7** Awards will be posted on the internet on the GCPS Bonfire Interactive Portal. Go to [www.gcpsk12.org](http://www.gcpsk12.org). From this screen, select **Quick Links**, then select **Purchasing/Property Management**. Under Purchasing Bids, find the link to the **Bonfire Interactive Portal** on the page's right side.
- 13.8** If, after the award, there is a decrease in the price of a product or a rebate from the manufacturer, the successful vendor will pass that price decrease and/or rebate onto GCPS.

**14.0 CONTRACT**

- 14.1** The Acknowledgement and Agreement Form must be completed and returned with the vendor's response to a bid, proposal, or quote.
- 14.2** Vendor must fully comply with all applicable federal and state security and immigration laws, including, without limitation, the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act. The vendor must affirm the vendor's compliance by completing and returning the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Documents with the bid, proposal, or quote.
- 14.3** **Entirety of Contract** – The contract between GCPS and the vendor shall include but not be limited to the original solicitation, G C P S General Terms and Conditions, subsequent addenda, clarifications, vendor questions/answers, the purchase order (if any), and award letter, as well as all GCPS accepted documents submitted in response to this solicitation, including any attachments and appendices. The entire agreement between the parties supersedes all prior oral and written agreements and understandings between the parties concerning the subject matter hereof. If any language of the response submitted by the vendor conflicts with the language of the solicitation, GCPS General Terms and Conditions, or any addenda, the language of the solicitation, GCPS General Terms and Conditions, or any addenda shall govern and control for all purposes unless consented to and agreed to by GCPS in writing.
- 14.4** If the vendor has additional terms and conditions, including but not limited to a vendor-drafted contract or purchase order that it is proposing, then the vendor must disclose and submit those terms and conditions in writing for evaluation by GCPS with its initial solicitation response. If the vendor objects to any term or condition in this solicitation, then any such objection shall be clearly indicated in writing. If any of the vendor's proposed contract terms conflict with any of GCPS's terms and conditions. In that case, every term the conflicting vendor proposes must be identified separately from the contract in writing. GCPS is not under any obligation to consider any terms or conditions proposed by the vendor that are not included in the vendor's initial response and not disclosed in the manner outlined in this paragraph. Further, unless expressly agreed to in writing, GCPS will not be bound by any terms and conditions in any vendor contract, packaging, service catalog, brochure, technical data sheet, or any other document that attempts to impose any conditions at variance with or in addition to the terms and

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conditions contained in the GCPS solicitation and the GCPS purchase order related to this solicitation or contract. Submitting terms and conditions that GCPS considers to conflict with GCPS terms and conditions may result in a vendor being deemed non-responsive.

- 14.5** This Agreement and all other contracts or agreements entered into between the Parties shall be governed, construed, and enforced according to the laws of the State of Georgia without regard to the principles of conflicts of laws. The Parties agree that this Agreement will be performed in the State of Georgia. The Parties consent to exclusive jurisdiction and venue in the State of Georgia and agree that all disputes between the parties regarding any Contract or Agreement the Parties entered into during the term shall be brought in the state courts of Gwinnett County or the federal court for the Northern District of Georgia, Atlanta Division.

**15.0 SHIPPING**

- 15.1** All prices are to include delivery to the location(s) specified in the solicitation documents or the purchase order. All delivery for goods must be FOB Destination, unless specified otherwise in the solicitation, with delivery to the location specified by the GCPS.
- 15.2** Inside delivery is required for all goods. At no time should goods be left outside of any building. Vendors are asked to be mindful of school arrival and dismissal times and avoid attempting delivery during those times. For large, heavy items, vendors are encouraged to call ahead to the delivery location to give prior notice and ascertain any delivery details particular to that location (i.e., loading dock availability, which entrance provides access to the loading dock, etc.).
- 15.3** All merchandise will be received in our warehouse on weekdays between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. Where two or more items are packaged together, their combined weight shall be no more than two thousand (2,000) pounds.
- 15.4** **MARKING:** Include a packing list in each shipment. The packing list must show the GCPS Purchase Order Number, Contents, and Shipper's Name and Address; mark the packing list and Invoices covering the final Shipment "Order Completed." If no packing list accompanies the shipment, the Buyer's count will be accepted. Mark (upper left corner) or each package (box, crate, barrel, bundle, piece) clearly with (1) the Shipper's name and address, (2) Contents, (3) Board of Education Purchase Order Number, and (4) Bill of Lading or Express Receipt and on every package the marking specified above, will obligate Shipper for any and all extra cost incurred, including drayage or demurrage.
- 15.5** If the goods/services have not been delivered/completed by the specified delivery date, and GCPS has granted no written extension of such delivery date, GCPS reserves the right to cancel the purchase of the items/services and/or any other pending purchase orders to the same vendor. Suppose delivery of goods or services is not complete within the time specified. In that case, GCPS may, without liability and in addition to any other rights or remedies, terminate the agreement by notice effective when received as to goods or services not yet delivered or rendered. GCPS may purchase substitute goods or services elsewhere and charge the awarded vendor for any additional expense incurred.

