

# SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION STUDY 2010-2011

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## **SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION STUDY 2010-2011**

### **Background**

For the past several years the Massachusetts Legislature and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have funded initiatives to reduce the cost of out of district Special Education transportation costs. These efforts have continued to meet with great success. In an effort to further enhance, support, and create greater efficiencies it is proposed that a survey be conducted of the private day and collaborative programs to determine actual ridership at the program site.

According to the October 1, 2009 Special Education Report, 10,557 students were attending 389 private or collaborative Special Education programs at the beginning of FY10. Special education administrators have highlighted that they do not necessarily know if students from neighboring communities are attending the same out of district placement as students from their town. They further have noted that they do not always know if there are students from neighboring towns attending the same out of district program, if these students are on the same vehicle.

### **Purpose**

As part of the State's on-going efforts to reduce and create efficiencies in the area of Special Education Transportation the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, (DESE) funded an initiative that would collect data from private day and collaborative programs on the actual ridership by vehicle at the school site. This data would be sorted by district, county, and program to allow special education administrators who are not part of a collaborative transportation network to determine; if route sharing does exist and they are not aware of it and/or if route sharing among neighboring districts should be initiated.

### **Process**

The criteria used for selecting programs to participate in the project was established by using the DESE October 1 Census of Special Education Placements from FY2009 to identify programs with students attending from fifteen or more districts. A survey was sent to 104 targeted private day and collaborative programs to collect data to include; vehicle type, vendor name, number of students, home district for each student on the vehicle, and if a monitor is required.

It is important to stress that not all routes and students can be combined, this data is for informational purposes and may not result in a cost savings. There are many factors that affect special education transportation services and this should be taken into consideration when discussing route combinations.

During the data collection phase several programs were identified as being primarily residential, no longer operating, or having low student population. In the case of several collaboratives, data was indicated under one program code on the State report; these programs were removed from the target list. The revised target list resulted in 98 target programs with 36 programs responding.

The information collected was input into a Microsoft Access Data Base which was developed to produce the desired outcomes. The county within the state each district is located was assigned to determine geographic location.

## **Outcomes**

The data is represented by students from 233 school districts attending 25 private day programs and 11 collaborative programs, utilizing 134 service providers transporting 2,036 students on 829 vehicles.

The service providers are represented by 87 private vendors, 8 collaborative providers, and 39 public school transportation providers. Not included on this list are the collaboratives that coordinate transportation services on behalf of their member districts these include; the Assabet Valley Collaborative, LABBB/EDCO, BICO and GLEC.

The list of school districts and transportation service providers are included in this report, Addendum A and B.

The information generated from this project will assist districts in assessing their current transportation routes to ensure the per day cost reflects the actual ridership and to create additional multi-district route opportunities when possible.

Individual district reports provide information on the ridership to a particular program based on the information obtained from the receiving school in this study. A sample report is shown below, (Exhibit 1). Each individual box represents a vehicle, labeled "Vehicle Details", each vehicle in the data base is assigned its own unique number. The vehicle type was requested and is represented by, "M" – caravan, "S" – sedan, "V" – eight or twelve passenger van, "B" – yellow school bus and "W" – wheelchair van. This information is reflected on the program reports when completed by the receiving school. The district shown in Exhibit 1 is the Marshfield Public Schools, the first box, vehicle number 880, shows that Marshfield shares the vehicle with Hingham Public Schools attending a Pilgrim Collaborative Program, the vendor is S.C.O. The district may or may not be aware of a ride share and should verify that a cost benefit is realized. The district may want to review the routes not being shared to determine if potential opportunities exist to cost share with a neighboring district. Marshfield Public Schools shares a route to the Pilgrim Collaborative and the May Center; the routes to the North River Collaborative, CNS Pathways and Learning Prep School are not being shared.

A second report is provided by receiving school, (Exhibit 2). The data is broken down by County, Vendor, Vehicle Number, Vehicle Type, Number of Students and District. In this case Marshfield Public Schools has a single run to CNS Pathways, they would review the report for CNS; Duxbury Public Schools is also sending a student.

**Sample District Report**

**Exhibit 1**

**School District Data**

District

**Marshfield**

Vendor: S.C.O.

