



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF OPERATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

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Date: June 18, 2020

To: School Board

From: Dan Jung, Chief Operations Officer
Teri Brady, Director of Student Transportation

Subject: Student Transportation - Yellow Bus and Cab Services

Portland Public Schools provides student transportation services from home to school for more than 7,000 students. This number has been as high as 7,600 in the last few years. Our overall yellow bus route numbers have remained fairly consistent. But we have seen an increase in cabs and van service. We provide rides to students who attend schools across a wide area including Clackamas, Salem, Vancouver, Tigard and much of Multnomah County.

During the last seven years, ridership has increased with enrollment and so has the types of service and special education placements we provide service to. The District has expanded DLI services to several HS clusters. We have provided yellow bus services to both Grant and Madison during their HS modernization projects. We have added services into Lincoln as the Forest Heights neighborhood moved away from shuttle services to the MAX station. The Access program has increased enrollment and added a second campus. These additions have increased our GT (big bus) routes from 96 to 131.

As we have struggled to recruit and retain DOT/ODE certified yellow bus drivers, this has had an inverse effect on the number of ST (small bus) routes we are able to staff. First Student had 92 small bus routes in 2013-14; the past two years they have had 46. PPS has gone from 64 to 76 in an attempt to meet the need, but we also struggle to get CDL drivers.

From the SPED side, there has been an increase in students being identified with more intensive needs for instruction and supports. Students are being placed in out of district programs and sites, and they come from all over the district making it hard to be efficient in routing. Title X students continue to increase. With less drivers available, Student Transportation has had to look to other providers and vehicles in order to meet the growing number of transportation requests.

	2013- Nov	2014- Nov	2015- Nov	2016- Nov	2017- Mar	2018- Jun	2019- Jun	20-Jan
Student By Mode Totals:								
PPS AM ST Yellow Bus	587	566	533	623	628	655	613	553
FS AM ST Yellow Bus	533	486	479	343	363	311	331	341
SubTotal ST Yellow Bus Students:	1120	1052	1012	966	991	966	944	894
PPS AM TYPE 10 Students	0	0	0	0	5	57	38	32
FS AM TYPE 10 Students	0	0	0	0	0	36	40	106
SubTotal ST Type 10 Students:	0	0	0	0	5	93	78	138
SubTotal GT Students:	5,537	5,777	6,064	6,117	6,374	5800	6,443	5,895
"Cab" Students:	NA	72	58	104	110	151	224	251
Total AM ST Students:	1,120	1,124	1,070	1,070	1,106	1,210	1,246	1,283
Total AM ST & GT Students:	6,657	6,901	7,134	7,187	7,480	7,010	7,689	7,178
Route Totals:								
PPS AM Yellow Bus ST	64	63	59	70	70	74	72	76
FS AM Yellow Bus ST	92	90	75	59	56	46	44	46
SubTotal AM ST Yellow Bus Routes:	156	153	134	129	126	120	116	122
PPS AM TYPE 10						13	12	12
FS AM TYPE 10						9	9	25
GT Big Yellow Bus Routes	96	104	111	116	117	123	133	131
Total ST & GT Routes:	252	257	245	245	243	263	270	290

In the last three years, we have added 37 routes utilizing sedans and vans. These vehicles do not require a driver to maintain a CDL and are easier to recruit drivers for, especially in the traffic conditions in the Portland Metro area. However, they are limited in the number of students they can carry. We limit our vans to 4 students and our sedans to 2. (As opposed to a bus that may carry up to 12) Even with the addition of the new vans and sedans, our SPED routes have gone from only 156 to 159 over the last 7 years.

This past year we had over 20 routes delivering students to the Pioneer programs. Many of these students have one on one support in the school itself. We have had an increase in the number of students who are required to ride alone for safety reasons. The number has jumped from 5 students 4 years ago to 41 students this year.

All of these factors have impacted Student Transportation's ability to schedule transportation services for students using traditional yellow bus and drivers. The growth in students transported by cabs has gone from 72 students to over 250 in the last five years. In that timeframe, we have gone from 3 main contractors to now having contracts with 20 individual companies. Some of these companies are small, minority owned and have 1-5 vehicles and drivers. Some are big vendors like Broadway and Radio.

Each contract is a spend up contract and there is no guarantee of work. We bid each of our trips separately, looking for the lowest bid that meets our students' needs. The increase in vendors has helped us to ensure that we have enough capacity for our requests and that we have competition to keep rates down as much as possible. Each of the drivers and vehicles must meet ODE standards and requirements and each driver passes a PPS/ODE background check, attends a 4 hour class at PPS Transportation and takes a writing and driving test before they are certified. We do our best to ensure they are getting the same safe driver with these vendors as with our school bus drivers.

Year	Budget	SPED Expenses	GT Expenses	Amount
14_2015	\$1,031,000.00	\$854,871.65	\$29,051.76	\$883,923.41
15_2016	\$1,031,000.00	\$1,000,770.68	\$21,803.10	\$1,022,573.78
16_2017	\$1,031,000.00	\$1,431,096.35	\$70,456.90	\$1,501,553.25
17_2018	\$1,031,000.00	\$1,880,627.46	\$351,577.31	\$2,232,204.77
18_2019	\$1,031,000.00	\$1,982,063.33	\$322,941.16	\$2,305,004.49
19_2020	\$1,031,000.00	\$1,431,996.49	\$209,330.63	\$1,641,327.12

Student Transportation will always look to provide a safe, effective and cost efficient model of transportation services. As we struggle with drivers and the ever expanding demand on our resources, cabs will continue to be part of our system. It is our hope though, that we will be able to lessen our reliance on them and move back towards yellow bus routes in the future.