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**16.0 INVOICING**

- 16.1** GCPS will make payment after the final delivery and acceptance of all items/services. However, final acceptance will not be made until after inspection and approval by the GCPS authorized representative. Acceptance of any part of the order shall not bind GCPS to accept any future shipments nor deprive it of any right to return goods already accepted.
- 16.2** All invoices must show the purchase order number and the item number and should be mailed to GCPS, Finance Department, 437 Old Peachtree Road, NW, Suwanee, Georgia 30024-2978.
- 16.3** Prompt payment discounts offered for payment up to thirty (30) days will be taken.
- 16.4** No invoice will be processed for payment until all contractual obligations have been met and/or items ordered have been received and approved by the GCPS authorized representative.

**17.0 PAYMENT**

**PAYMENT IN FULL** will be made by the Board of Education when an invoice is received indicating that the goods and/or services have been delivered. The Board of Education will also make **PARTIAL PAYMENT** when partial shipment is received, as long as an invoice is received indicating partial delivery.

**18.0 COMPLIANCE**

GCPS will make final inspection of all products/services for acceptance or rejection. Final inspection resulting in acceptance or rejection of the products/services will be made as soon as practicable. Still, failure to inspect shall not be construed as a waiver by GCPS of its rights to reject such products/services or to claim reimbursement or damages for such products/services that are later found to be defective, not in conformance with the required specifications, or not to perform as claimed by the vendor.

**19.0 RIGHTS AND REMEDIES**

- 19.1** As permitted by law, in lieu of canceling the purchase order, GCPS may levy a charge if the successful vendor fails to deliver the item(s). Such a charge is not a penalty; instead, it is the agreed-upon liquidated damages representing the estimated damages that GCPS will incur due to the vendor's failure to deliver the item(s) as required.
- 19.2** GCPS does not waive any of its rights under contract law. Vendor acknowledges and agrees that if the vendor breaches this agreement, GCPS may cover such goods by contracting to purchase goods in substitution for those due from the seller. GCPS may recover from the vendor as damages the difference between the cost of cover, the contract price, and any incidental or consequential damages. Failure of GCPS to effect cover does not bar it from any other remedy. In such circumstances that GCPS is not able to cover or chooses not to cover the goods purchased under this solicitation, then the vendor acknowledges and agrees that GCPS can recover the difference between the

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market price of the goods at the time GCPS learned of the breach and the contract price of the goods, including any incidental and consequential damages. Suppose GCPS has accepted non-conforming goods purchased under this solicitation. In that case, the vendor acknowledges and agrees that GCPS can recover the value of the goods promised by the vendor and the value of the non-conforming goods provided. The preceding remedies are not exclusive of any other remedies permitted to GCPS under Georgia law. The vendor acknowledges and agrees that GCPS is owed its reasonable attorney's fees and costs incurred by exercising GCPS's rights in connection with the foregoing remedies.

**19.2.1** Partial completion of a purchase order will not exempt a vendor from this charge. GCPS further has the right, after assessing such charge, after the continuing failure of the vendor to complete, to terminate the purchase order.

**19.3 Warranty and Support Requirements** – GCPS is not waiving, amending, or abridging any warranty rights/contractual rights provided to GCPS under state or federal law. GCPS is not bound by any terms or conditions in any vendor's contract, packaging, invoices, service catalog, brochure, technical datasheet, or another document that attempts to impose any conditions that waive, amend, abridge, abrogate, are in conflict with or are in addition to GCPS's contractual rights as provided under state or federal law. In addition to the foregoing warranty and contractual rights of GCPS, the vendor further warrants and agrees as follows:

**19.3.1** Any good(s) purchased under this contract will be defect-free in materials and workmanship and be of the quality, size, and dimensions ordered. The packaging, packing, marking, and shipping of such goods will conform to the requirements of the solicitation documents and as outlined in the vendor's response. This express warranty shall not be waived because of acceptance of the goods or payment thereof by GCPS.

**19.3.2** For Goods: Upon request by GCPS, the vendor further agrees to immediately correct, without charge to GCPS, any defects in the goods which develop during the life of the warranty after acceptance and payment by GCPS. The vendor further agrees to indemnify GCPS against damages of any sort resulting from faulty workmanship or materials by the vendor while performing any warranty or guarantee work hereunder (or by any third party performing such work for and on behalf of the vendor). Any goods or parts thereof, corrected or furnished in replacement under this clause, shall also be subject to the terms of this clause to the same extent as goods initially delivered.

**19.3.3** For Goods: Vendor is fully aware of GCPS's business requirements and intended uses of the product(s) and warrants that the product(s) shall be fit for such intended uses.