Vehicle Details			
Vehicle#	District	Program	# Students
880	Hingham	Pilgrim	2
880	Marshfield	Pilgrim	1
Total Students:			3

Ride share

Vendor: RAZ

Vehicle Details			
Vehicle#	District	Program	# Students
871	Marshfield	North River Sch	2
Total Students:			2

Vendor: Braintree Blue Cab

Vehicle Details			
Vehicle#	District	Program	# Students
630	Braintree	May Ctr	2
630	Marshfield	May Ctr	1
Total Students:			3

Ride share

Vendor: RAZ

Vehicle Details			
Vehicle#	District	Program	# Students
377	Marshfield	CNS Pathways	1
Total Students:			1

Single district runs

Vendor: RAZ

Vehicle Details			
Vehicle#	District	Program	# Students
235	Marshfield	Learning Prep	4
Total Students:			4

**CNS Pathways**

**Location: Belmont**

<u>County</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Vehicle #</u>	<u>Vehicle Type</u>	<u># Students</u>	<u>District</u>
Barnstable	Cape Cod Collab	383		1	Sandwich
Essex	Mass Tran	381		1	Gloucester
Middlesex	N. Reading	371		1	North Reading
	N. Reading	371		1	Stoneham
	N. Reading	371		1	Wilmington
	Malden Taxi	372		2	Everett
	YCN	373		2	Newton
	SP&R Transp	374		1	Cambridge
	C.A.S.E.	375		1	Bedford
	MCJ Transportation	376		1	Natick
	AR-BEL Trans	378		1	Arlington
	AR-BEL Trans	378		1	Belmont
	ACCEPT	382		2	Framingham
Plymouth	RAZ	377		1	Marshfield
	Judco	379		1	Duxbury
Suffolk	First Student	370		1	Boston
	Broadway Trans	380		1	Revere
Worcester	Gokey & Quinn	384		2	Leominster

Potential Cost Share

**Total Number of Vehicles:**

**15**

**Total Number of Students:**

**22**

**Potential Cost Savings**

The example below is illustrative of the potential cost savings the Marshfield and Duxbury Public Schools could potentially realize if they were to share the route. The cost of the route would be divided by the number of districts on that route. In this example the current per day cost is based on what the Northeast Network currently charges, \$215.00 per vehicle per day, the cost share amount is the day rate divided by two.

**Example A:**

<u>District</u>	<u>Current per Day Cost*</u>	<u>Cost Share**</u>	<u>Annual Savings 180 Days</u>
Marshfield PS	\$215.00	\$107.50	\$19,350.00
Duxbury PS	\$215.00	\$107.50	<u>\$19,350.00</u>
<b>Combined Savings:</b>			<b><u>\$38,700.00</u></b>

\*Hypothetical figure based on Northeast Network current rate.

\*\*Per Day cost divided by number of districts.

**Current Cost Savings**

The “Program Report” illustrates the actual ridership at the program site, Exhibit 3. Currently the North Reading, Stoneham and Wilmington School Districts cost share the route to CNS Pathways. In this example the districts individually realize a cost avoidance of \$25,812 per year. Based on actual figures provided by the Northeast Network the districts currently pay \$71.60 per day, if they were to be transported on separate vehicles the per day cost would be \$215.

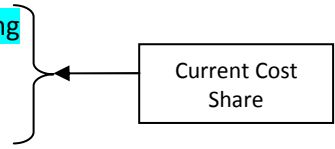
**Example B:**

<u>District</u>	<u>Current per Day Cost</u>	<u>Cost Avoidance Per Day</u>	<u>Annual Savings 180 Days</u>
North Reading PS	\$71.60	\$215.00	\$25,812.00
Stoneham PS	\$71.60	\$215.00	\$25,812.00
Wilmington PS	\$71.60	\$215.00	<u>\$25,812.00</u>
<b>Combined Cost Avoidance (Savings):</b>			<b><u>\$77,436.00</u></b>

**CNS Pathways**

**Belmont**

<u>County</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Vehicle #</u>	<u>Vehicle Type</u>	<u># Students</u>	<u>District</u>
Barnstable	Cape Cod Collab	383		1	Sandwich
Essex	Mass Tran	381		1	Gloucester
Middlesex	N. Reading	371		1	North Reading
	N. Reading	371		1	Stoneham
	N. Reading	371		1	Wilmington
	Malden Taxi	372		2	Everett
	YCN	373		2	Newton
	SP&R Transp	374		1	Cambridge
	C.A.S.E.	375		1	Bedford
	MCJ Transportation	376		1	Natick
	AR-BEL Trans	378		1	Arlington
	AR-BEL Trans	378		1	Belmont
	ACCEPT	382		2	Framingham
Plymouth	RAZ	377		1	Marshfield
	Judco	379		1	Duxbury
Suffolk	First Student	370		1	Boston
	Broadway Trans	380		1	Revere
Worcester	Gokey & Quinn	384		2	Leominster



