



## Ann Arbor Public Schools



### **Transportation Working Group Report**

#### **Board of Education**

Regular Board Meeting

December 19, 2012

7:00 p.m.

#### **Board of Education**

Deb Mexicotte, *President*

Christine Stead, *Vice President*

Andy Thomas, *Secretary*

Irene Patalan, *Treasurer*

Susan Baskett, *Trustee*

Simone Lightfoot, *Trustee*

Glenn Nelson, *Trustee*

**Patricia P. Green, Ph.D.**

*Superintendent*

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## **Transportation Working Group Members**



**Patricia P. Green, Ph.D.**

*Superintendent*

**Glenn Nelson**

*Board of Trustees*

**Simone Lightfoot**

*Board of Trustees*

**Robert Allen**

*Deputy Superintendent for Operations*

**Alesia Flye**

*Deputy Superintendent for Instructional Services*

**David Comsa**

*Deputy Superintendent for Human Resources and General Counsel*

**Dawn Linden**

*Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education*

**Robyne Thompson, Ph.D.**

*Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education*

**Elaine Brown, Ph.D.**

*Assistant Superintendent for SISS*

**Liz Margolis**

*Director of Communications*

**Randy Trent**

*Executive Director of Physical Properties*

**Michael Madison**

*Quad A Representative*

**Steve Powers**

*City Administrator, City of Ann Arbor*

**Pat Cawley**

*Traffic Engineer, City of Ann Arbor*

**Craig Hupy**

*Public Services, City of Ann Arbor*

**Matt Warba**

*Field Operations, City of Ann Arbor*

**John Seto**

*Chief of Police, Ann Arbor Police Department*

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## Transportation Working Group Members



**Jamie Adkins**

*Administrative Officer, AAPD*

**James Kosteva**

*Community Relations Director, Office of VP for Government Relations, U of M*

**Peter Sweatman**

*Director, U of M Transportation Research Institute*

**Michael Ford**

*Chief Executive Officer, AATA*

**Chris White**

*Manager of Service Development, AATA*

**Mary Stasiak**

*Manager of Community Relations, AATA*

**Justin Fenwick**

*Business Transit Coordinator, AATA*

**Brian Marcel**

*Assistant Superintendent for Business Services, WISD*

**Tom Moore**

*Transportation Director, WISD*

**Elena Yadykina**

*Traffic Engineer, Washtenaw County Road Commission*

**Brent Schlack**

*Traffic & Safety Sr. Project Manager, Washtenaw County Road Commission*

**Bonnie Billups**

*Executive Director, Peace Neighborhood*

**Amy Pachera**

*Board President, Peace Neighborhood*

**Martine Perreault**

*AAPS Transportation Safety Committee*

**Donna Lasinski**

*Chair, AAPS Parent Teacher Organization Council (PTOC)*

**Bryan Johnson**

*Chair, AAPS Black Parent Support Group*

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## Goal for the Group



The goal for this group was to study and report on the financial sustainability of student transportation.

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## Objectives



1. Identify options for transporting AAPS students who qualify for transportation services.
2. Collect and review information and data pertaining to the identified options.
3. Analyze the elements of these options.

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## Transportation Cost Information (Gross)



Transportation of Homeless Students	\$0.165 million
Transportation of Special Education Students	\$1.950 million
Transportation of General Education Students	\$4.845 million
Total Gross Transportation Costs	\$6.960 million

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## Transportation Cost Information (Net)



Transportation of Homeless Students	\$0.165 million
Transportation of Special Education Students	\$0.577 million
Transportation of General Education Students	\$4.845 million
Total Gross Transportation Costs	\$5.587 million

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## Legal Requirements



- The law prohibits AAPS from eliminating transportation of homeless and special education students

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## Transportation Cost By Level



High Schools	\$0.768 million
Middle Schools	\$1.072 million
Elementary Schools	\$1.325 million
Pre-School	\$0.336 million
Other (e.g. mid-day, after school)	\$0.599 million
Total Gross transportation costs	\$4.100 million

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## Transportation Options



1. **Contract / Privatization**
  - Numerous districts are outsourcing services and private contractors are increasing their returns reducing any savings.
  - Consolidation savings have already been realized through WISD.
2. **Pedestrian Infrastructure Improvement**
  - Reduce safety bussing by prioritizing areas and requesting the City to address sidewalk gaps.
  - Placement of Crossing Guards in critical areas to replace safety bussing.
3. **Re-Routing**
  - Survey community, parents, and staff for eliminating transportation and consider information in future decision-making.
  - Addressing start times, common stops and increased use of AATA would make rerouting more feasible with additional savings.