**19.3.4** GCPS shall give written notice to the vendor of any breach of warranties in this section, and such notice shall contain information concerning the deficiencies found, the location of the nonconforming good(s), and the quantity involved, including GCPS's notification of the remedy for the non-conforming or defective

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good(s).

**20.0 TERMINATION**

- 20.1** If GCPS or Blue Bird Body Company wishes to cancel this contract or any purchase order following the award, GCPS or Blue Bird Body Company will provide written notice thirty (30) days in advance. GCPS and Blue Bird Body Company reserves the right to terminate the contractual relationship with the other party vendor at any time without cause and penalty on thirty (30) days' written notice to the other party vendor. If GCPS terminates, GCPS shall pay the vendor for the work performed before the date of notice of termination. The vendor shall not be paid for any work performed or incurred after the receipt of the notice of termination nor for costs incurred by its vendors. In addition, GCPS or Blue Bird Body Company may terminate the contract with the other party vendor in the event the other party vendor breaches any of its duties and obligations under this contract, and the other party vendor fails to cure such breach within ten (10) days after receiving notice from the other party GCPS specifying the breach.
- 20.2** The rights and remedies of either party, GCPS, as stated above, shall not be exclusive and are in addition to any other rights and remedies provided by law or under the contract.
- 20.3** Any purchase orders which result from this contract must be issued prior to the expiration of the contract; however, Bidder performance, GCPS payment obligations, and any applicable warranty periods or other Bidder or GCPS obligations may extend beyond the term of the contract unless said purchase order is terminated in writing pursuant to Section 20.1 above.
- 20.4 Multi-year Awards** – As provided in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-506, any contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation shall be deemed to obligate GCPS only for those sums payable during the calendar year of its execution or, in the event of renewal by GCPS, for those sums payable in the calendar year in which the renewal occurs. In no event shall any contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation be deemed to create a debt of GCPS for the payment of any sum beyond the calendar year of its execution or, in the event of renewal by GCPS, for those sums payable in the calendar year in which the renewal occurs.
- 20.4.1** The contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation shall terminate absolutely and without further obligation on the part of GCPS at the close of the calendar year in which it was executed and at the close of each succeeding calendar year for which it may be renewed as provided herein unless earlier terminated as provided in this contract or renewed as provided herein. If GCPS wishes to terminate pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2- 506, GCPS will provide thirty (30) days' notice prior to the close of the calendar year. If GCPS does not provide such notice, the contract will automatically renew January 1 for the following calendar year during the term unless otherwise terminated or non-renewed in accordance with the contract.
- 20.4.2** The contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation shall state the total obligation of GCPS for the calendar year in which it was executed and for each calendar year for which it may be renewed as provided herein.

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**20.4.3** The contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation shall not exceed seven and

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one-half percent (7.5%) of the total local revenue collected for the maintenance and operation of GCPS in its most recently completed fiscal year.

**20.5** The contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation will terminate immediately and absolutely at such time as appropriated and otherwise unobligated funds are no longer available to satisfy the obligations of GCPS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-506. In the event GCPS determines that appropriated funds no longer exist or are insufficient to fulfill GCPS's obligations hereunder, GCPS may terminate the contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation by providing thirty (30) days' written notice of termination to the vendor. Notice of any such termination shall include a certification by GCPS of the unavailability or insufficiency of funds, and such certification shall constitute an agreement by GCPS not to replace the services covered hereunder in whole or in part with any service obtained from a provider other than the vendor before the end of the calendar year in which the notification of such termination is provided. GCPS shall make payments to the vendor through the date of termination.

**20.6 Termination for Cause** – The occurrence of any one or more of the following events shall constitute cause for GCPS or Blue Bird Body Company to declare the other party vendor in default of its obligations under the contract:

**20.6.1** The vendor fails to deliver or has delivered nonconforming goods or services or fails to perform, to GCPS's satisfaction, any material requirement of the contract or is in violation of a material provision of the contract, including, but without limitation, the express warranties made by the vendor;

**20.6.2** GCPS or Blue Bird Body Company determines that the satisfactory performance of the contract is substantially endangered or that a default is likely to occur;

**20.6.3** The vendor fails to make substantial and timely progress toward the performance of the contract;

**20.6.4** The vendor or GCPS becomes subject to any bankruptcy or insolvency proceeding under federal or state law to the extent allowed by applicable federal or state law, including bankruptcy laws; the vendor or GCPS terminates or suspends its business, or GCPS or Blue Bird Body Company reasonably believes that the other party vendor has become insolvent or unable to pay its obligations as they accrue consistent with applicable federal or state law;

**20.6.5** The vendor or GCPS ~~has failed~~ to comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, ordinances, regulations, and orders when performing within the scope of the contract;

**20.6.6** Either party ~~The vendor~~ has engaged in conduct that has or may expose the other party GCPS to liability, as determined in that parties GCPS's sole discretion, or

**20.6.7** Either party ~~The vendor~~ has infringed on a third party's patent, trademark, copyright, trade dress, or any other intellectual property rights.