**Total Number of Vehicles:**

**15**

**Total Number of Students:**

**22**

# Vehicles per Program (by Vehicle)

EXHIBIT 4

## Beacon HS

## Location: Watertown

Vehicle#	Vendor	Vehicle Type	County	Districts	# Students	
21	ACCEPT	M	Middlesex	Framingham	2	} Collaborative provider
	ACCEPT	M	Middlesex	Holliston	1	
	ACCEPT	M	Middlesex	Hopkinton	1	
	ACCEPT	M	Middlesex	Natick	2	
	ACCEPT	M	Norfolk	Medfield	1	
22	Atlantic Express	M	Worcester	Millbury	1	
23	Boston PS		Suffolk	Boston	2	
24	C.A.S.E.		Middlesex	Acton-Boxborough	2	} Collaborative provider
	C.A.S.E.		Middlesex	Concord-Carlisle	2	
	C.A.S.E.		Worcester	Harvard	1	
25	J.S.C. Trans		Middlesex	Newton	3	
	J.S.C. Trans		Norfolk	Wellesley	3	
	J.S.C. Trans		Worcester	Northboro-Southboro	2	
26	Kiessling		Bristol	Easton	2	
27	LBK		Essex	Hamilton-Wenham	1	
28	Malden Taxi		Middlesex	Everett	1	
29	McCarthy & Sons		Worcester	Nashoba	1	
30	Melrose PS		Middlesex	Melrose	2	
31	N. Reading		Middlesex	Reading	1	} Northeast Network
	N. Reading		Middlesex	Wakefield	1	
	N. Reading		Middlesex	Winchester	1	
	N. Reading		Middlesex	Woburn	1	
32	SP&R Transp		Middlesex	Somerville	1	
33	TLC		Norfolk	Milton	2	
34	WCT		Middlesex	Wayland	1	
35	YCN		Middlesex	Burlington	1	} BICO Collaborative
	YCN		Middlesex	Lexington	2	
	YCN		Middlesex	Waltham	1	
	YCN		Norfolk	Brookline	1	
	YCN		Norfolk	Dedham	2	
	YCN		Norfolk	Needham	1	
	YCN		Norfolk	Westwood	1	



## **Additional Reports**

Further examples of potential multi-district routes are included in this report. Program reports for every program in the study, sorted by county and by vehicle, and individual district reports are provided in the attached information.

## **Average Ridership**

The information generated from these reports was compiled into a spreadsheet to determine the average ridership by program, (Exhibit 5). This can be used to further evaluate programs with low ridership to determine if additional multi-district routes can be established. This will assist programs at the site level in easing congestion and enhance traffic flow at arrival and dismissal time. It should be noted that the type of vehicle used limits ridership, in cases where a wheelchair van is used or a smaller size vehicle ridership is limited. This information is for discussion purposes only and does not necessarily mean that cost effectiveness is not being realized.

