



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF OPERATIONS
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION
501 North Dixon Street / Portland, OR 97227
Telephone: (503) 916-

Date: April 25, 2023
To: School Board
From: Dan Jung, Chief Operating Officer
Teri Brady, Director of Student Transportation
Subject: Student Transportation Supplemental Transportation Plan Update

BACKGROUND

The State of Oregon requires that school districts provide transportation to primary students who live more than 1 mile from their neighborhood elementary school and to secondary students who live more than 1.5 miles from their neighborhood middle or high school. The state also requires that transportation be provided to areas inside the distance boundary where students face hazards in walking to school. Hazardous conditions are determined and approved by the local school district and are based on health or safety reasons. Expenses incurred in providing this required transportation qualify for reimbursement from the State School Transportation Fund.

The PPS Student Transportation Department has previously established the hazardous areas for the existing school boundaries based on physical characteristics of the streets being walked or crossed. Criteria looked at include, but are not limited to, the availability of protected walking areas, the speed and number of vehicles traveling along roadways and whether there are controlled pedestrian crossings at intersections.

The last formal submission of a Supplemental Plan update from PPS to the Oregon Department of Education occurred in 2007. ODE has asked for an update to reflect current school boundaries and service changes made to reflect new streets and traffic patterns. The process for submissions are outlined in Oregon Revised Statute and Administrative Rule as outlined below.

RELATED POLICIES/BEST PRACTICES

State ORS 327.043 outlines when school districts are required to provide transportation services

State OAR 581-023-0040 defines "Supplemental Plan" and its requirements

Board Policy 4.10.100 outlines student transportation and eligibility, including designation of hazardous walking areas.

ANALYSIS OF SITUATION

With the work of the Southeast Guiding Coalition regarding school boundaries and balancing school enrollments, the need for transportation and safe access to schools was a frequent concern of parents and families. This fact, along with the recognized impact of increased traffic, homelessness, and the pattern of pedestrian injuries and fatalities on our streets has highlighted the need for PPS Student Transportation to update the criteria and lens with which we view our designation of “hazardous” areas.

The previous plan, as outlined above, was developed in the early 1990’s and has not always taken into consideration the increased distractions and driver behaviors of the current day. As technology has increased and data collection/analysis has improved, it has been apparent that we needed to change our assessment model.

Over the last several years, PPS has been working on a database and software that can be updated with existing infrastructure layers and utilizing data from our City, County and Metro partners. This new software has been built and tested to produce expected results based on specific criteria. As infrastructure changes and/or boundaries are adjusted, scenarios can be ran to provide updated maps in a sustainable manner to ensure the District remains in compliance with our supplemental plan.

The first phase of our update focuses on the attendance boundaries and schools that were impacted by the SEGC balancing work that will be implemented with the fall of 2023/23 school year. This area of focus was identified due to the increased changes and stressors already being placed upon these families during the process.

Phases 2 and 3 will focus on the schools in the McDaniel, Grant, Jefferson and Roosevelt clusters and then the remainder of the PPS District respectfully.

FISCAL IMPACT

Phase 1 analysis and implementation of the new criteria will result in an overall increase of students eligible for bus service. We have zero students in the affected school boundaries that will be losing eligibility and there are 677 students who are gaining eligibility. Student Transportation will be able to utilize several existing routes with light loads and shift other buses due to boundary changes to reduce the actual number of added services needed to 1 additional bus. The cost for this bus is estimated at \$110,000 (\$33,000 after 70% reimbursement)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

The communities impacted by this first phase of the update have been engaged within the SEGC work. Families were given the chance to give feedback on major street crossings and other safety concerns when discussing new boundaries. Additionally, Transportation staff have been onsite during a variety of School Community Building meetings and activities throughout February 2023 and March 2023. Parents were able to ask more specific questions regarding transportation eligibility based on their choice of school attendance. Community engagement

will continue with Transportation staff working to be present at future school events to ensure families are aware of changes and can ask their individual questions.

Student Transportation worked with our partners at City of Portland Vision Zero and the Safe Routes to School Bureau to ensure criteria used for evaluation was based on current practices and data driven models.

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION / EVALUATION

Bus stops and routes will be scheduled to accommodate the newly designated service eligibility areas with the start of the Fall 2023/24 school year. Bus routes for our general education students are finalized in early to mid-August and posted online.

BOARD OPTIONS WITH ANALYSIS

The Board has the option to approve the Supplemental Transportation Plan update and move our district services into compliance with Oregon Revised Statute. The new plan ensures students are not required to cross high crash corridors or navigate intersections that place vulnerable populations at risk. With the District Board approval, plan submission and State Board approval, new service to areas within the designated distance walk boundaries will be eligible for general fund reimbursement of 70%.

The Board also has the option to not approve the Supplemental Transportation Plan update and not accept changes to our criteria for assessing safe walking and crossing conditions. If the plan is not approved, staff will be required to create a report for ODE that outlines our current conditions only and any new service for families would not be eligible for general fund reimbursement.

CONNECTION TO BOARD GOALS

With the new criteria utilized for the Supplemental Transportation Plan Update, Student transportation is helping to remove barriers for families to get to their school and have access to their education and services. Our historically underserved families are more highly impacted due to their residential area of the district and how the lack of infrastructure investment has created unsafe conditions for them to travel safely to and from school buildings.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the School Board approve this Supplemental Plan update and authorizes plan submission to the Oregon Department of Education State Board.

As a member of the PPS Executive Leadership Team, I have reviewed this staff report.

_____ *(Initials)*

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Supplemental Transportation Plan: Phase 1
- B. STPU presentation for F&O committee
- C. Summary of impacted schools and students