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**20.7 Notice of Default** – If ~~either party the vendor~~ causes a default event, ~~such party GCPS~~ shall provide written notice to the ~~other party vendor~~ requesting that the breach or non-compliance be remedied within the period of time specified in ~~that parties GCPS's~~ written notice ~~to the vendor~~. If the breach or non-compliance is not remedied within the period of time specified in the written notice, then ~~the other party GCPS~~ may:

**20.7.1** Immediately terminate the contract without additional written notice and/or;

**20.7.2** ~~GCPS may p~~Procure substitute goods or services from another source and charge the difference between the contract and the substitute contract to the defaulting vendor, including without limitation offsetting amounts owed by GCPS to the vendor by such charges and/or

**20.7.3** Enforce the terms and conditions of the contract and seek any legal or equitable remedies.

**20.8** Termination upon Assignment or Change in Control. In the event that the vendor attempts to assign this contract to a third party ~~without written notice to GCPS~~, or in the event the vendor changes control, GCPS shall have the right, ~~at its sole discretion~~, to terminate the contract immediately upon written notice.

**21.0 NO ASSIGNMENT, DELEGATION, OR SUBCONTRACT WITHOUT DISTRICT CONSENT**

**21.1** Except as may be specifically permitted by the solicitation, the vendor shall not delegate, subcontract, assign, or otherwise permit anyone other than vendor personnel to perform any of the work and/or provide any of the services required of the vendor under this contract or assign any of its rights or obligations hereunder, without the prior written consent of GCPS, which consent may be withheld by GCPS in its sole discretion.

**21.2** No subcontract, which the vendor enters into with respect to the performance of work and/or provision of services under this contract, shall in any way relieve the vendor of any responsibility for any performance or obligation required of it by this contract. The vendor hereby accepts responsibility for ensuring that all subcontractors who perform any of the services under this contract also comply with the terms and conditions of this contract. Vendor expressly agrees to indemnify and hold harmless GCPS from any and all claims, demands, liabilities, losses, damages, costs, and expenses which result from any failure by any such subcontractor to comply with any of the terms and conditions of this contract. The vendor shall give GCPS immediate notice in writing by registered or certified mail of any claim, action, or suit filed against the vendor by any subcontractor and prompt notice of any claim made against the vendor or any subcontractor, which may result in litigation, related in any way to this contract.

**21.3** Vendor must notify GCPS of all subcontractors used to fulfill this contract, including those contracted by their agents (such as delivery services). GCPS reserves the right to require that a subcontractor be removed from the contract.

**21.4** A completed Subcontractor E-Verify Affidavit form must be submitted for each subcontractor that will be used to fulfill this contract.



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**22.0 TAXES**

The vendor will timely pay all taxes lawfully imposed upon the vendor with respect to this Contract. The vendor makes no representation whatsoever regarding any tax liability of the vendor nor regarding any exemption from tax liability related to this contract.

**23.0 FORCE MAJEURE**

Neither party shall be liable or responsible to the other party, nor deemed to have defaulted under or breached the contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such contract, when and to the extent such failure or delay is caused by or results from acts beyond the impacted party's reasonable control including, without limitation, Acts of God, flood, fire, earthquake, explosion, global pandemic, war, invasion, hostilities, terrorist threats or acts, riots or other civil unrest, governmental order or law, actions, embargoes or blockades, strikes, labor stoppages or slowdowns. The impacted party shall promptly give notice to the other party within five (5) days of the occurrence of any such event, which shall identify the period of time the occurrence is expected to continue. The impacted party shall use diligent efforts to end the failure or delay and ensure the effects of such an event are minimized. The party shall resume the performance of its obligations as soon as reasonably practicable after the removal of the cause. GCPS may revise/stop services and/or deliveries while school(s) are closed and will not be held responsible for any payment for services not provided or items not delivered.

**24.0 SURVIVAL OF REPRESENTATIONS**

The provisions, representations, and warranties contained in this contract shall survive the delivery of all components procured hereunder and the payment of fees, therefore, and any termination of this contract in accordance with their respective terms and conditions.

**25.0 RELATIONSHIP OF PARTIES**

This contract is not intended by the parties to constitute or create a joint venture, pooling arrangement, partnership, or formal business organization of any kind, and the rights and obligations of the parties shall be only those expressly set forth herein. The vendor shall be deemed an independent contractor, and the employees and agents of the vendor shall not be deemed to be the employees or agents of GCPS. GCPS is not responsible for the payment of any taxes, insurance, or benefits on behalf of the vendor's employees.