**Average Ridership by Program**

**Exhibit 5**

<b>Program Name</b>	<b># Vendors</b>	<b># Vehicles/Routes</b>	<b># Students</b>	<b>Average Ridership</b>
<i>Private Day Programs</i>				
BC Campus	14	20	38	1.9
Beacon HS	15	15	47	3.1
Beverly Sch Deaf	9	18	32	1.8
Cardinal Cushing	16	16	31	1.9
Clarke Sch	6	14	26	1.9
CNS Pathways	15	15	22	1.5
Community Therapeutic	10	10	17	1.7
Cotting Sch	12	17	25	1.5
Devereux	10	17	35	2.1
Farr Academy	11	14	24	1.7
Gifford	27	30	93	3.1
Italian Home for Children	11	12	31	2.6
Landmark	16	25	53	2.1
League Sch	20	30	57	1.9
Learning Prep	31	58	214	3.7
Lighthouse	27	55	171	3.1
Manville Sch	21	38	92	2.4
May Ctr	32	36	65	1.8
NECC	24	35	59	1.7
Perkins Sch Blind	35	37	109	2.9
RCS Learning	12	15	28	1.9
St Ann's Home	7	14	50	3.6
The Learning Center	32	44	105	2.4
Victor School	7	8	12	1.5
Willie Ross	8	9	38	4.2
<i>Collaborative Programs</i>				
AVC Alt HS	7	15	48	3.2
CASE Colebrook HS	3	10	24	2.4
CASE Devel	14	54	114	2.1
CASE HSL	9	18	45	2.5
LABBB Arlington	9	11	27	2.5
LABBB Lexington	24	31	80	2.6
North River Sch	14	17	61	3.6
Pilgrim	8	15	40	2.7
READS Academy	11	17	45	2.6
READS DHH	20	20	42	2.1
South Coast Bridge	14	19	36	1.9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>829</b>	<b>2036</b>	
<b>AVERAGE</b>				<b>2.4</b>

**Conclusion**

The actual ridership data collected at the school site is a valuable resource for school districts as they strive to maintain costs in the area of special education transportation. It allows a district to determine if a ride share exists and they are receiving a cost benefit and to explore additional opportunities to cost share with contiguous communities. It is evident in reviewing the information that more can be done to combine routes and create additional savings. Hypothetically, if one cost share route between two districts was to be established, at a combined cost reduction of \$38,700 as shown in "Example A", the budget impact could be significant. The potential combined savings for the 36 programs could potentially be **\$1,393,200** (\$38,700 x 36).

**Considerations**

The data collection form should be revised to ensure accuracy and clear directions should be provided to the participating programs. Web access should be set up and maintained for districts to retrieve their individual district data and program summary data for schools they are transporting to, with access to support on how best to use the data. Also, school districts can review program data for all programs to facilitate transportation services for new placements.

It is highly recommended that districts include language in all contracts with special education transportation providers to allow a ride/cost share when appropriate at the sole discretion of the school district. It is imperative that districts are fully knowledgeable as to the daily route operation. The special education out of district contract should require vendors to report a detailed invoice that reflects a ride share with other districts. This should be monitored by the district on a regular basis. An invoice template is shown below.

SAMPLE INVOICE TEMPLATE

Rt #	Program Name	Student Last Name	Student First Name	Daily Vehicle Rate	Monitor Rate	Total Cost per Day	# Days	Total Due	Indicate name of shared district if applicable	# Students riding
302	Dearborn	Smith	Joe	\$72.00		\$72.00	18	\$1,296	Malden	1
		Jones	Paul						Peabody	1

**ADDENDUM A**

**Special Education Transportation Project: Districts Identified**

Abington	Chelsea	Hopkinton	New Bedford	Silver Lake
Acton	Chicopee	Hudson	Newburyport	Somerset
Acton-Boxborough	Clinton	King Philip	Newton	Somerville
Acushnet	Cohasset	Kingston	Norfolk	Southampton
Agawam	Concord	Lakeville	North Adams	Southborough
Amesbury	Concord-Carlisle	Lawrence	North Andover	Southbridge
Amherst	Danvers	Leicester	North Attleborough	Southwick-Tolland
Andover	Dartmouth	Leominster	North Brookfield	Spencer-E Brookfield
Arlington	Dedham	Lexington	North Middlesex	Springfield
Ashburnham-Westminster	Dighton-Rehoboth	Lincoln	North Reading	Stoneham
Ashland	Dover	Lincoln-Sudbury	Northampton	Stoughton
Athol-Royalston	Dracut	Littleton	Northboro-Southboro	Sturbridge
Attleboro	Dudley-Charlton Reg	Lowell	Northborough	Sudbury
Auburn	Duxbury	Ludlow	Northbridge	Sutton
Avon	East Bridgewater	Lunenburg	Norton	Swampscott
Ayer	Easthampton	Lynn	Norwell	Taunton
Barnstable	Easton	Lynnfield	Norwood	Tewksbury
Bedford	Everett	Lynnfield	Orange	Topsfield
Belchertown	Fairhaven	Malden	Oxford	Triton
Bellingham	Fall River	Manchester Essex Regional	Palmer	Tyngsborough
Belmont	Falmouth	Mansfield	Peabody	Uxbridge
Berkley	Fitchburg	Marblehead	Pembroke	Wachusett
Berlin	Foxborough	Marlborough	Pentucket	Wakefield
Berlin-Boylston	Framingham	Marshfield	Plainville	Walpole
Beverly	Franklin	Masconomet	Plymouth	Waltham
Billerica	Freetown	Mashpee	Quabbin	Wareham
Blackstone-Millville	Gardner	Mattapoissett	Quaboag Regional	Watertown
Boston	Georgetown	Maynard	Quincy	Wayland
Boxborough	Gill-Montague	Medfield	Randolph	Webster
Boxford	Gloucester	Medford	Reading	Wellesley
Boylston	Grafton	Medway	Revere	West Boylston
Braintree	Greenfield	Melrose	Rochester	West Bridgewater
Bridgewater-Raynham	Groton-Dunstable	Mendon-Upton	Rockland	West Springfield
Brimfield	Halifax	Methuen	Rockport	Westborough
Bristol County Agricultural	Hamilton-Wenham	Middleborough	Salem	Westfield
Brockton	Hampshire	Middleton	Sandwich	Weston
Brookline	Hanover	Milford	Saugus	Westwood
Burlington	Harvard	Millbury	Scituate	Weymouth
Cambridge	Haverhill	Millis	Seekonk	Whitman-Hanson
Canton	Hingham	Milton	Sharon	Wilmington
Carlisle	Holbrook	Nahant	Sherborn	Winchendon
Carver	Holliston	Nashoba	Sherborn	Winchester
Central Berkshire	Holyoke	Natick	Shirley	Winthrop
Chelmsford	Hopedale	Needham	Shrewsbury	Woburn
				Worcester
				Wrentham

