



City of Boston, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor
Michelle Wu

TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Dear City Councilors:

In Response to a 17F request filed by your Honorable Body on November 28, 2022.

Re: Relative to the BPS Transportation.

Sincerely,

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston



Office of the Superintendent

Dr. Samuel DePina, Deputy Superintendent of Operations

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January 24, 2023

Boston City Council
One City Hall Square, 5th floor
Boston City Hall
Boston, MA 02201

Re: 17F

Dear City Councilors,

Attached please find responses to Docket 1421: *Order requesting certain information under 17F regarding Boston Public School Busses* filed by City Councilor Erin Murphy on November 30, 2022.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samuel DePina".

Sam DePina
Deputy Superintendent of Operations



TO: Boston City Council
FROM: Daniel Rosengard, Deputy Director of Transportation
DATE: December 19, 2022
SUBJECT: 17F Responses and BPS Transportation Follow-up Question

The following responses are from the Boston Public Schools (BPS) to a 17F filed by At-Large Boston City Councilor Erin Murphy. The 17F passed the City Council on Wednesday, December 7, 2022.

The last response in this memo is the answer to a question submitted by City Councilor and Committee Chair Julia Mejia following a hearing of the City Council's Government Accountability, Transparency & Accessibility Committee on Docket 0725: Order for a hearing regarding the BPS Transportation System held on Thursday, November 10, 2022.

17F Questions and Responses

1. *The number of students each day that did not get picked up by their assigned school bus since September 9th, 2022.*

- a. *The number of students across the system*
- b. *The number of students by school*

BPS currently transports approximately 22,000 BPS and non-BPS students across the City to and from school each day. BPS does not track individual student ridership. The BPS Transportation Operations and Customer Service teams work closely with Transdev and with families to ensure all buses service all assigned stops on-time on a daily basis. Students may not be picked up by their assigned school bus for two primary reasons:

1. The bus is uncovered, meaning a driver is not available at the scheduled time. (Additional information and data on uncovered buses is provided in the response to question 4.)
2. The driver misses the student's stop, either due to not having a monitor (for a monitor-required student) or due to operational error.



Any time a stop is identified as missed, either by the BPS or Transdev teams or due to a confirmed report from a parent/guardian or school staff, the BPS Operations team works with Transdev Operations to ensure the issue is flagged and resolved going forward. This includes progressive discipline for drivers with multiple missed stops. Missed stops were highest on September 8 and 9 (the first two days of BPS), September 12 and 13 (the first two days of BPS for K0-K2 students), and November 14 and 15 (the first two days after the drivers' rebid). Missed stops also are often higher on Wednesdays, the day that transportation assignment changes take effect each week. Eliminating missed stops continues to be a key focus of BPS and Transdev Operations teams.

Backup buses are also provided, upon a family's request, if their stop is missed.

The attached spreadsheet lists, by day, the number of confirmed missed stops, so far for SY22-23.

Data for this question, and subsequent questions, is provided from August 11, 2022 through December 9, 2022. BPS Transportation services both BPS and non-BPS schools, and August 11 was the date that the first non-BPS school serviced by BPS Transportation began their 2022-23 school year.

2. *The number of times a backup bus needed to be sent out*
 - a. *The number of students across the system*
 - b. *The number of students by school*

BPS provides backup buses, upon request, for students who are not picked up by their assigned school bus due to the reasons described in the response to question 1.

The attached spreadsheet lists, by day, the number of backup buses sent out.

3. *The actual time the students arrived at school if they were on a late bus.*
 - a. *The number of students across the system*
 - b. *The number of students by school*

BPS does not have data on bus student arrival times available by student or by school. Bus arrivals are tracked at the route level.

Approximately 22,000 students are currently routed for bus transportation, across all schools that BPS Transportation services (BPS and non-BPS). So far in SY22-23 (as



of 12/9/2022), 88% of AM buses have arrived on time, 98% have arrived within 15 minutes of on-time, and 99% have arrived within 30 minutes of on-time. On average, an estimated 2,640 students (12% of bus students) per day arrive after the bell, an estimated 440 students (2% of bus students) per day arrive more than 15 minutes after the bell, and an estimated 220 students (1% of bus students) per day arrive more than 30 minutes after the bell as a result of yellow bus transportation delays.

The attached spreadsheet also lists, by day, the percentage of AM buses that arrived on time, within 15 minutes of on-time, and within 30 minutes of on-time, so far for SY22-23.

4. How many of these students miss an entire day due to unreliable bussing.

a. The number of students across the system

b. The number of students by school

BPS Transportation tracks uncovered buses at the route level.

Approximately 22,000 students are currently routed for bus transportation, across all schools that BPS Transportation services (BPS and non-BPS). So far in SY22-23 (as of 12/9/2022), 213 AM bus trips have been uncovered (without a driver available at the scheduled time) out of 90,686 scheduled AM bus trips. This represents 0.23% of all scheduled bus trips. BPS Transportation communicates to families through a robocall / robotext system anytime a bus is uncovered.

An estimated 51.7 students per day (0.23% of bus students) are on an uncovered AM bus, meaning their bus did not have a driver available at the scheduled time. This does not necessarily mean that all of these students missed school. BPS Transportation provides students with backup buses upon request if their bus is uncovered or their stop is missed, and students may have also been transported to school through other means.

The attached spreadsheet also lists, by day, the number of uncovered AM bus trips.

Docket 0725 Follow-up Question

How does BPS compensate undocumented parents without social security numbers when they have to pay out of pocket for transportation to/from school?



BPS is a government agency and is required to track the expenditure of public funds. A social security number or tax identification number is required for reimbursement by BPS and the City of Boston. This is due to requirements for use of city funds by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Additionally, BPS and the City of Boston are not allowed to use city funds for gift cards, as directed by the Division of Local Services in the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

Notwithstanding, the City of Boston and Boston Public Schools are in the process of creating an alternative method to reimburse individuals who do not have a Tax ID or SSN for the cost of special education transportation when BPS special education transportation fails. Families may contact the Office of Special Education and/or the Office of the Legal Advisor for support in being reimbursed until the finalized process for reimbursement without Tax ID or SSN is established and communicated to families.

BPS is currently in negotiations with a rideshare company to secure a contract for a platform that will allow BPS Transportation employees to dispatch appropriate and handicap accessible ride-share services to families so that families of special education students who have transportation as a related service in their IEPs do not incur out-of-pocket expenses in the event a route is not covered.