**26.0 SEVERABILITY**

Any section, subsection, paragraph, term, condition, provision, or other parts of this contract which is held, found, or declared to be voidable, void, invalid, illegal, or otherwise not fully enforceable shall not void any other section, subsection, paragraph, term, condition, provision, or part of this contract, and the remainder of this contract shall continue to be of full force and effect. Any agreement of the parties to amend, modify, eliminate, or otherwise change any section, subsection, paragraph, term, condition, provision, or other terms of this contract shall not affect any other section, subsection, paragraph, term, condition, provision, or part of the contract, and the remainder of this contract shall continue to be of full force and effect.

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**27.0 BIDDERS EVIDENCE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Bidders may be required to furnish evidence in writing that they maintain permanent places of business and have adequate equipment, finances, and personnel to furnish the items offered satisfactorily and expeditiously and that they are authorized dealers and can provide necessary services and warranties for items they propose to furnish.

**28.0 WAIVERS**

The failure of either party to assert any claim or right against the other party regarding its obligations hereunder, in any one or more instances, shall not constitute a waiver of such claim or right with respect to the future performance of such obligations and other obligations under this contract.

**29.0 PUBLICITY**

The vendor shall not prepare or disseminate any publicity relating to this contract, products sold or licensed, or the services performed under this contract without the express written prior consent of GCPS. As used in this section, the term “publicity” includes but is not limited to advertisements, flyers, public announcements, pamphlets, press releases, reports, books, broadcasts, signs, social media, and similar public information.

**30.0 USE BY OTHER AGENCIES**

So long as such additional use of this Agreement does not interfere in the fulfillment of obligations to GCPS by the Bidder, and only upon the consent of the Bidder, this bid is available and open to public and nonprofit entities across the United States and Canada; such as federal, state/province, municipal, K-12 and higher education, tribal government, and other public entities; to buy off this bid at the same prices quoted during the effective term.

**Charter Schools** – Selected GCPS contracts and pricing have been made available for use by GCPS Charter Schools. Sales to GCPS Charter Schools by the Contractor will be optional and not be considered when determining the award, i.e., allowing other agencies to participate is not mandatory. It is to be understood, however, that GCPS shall not be responsible for any problems that may arise between a GCPS Charter School and the contractor as a result of any sales. Any resulting contract is solely between the bidder and third-party GCPS Charter School. Billings for items purchased under this agreement shall be directed to the agency making the purchase.

**31.0 VENDOR’S EMPLOYEES ON GCPS PROPERTY**

**31.1** All vendor’s employees, agents, and subcontractors working on GCPS property must wear an ID, preferably a photo ID, be neat and clean in appearance, and must comply with all of the policies and procedures related to on-campus work that are in effect at the school or administrative site, as the case may be. The vendor shall provide and institute necessary security measures to prevent **unauthorized** access to all computer networks and proprietary information, trade secrets, or student information of GCPS by any of its employees or agents. The vendor shall be liable and responsible to GCPS for all security breaches by its employees or agents. All vendor employees shall conduct themselves in a professional manner and shall not give the appearance of fraternizing with the students and teachers.

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**31.2 GCPS is a drug-free workplace** - By submission of a response to the solicitation, the GCPS vendor certifies that employees, agents, and subcontractors will not engage in the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of controlled substances or drugs while on the GCPS property during the performance of the contract.

**31.3 GCPS is a tobacco-free workplace** - By submission of a response to the solicitation, the vendor certifies that employees, agents, and subcontractors will not use tobacco products or electronic nicotine delivery systems while on GCPS property at any time during the performance of the contract. The use of electronic nicotine delivery systems (e.g., e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-hookahs, e-pipes, and other forms of what is commonly referred to as “vaping”) shall be prohibited at all times. GCPS reserves the right to request the removal of any vendor employees, agents, or subcontractors from GCPS property.

**32.0 BACKGROUND CHECKS**

**32.1** GCPS requires the vendor, at the vendor’s expense, to perform background checks on any employee or subcontractor who will be working on GCPS property (delivery personnel excluded). A comprehensive criminal history background check, including both the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC) and National Crime Information Center (NCIC), is required on each applicant assigned to GCPS. Minimum findings that warrant exclusion include:

**32.1.1** Any felony conviction

**32.1.2** Any misdemeanor drug offense within the past seven (7) years

**32.1.3** Any crime against children

**32.1.4** Any sex-related conviction

**32.1.5** Regardless of ultimate disposition, the total number of arrests exceeds four (4)

**32.1.6** Regardless of ultimate disposition, more than two (2) arrests for crimes of similar nature (e.g., assault, shoplifting, DUI)

**32.1.7** Pending Charges – Any applicant out on bond and awaiting disposition for any offense

**32.1.8** Failure to disclose any criminal history (regardless of how long ago) on application

**32.2** Once employed by the vendor, the employee has the obligation to self-report any arrest to the vendor within twenty-four (24) hours. The vendor should contact Gwinnett County Public Schools' designated representative within twenty-four (24) hours of the report.