**ADDENDUM B**

<b>PRIVATE VENDOR</b>		<b>COLLABORATIVE PROVIDER</b>	<b>PUBLIC SCHOOL</b>
87 Providers		8 Providers	39 Providers
AA Transportation	Marks	ACCEPT	Amherst PS
Action EMS	MART / Heritage	C.A.S.E	Attleboro PS
AR-BEL Trans	Mass Tran	Cape Cod Collab	Barnstable PS
Atlantic Express	McCarthy & Sons	LPVEC	Berkley PS
Bedford Charter	MCJ Transportation	MEC	Boston PS
Bill's Taxi	Mill City Transit	N. Shore Ed Consort.	Braintree PS
Braintree Blue Cab	MS 99	North River Collab	Carver PS
Broadway Trans	Mystic Services Inc	SWCEC	Danvers PS
Cape Taxi	N. Reading		Dartmouth PS
Churchill Trans	North Shore Shuttle		Easton PS
Clinton Livery	Northeast Network		Falmouth PS
CMK Wayland	NRC		Framingham PS
Community Action	NRT Bus		Freetown/Lakeville PS
Country Carriage	On Time Vans		Greenfield Van
D&R Transportation	RAZ		Groton Dunstable PS
Dee Bus	Response Transit		Hanover PS
Dunham	Ride Rite		Haverhill PS
First Call	Rite Way Transportation		Hopedale P.S.
First Choice	Royal Taxi		Malden PS
First Medical	S.C.O.		Marshfield P.S.
First Student	Safeway		Melrose PS
Fisher	SP&R Transp		Middleboro PS
Fox Transp	Spence		Millis PS
Fred Bus Co.	Statewide Trans		North Attleboro PS
Gokey & Quinn	Taunton Motor Coach		Norwood PS
Green Taxi	Tellstone & Sons		Oxford PS
H&L Bloom	TLC		Quincy PS
Heritage	TMC		Rockland PS
Hunter	Towne & Country		Sandwich PS
J & P Transportation	Travelers Transit		Seekonk PS
J & R Trans	Tremblay Bus Co		Sharon PS
J.S.C. Trans	Trombly Motor Coach		Southwick-Tolland PS
JAM Transp	Tyngsborough PS		Sutton PS
JBL	Van Pool		Swansea PS
JFK	Varneys		Tantasqua Reg
JSC/Wellesley PS	VHS Transport		Wareham PS
Judco	Village Transportation		Welllsey PS
Kabco	VSP		Westford PS
Keissling	W. Spence		Winthrop PS
KJ	WCT		
KTI	Whaling City		
LBK	YCN		
Lizak Bus Company	Yellow Cab of Norwood		
Malden Taxi			