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## Transportation Options



4. **Change School Start Times and Consolidate Grade Levels on Busses**
  - Adjusting the 3-tier bussing system or switching middle and high school times does not prove to have significant savings.
  - Survey parents and community at the elementary, middle and high school level regarding a 15-minute adjustment to the high school start time.
5. **Greater Use of Common Stops**
  - Common stops are locations where buses pick up and drop off students from an area surrounding the location of the common stop.
  - Common stops are currently used for high school students and could be initiated for middle school students.
6. **Increased Use of AATA Bus Routes**
  - AATA currently provides three secondary routes.
  - The most challenging needs are outside the AATA route system where there is no bussing or pedestrian sidewalks.

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## Transportation Options



7. **Increased Walk Zones for :**
  - a. **Elementary Schools**
    - Must provide safe infrastructure for students to walk 2 miles.
    - Cannot increase walking zone from 1.5 to 2 miles legally.
  - b. **Middle Schools**
    - Must provide safe infrastructure for students to walk 2 miles.
    - Cannot increase walking zone from 1.5 to 2 miles legally.
  - c. **High Schools**
    - Must provide safe infrastructure for students to walk 2 miles.
    - Cannot increase walking zone from 1.5 to 2 miles legally.

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## Transportation Options



### 8. Eliminate Choice Bussing for All Students

- Choice bussing: Students who are not attending school within their home school boundary.
- There are approximately 60 routes that transport these students. Charging for Choice bussing is not a legal option.

### 9. Eliminate All Transportation Except What is Legally Required

- Leave this option open for reconsideration over the next 5 years.
- This would give the community a forewarning of what the future may bring.

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## Options That Were Not Feasible



### 1. Utilize University of Michigan Busses

- University bus routes do not match well with the needs of most AAPS students. Would only be available to a small number of students in the Pioneer and Huron areas.
- This option would not reduce transportation costs or have a significant positive impact if pursued.

### 2. Vanpools for Student Transportation

- AATA owns vehicles, riders pay \$79 per rider and for fuel costs.
- This option would not reduce transportation costs or have a significant positive impact if pursued.

### 3. Facilitate Subscription, Private Transportation Services

- State law does not allow the school district to charge for student transportation. Parent groups would need to organize and facilitate the service.
- This option would not reduce transportation costs or have a significant positive impact if pursued.

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## Recommendations



### 1. Pedestrian Infrastructure Improvements

- Reduce safety busing by reviewing conditions and improving infrastructure. Maximize the use of Crossing Guards with elimination of routes.

### 2. Re-Routing

- Continue to review routes and safety bussing to make as efficient as possible. Gather information from the community, building staff, bus drivers and supervisors to help with this process. Rerouting, common stops, and start times could create savings but must be considered collectively in order to provide significant savings.

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## Recommendations



### 4. Increased Use of AATA Bus Routes

- Transfer AAPS routes to AATA where possible. Include middle school routes as well as high school. Provide more community education/information to take advantage of AATA bussing at student expense.

### 5. Eliminate Choice Bussing for All Students

- The elimination of all choice bussing or nothing due to equity issues.

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## Parting Thoughts of Committee Members



1. Elimination of all transportation is not consistent with the District's educational goals.
2. The community must be educated on the financial sustainability of transportation that could be eliminated in future years. Communicate openly with greater understanding.
3. Elimination of transportation could likely increase the achievement gap. Families needing the support will be affected the most when reducing costs.
4. Changes in the School State Aid Act may have potential changes in Michigan that could increase costs or potentially reduce costs.
5. Maximize efficiency in all areas of service with the least amount of implications.
6. The option of eliminating all student transportation within the next 3-5 years be kept open (except which is legally required.) There may be a need to eliminate transportation on a gradual basis.
7. Financial stability is still an issue.
8. Maximum savings of \$5M will occur only if elimination of all transportation. Substantial savings can't be gained by eliminating pieces.
9. Deliver of service will change in the future.

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