**32.3** Background checks must be provided to the GCPS designated representative upon request by the GCPS. Please note: It is required that all necessary background checks be completed prior to the employee beginning work.

**33.0 AMENDMENTS IN WRITING**

No amendment of any term or condition contained in this contract, including the solicitation

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documents and vendor's response, shall be effective unless it is in writing and signed by duly authorized representatives of the parties. No representation, request, instruction, directive, or order made or given by any official, employee, or agent of GCPS, whether verbal or written, shall be effective to amend this agreement or excuse or modify performance hereunder unless reduced to a formal amendment and executed as set forth above. The vendor shall not be entitled to rely on any such representation, request, instruction, directive, or order and shall not, under any circumstances whatsoever, be entitled to additional compensation, delay in performance, or other benefit claimed for relying upon or responding to any such representation, request, instruction, directive, or order.

If necessary, addendums to the Bid will be posted up to seventy-two (72) hours before the Bid opening time.

**34.0 PARTIES BOUND**

The contract of which these General Terms and Conditions are a part shall be binding on and inure to the benefit of the parties to this contract and their respective heirs, executors, administrators, legal representatives, successors, and assigns.

**35.0 RELEASE, WAIVER AND INDEMNIFICATION**

**35.1** Vendor hereby waives, releases, relinquishes, discharges and agrees to indemnify, protect, and hold harmless members of the GCPS Board of Education (BOE), GCPS and its officers, agents, and employees (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Indemnitees"), of and from any and all claims, demands, liabilities, loss, costs, or expenses for any loss or damage (including but not limited to reasonable attorneys' fees) growing out of, or otherwise occurring in connection with this contract, due to any act or omission on the part of vendor, its agents, employees, subcontractors, or others working at the direction of vendor or on its behalf; or due to any breach of this contract by vendor; or due to the application or violation of any pertinent Federal, State, or local law, rule, or regulation by vendor, its agents, employees, subcontractors, or others working at the direction of vendor or on its behalf.

**35.2** As permitted by Georgia law, this indemnification shall apply notwithstanding the fact that the Indemnitees may be partially responsible for the situation giving rise to the claim. This indemnification shall apply notwithstanding the fact that a claim results in a monetary obligation that exceeds any contractual commitment. This indemnification shall not apply if the situation giving rise to the claim results solely from the negligence or willful acts of Indemnitees.

**35.3** This indemnification extends to the successors and assigns of the vendor, and this indemnification and release survives the duration of this contract, the termination of this contract, and the dissolution or, to the extent allowed by law, the bankruptcy of the vendor.

**35.4** Vendor shall, at its expense, be entitled to and shall have the duty to participate in the defense of any suit against the Indemnitees. No settlement or compromise of any claim, loss, or damage asserted against Indemnitees shall be binding upon Indemnitees unless expressly approved by the Indemnitees.

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**36.0 COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS**

- 36.1** Vendor shall, at its own expense, obtain all necessary permits, give all notices, pay all license fees and taxes, and comply with all applicable local, State, and Federal Laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations in connection with its performance under this contract.
- 36.2** Vendor further agrees that in the performance of the contract, it will comply with all laws, regulations, rules, and policies that may apply to public education in general and the operation of GCPS in particular.
- 36.3** Notwithstanding or in limitation of the foregoing, the vendor acknowledges and agrees that it shall, at all times during this solicitation process and in the performance of any contract resulting therefrom (if any), comply with the provisions of the Georgia Student Data Privacy and Transparency Act, O.C.G.A. §20-2-660 *et seq.*

**37.0 COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAWS**

All vendors must comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations, including, without limitation:

- 37.1** Compliance with all applicable standards, orders, or requirements issued under section 306 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. §7606), section 508 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §1368), Executive Order 11738, and Environmental Protection Agency regulations 40 C.F.R Part 35 (Contracts, subcontracts, and sub-grants of amounts in excess of \$100,000).
- 37.2** Mandatory standards and policies relating to energy efficiency, which are contained in the state energy conservation plan issued in compliance with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (Pub. L. 94–163, 89 Stat. 871). (Contracts, subcontracts, and sub-grants of amounts in excess of \$100,000.)
- 37.3** BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL - Bidder certifies that Bidder is not currently engaged in, and agrees for the duration of this Contract not to engage in, a boycott of Israel, as defined in O.C.G.A. § 50-5-85.
- 37.4** Buy American Policy – The Federal “Buy American” Policy mandates that the District/State agency/Territory participates in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program and is required to use the nonprofit food service funds, to the maximum extent practicable, to buy domestic commodities or products for Program meals. A “domestic commodity or product” is defined as one that is either produced in the U.S. or is processed in the U.S. substantially using agricultural commodities that are produced in the U.S. as provided in 7 CFR 210.21 (d).” Additionally, vendors must be able to provide documentation verifying the domestic origin of products as defined in 7 CFR 210.21 (d) if requested.

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**37.4.1** Exceptions to the Buy American provision are very limited; however, an alternative or exception may be approved upon request. An alternative or exception may be considered if the request is submitted in writing to a designated official a minimum of 10 days in advance of delivery. The request must include the following: (1) Alternative substitute(s) that are domestic and meet the required specifications: (a) Price of the domestic food alternative substitute(s); and (b) Availability of the domestic alternative substitute(s) in relation to the quantity ordered. (2) Reason for exception: limited/lack of availability or price (include price): (a) Price of the domestic food product; and (b) Price of the non-domestic product that meets the required specification of the domestic product.

**38.0 BIDDER CODE OF CONDUCT:**

GCPS aims to operate in a manner that reflects high ethical standards and is committed to complying with all applicable laws, regulations, and other legal requirements. Accordingly, GCPS seeks to conduct business with bidders who share our commitment to high ethical standards and operate in a responsible and ethical manner.

All GCPS employees are expected to act at all times in accordance with good business judgment for the benefit of the District and to avoid activities that could create a conflict of interest or the appearance of such a conflict. Bidders, when doing business with GCPS, in turn, are expected to conduct their business in an ethical manner and act with integrity.

Bidder's employees may be required to perform work at government owned facilities, including schools. Bidder's employees and agents must conduct themselves in a professional manner while on the premises, and in accordance with GCPS policies and procedures, and all applicable laws.

**Acceptance of Entertainment & Gifts:**

Bidders may neither offer nor give any gift to any GCPS employee or contracted staff who conduct business for GCPS except those items of nominal value, which may then be subject to disclosure by the receiving party to an immediate supervisor and/or the GCPS Department of Internal Audit. For purposes of this Procedure, a "gift" shall mean anything of value that shall include, but is not limited to, goods, loans, money, personal services, gratuities, entertainment, etc. Any prohibited activity or gift may result in the termination of existing contracts. Any activity or gift is strictly forbidden where it is being given under circumstances where it can be reasonably inferred that it was intended to influence GCPS employees in the performance of his or her official duties or during the solicitation and award process of a bid.

**Bidder Submittals:**

GCPS expects all bidders to be forthcoming and always submit true and accurate information in response to a GCPS Purchasing solicitation or in regard to an existing business relationship. If the GCPS Purchasing Department determines that the bidder has intentionally omitted or failed to provide pertinent information and/or falsified or misrepresented material information submitted to the Purchasing Department, the Department shall act in accordance with applicable GCPS policies and procedures and applicable State of Georgia

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Law.

Information and Communication During the Solicitation:

All bidding information received, including pricing, remains confidential until an award is made so as not to compromise the competitive bid process. Likewise, to protect the integrity of the solicitation process, any communication with GCPS, including clarification of a quote, bid, or proposal, must go through the assigned Purchasing Department Senior Buyer.

By accepting our bid "Instructions and Conditions" terms and agreeing to do business with GCPS, all bidders are agreeing to comply with this Code of Conduct.

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**BID PROTEST PROCEDURE**

This bid protest procedure applies to challenges to the awarding of bids or contracts by the Purchasing Department of the Gwinnett County Public Schools. This procedure applies to electronically submitted bids, RFPs, quotes, and contracts.

If the protesting party does not submit a completed bid, proposal, quote, or contract, the protest must be submitted prior to the date and time of the solicitation opening or prior to the date on which the Bid, RFP, Quote, or Contract is due to be received by the Board. Any protests received after those dates will not be reviewed and considered and will be dismissed as untimely.

For those protestors who did submit a completed and confirmed bid, RFP, quote, or contract response, their protests must be filed within seven calendar days after the protesting party knew or should have known of the facts giving rise to the protest. However, no protest that is filed more than seven calendar days after the date the notice of award of the contract is posted on the Purchasing Department of the GCPS website will be accepted. Untimely protests will be dismissed.

The date of filing is the date the Purchasing Department receives the protest. A protest must be in writing and must be sent to GCPS, Purchasing Department, 437 Old Peachtree Road, NW, Suwanee, Georgia 30024, Attn: Director of Purchasing.

Each protest must specify the reasons the protesting party believes that the solicitation or award was improper. Issues not raised in the written protest are deemed waived and may not be raised on appeal. The protesting party may submit any documents or information deemed relevant to the protest. If the contract has been awarded, the Purchasing Department shall notify the successful bidder or contractor of the protest. If the protest is received before the contract is awarded and the protest raises substantial issues, all bidders and offerors who appear to have a substantial and reasonable prospect of winning the award shall be notified of the protest and the reasons for the protest and they may file their position on the issues with the Purchasing Department, in writing, within five days after receipt of notice of the protest.

Upon the filing of a protest, further action on the solicitation or award shall be stayed, or if the protest is timely received after the award, the performance of the contract should be suspended until the protest is resolved. The Purchasing department may, however, determine that the protest is clearly without merit or that the award of the contract without delay is necessary to protect the substantial interests of the Board. In such case, if the Director of Purchasing determines that the protest is clearly without merit or will substantially harm the Board and does not stay the procurement, he shall immediately issue the decision.

Within 15 days of receiving a protest, the Purchasing Department will issue a response. The response may include any documents or information that the contracting officer or Director of Purchasing deems



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relevant to the protest. If additional time is required to investigate the protest, he shall inform the protesting party of the additional time needed to render a determination and obtain the protesting party's consent. Unless an extension of time has been agreed to, the Director of Purchasing shall issue a final written determination stating the reasons for the decision within 60 days of the date the protest was filed.

The Purchasing Department shall send a copy of the decision to the protesting party and any other person determined to be affected by the decision. If the protest is denied, the decision shall inform the protesting party of its right to file an appeal. The appeal will need to be sent to GCPS, Business and Finance Division, 437 Old Peachtree Road, NW, Suwanee, Georgia 30024, Attn: Chief Financial Officer, and received within 15 days of the mailing date of the decision.

## Question Set 1: RFP-2501KM Purchase of School Buses and Related Accessories, Supplies and Parts Standard Questions

#	Question	Response	Comment	Status
1.0.1	Supplier Name & Address- Enter supplier name & address in comments section.	-	Blue Bird Body Company, 402 Blue Bird Blvd., Fort Valley, GA 31030	Complete
1.0.2	Contact Person- Provide contact name, phone # and email address in comments section.	-	Albert Burleigh, (478) 919-7311, albert.burleigh@blue-bird.com	Complete
1.0.3	How did your firm hear about this solicitation?	Email Notification		Complete
1.0.4	When responding to a GCPS solicitation, if an item is to be bid at "zero cost" to the district, supporting documentation must be provided under the "Additional Supplier Information –If needed" section within Bonfire.	Yes I am aware of this requirement		Complete
1.0.5	Is your company a new supplier to Gwinnett County Public Schools? If so, please complete the vendor registration packet and submit it with your response. Please Note: A new supplier is a supplier that has not done business with GCPS within the last 12 months.	Yes	We have not provided goods or services directly to Gwinnett County Schools. If successful on this award, our local dealer, Yancey Bus Sales, will be providing the goods and services to the customer. They have complete the vendor registration packet which is included in our submission.	Complete
1.0.6	Does your company accept all of Gwinnett County Public Schools' Instructions & Conditions? By answering Yes, I have read the Instructions & Conditions in it's entirety and agree to conform to it's every requirement. I further acknowledge that failure to prepare or submit or execute this bid in the exact manner requested will be just cause to reject any or my entire bid.	Yes- I have read the Instructions & Conditions in it's entirety and agree to conform to it's every requirement.	Blue Bird is submitting this proposal, but we cannot agree to all the instructions and conditions as we are not directly providing the goods and services. We have provided our redline edits in the additional information section. If we are successful on this award, our local dealer, Yancey Bus Sales, will be providing the goods and services to Gwinnett County Schools and has agreed to the instructions and conditions.	Complete
6 Questions		100.00% Complete		

## Question Set 2: RFP-2501KM Purchase of School Buses and Related Accessories, Supplies and Parts References

### Question Set 2 Instructions

Please list a minimum of three (3) references where work of a similar size and scope has been completed. Please list all response information within the comments section.

#	Question	Response	Comment	Status
Reference 1				?
2.1.1	Company Name	-	Cobb County Schools	Complete
2.1.2	Contact Name, Telephone Number, E-Mail Address	-	Matt Sanders, (770) 429-5821, matt.sanders@cobbk12.org	Complete
2.1.3	Brief Description of Project, including # of employees on assignment	-	Sale of school buses; provide parts and service	Complete
2.1.4	Completion Date	-	Ongoing	Complete
Reference 2				?
2.2.1	Company Name	-	Paulding County Schools	Complete
2.2.2	Contact Name, Telephone Number, E-Mail Address	-	Trey Studstill, (770) 443-8135, tstudstill@paulding.k12.ga.us	Complete
2.2.3	Brief Description of Project, including # of employees on assignment	-	Sale of school buses; provide parts and service	Complete
2.2.4	Completion Date	-	Ongoing	Complete
Reference 3				?
2.3.1	Company Name	-	Bibb County Schools	Complete
2.3.2	Contact Name, Telephone Number, E-Mail Address	-	Anthony Jackson, (478) 365-5452, anthony.jackson@bcsdk.net	Complete
2.3.3	Brief Description of Project, including # of employees on assignment	-	Sale of school buses; provide parts and service	Complete
2.3.4	Completion Date	-	Ongoing	Complete
12 Questions			100.00% Complete	

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BLUE BIRD DEALERS**

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