



Transportation Services Plan

For 2022-23 and 2023-24

March 22, 2023

Introduction

Per Education Code (EC) Section 39800.1, as a condition of receiving apportionments for Transportation Services (under EC Section 41850.1), a local educational agency shall develop a plan describing the transportation services. The plan shall be presented and adopted by the governing board of the local educational agency on or before April 1, 2023. The plan may provide for the local educational agency to partner with a municipally owned transit system to provide service pursuant to this section to middle school and high school pupils. Nothing in a local educational agency's plan shall preclude a local educational agency from providing no-cost transit passes to pupils.

The Santa Maria-Bonita School District

The District is located along California's Central Coast, approximately halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles. The District operates primarily in the County of Santa Barbara ("Santa Barbara County"), but also serves the County of San Luis Obispo ("San Luis Obispo County" and, together with Santa Barbara County, the "Counties"). The District was formed on July 1, 1988 from the merger of the Santa Maria Elementary School District and the Bonita School District. The District provides public education within an approximately 48.2 square mile area, serving the City of Santa Maria and neighboring communities. The District operates twenty-one schools, including seventeen elementary schools and four junior high schools. Included in the District's seventeen elementary schools is Bill Libbon Elementary, which the District opened in August 2020. For more information, see "DISTRICT HISTORY, OPERATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION – State Funding of Education; State Budget Process – Enrollment, A.D.A. and LCFF." Total enrollment in the District was approximately 16,569 students in fiscal year 2021-22. As of the preparation of the District's first interim report for fiscal year 2022-23 (the "Fiscal Year 2022-23 First Interim Report"), total enrollment in the District is projected to be approximately 16,707 students in fiscal year 2022-23. The District operates under the jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara County Superintendent of Schools.

Vision

We are here to prepare children to be successful citizens.

District Core Values

We believe every person has value and potential.

We believe in the power of teaching.

We believe families are critical partners in a child's education.

We believe the greatest learning occurs in a safe environment.

We believe all students should be given the best education possible.

We believe in being advocates for our district's excellence.

We believe in dignity and respect for all.

Board Of Education

John Hollinshead, President

Ricardo Valencia, Vice President

Linda Cordero, Clerk

Luz Maria Cabral, Member

Ricky Lara, Member

District Administrators

Darren McDuffie, Ed.D., Superintendent

Matthew Beecher, Deputy Superintendent, Business Services

Melissa Dutra, Assistant Superintendent of Education Services

Patty Grady, Ed. D., Interim Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Transportation Services Leadership

Javier Cavazos Jr., Coordinator for Maintenance, Operations, Facilities and
Transportation, Santa Maria-Bonita School District

Patricia Van Buren, Location Manager, First Student, Inc.

Brig Summers, Area General Manager, First Student, Inc.

Description of Transportation Services

The Superintendent or designee is directed to develop procedures for the administration of transportation services for students to their school of residence. (BP 3540)

The Superintendent or designee shall design transportation routes and stops to promote the safety of students and maximum efficiency in the use of buses. (AR 3541)

Students who reside beyond a non-transportation distance listed below shall be eligible for transportation service to the school of their attendance area: Grades TK-8: 1.2 miles.

The District shall provide appropriate transportation services for a student with disabilities when the District is the student's District of residence, and the transportation services are required by his/her individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 accommodation plan. School bus route information shall be maintained for all regular and special education home-to-school bus runs. Each route shall show the route of travel, the pick-up and drop-off locations, and the expected time of departure from each location.

The District shall provide homeless students with transportation services comparable to those offered to other students at the school of attendance. If a homeless student moves to a residence that is in another attendance area within the district, the Superintendent or designee may arrange transportation that enables the student to continue attending the same school. If a homeless student attending school in this District moves to a residence that is in another adjacent District, the Superintendent or designee may arrange transportation that enables the student to continue attending the same school in this district. This transportation may be achieved through the transportation services of this District, the new District, an outside agency or an individual agreement with the family to reimburse the costs of transportation.

The criteria for bus route design is to provide a safe route to and from school, minimize miles driven, allow adequate time for schedules to be met, and to effectively utilize staff and equipment resources. Bus stops shall only be assigned within the transportation eligibility areas established. The District shall adjust and modify routes and schedules as appropriate to maintain an optimum level of transportation services. A complete file of all current bus schedules shall be maintained at the Maintenance and Operations Office and on the District website. The Transportation Department shall furnish each school with the current bus schedules for that school.

The respective schools shall maintain their files with the most current bus schedules as provided by the District.

Upon registration, the parents or guardians of all pupils not previously transported in a school bus or school pupil activity bus and who are in prekindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 6, inclusive, shall be provided with written information on school bus safety, and a list of school bus stops near each pupil's home.

Free Transportation for Unduplicated Pupils

Students receiving either General Education or Special Education transportation service, including Unduplicated Pupils -- defined as students who are low socio-economic, English learners, or foster youth -- will receive District transportation service at no charge.

Transportation Services will be Provided by an Independent Contractor

The District has been using an independent contractor for many years and plans to continue to use the expertise and focus of a professional provider to meet the needs of students into the future.

First Student - Transportation Service Provider

With more than a century of experience in providing safe and reliable transportation to students across the U.S. and Canada, First Student understands the priorities of today's K-12 community. First Student helps school districts build transportation solutions tailored to their community's needs. Their 50,500 dedicated employees complete 5 million student journeys per day. They are committed to our students and families and always keep safety in front of mind. Although First Student is a contracted transportation provider, they operate as an extension of the District. Collaboratively we provide transportation services for students.

Priority 1 - Transportation Services for Students with Special Needs, Homeless Students and Involuntary Transfers

The highest priority will be assigned to students with disabilities as specified in their individualized education program. This includes students in District and County operated programs that reside in the District boundaries. The District shall provide appropriate transportation services for a student with disabilities when the District is the student's District of residence, and the transportation services are required by his/her individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 accommodation plan.

School bus route information shall be maintained for all regular and special education home-to-school bus runs. Each route shall show the route of travel, the pick-up and drop-off locations, and the expected time of departure from each location.

The highest priority will also be assigned to students experiencing homelessness. Students experiencing homelessness that move to another place of residence in another school's attendance area or in an adjacent District will be transported to their original school free of charge. Finally The highest priority will be assigned to students being transferred from one school to another for the purpose of remaining within statutory class size caps.

Guidelines and Standards for Transportation Services: Bus ride time are less than 45 minutes, no more than 12 - 15 pupils at one time in a small school bus, and Students arrive at school 15 minutes before the attendance bell rings.

Priority 2 - Transportation Services for Students in Grades Transitional Kindergarten through Eighth Grade Living 1.2 Miles From Their School of Residence

Students living more than 1.2 miles from their school of residence will be assigned the next level of priority. In the current times, there is a significant scarcity of qualified bus drivers. This scarcity has required that tiers be created within this priority to determine how to allocate the drivers available in a way that provides reliable transportation services to families every day. In the past, transportation services had to be repeatedly canceled because of fluctuations in available drivers. This is to be avoided as it creates too much stress on families when students suddenly do not have a ride to school. The tiers are defined below:

1. Tier 1 - Furthest Distance and Dependence on Transportation
 - a. Bonita Elementary and Arellanes Jr High
 - i. Priority is based on the rural location of schools and the lack of safe walking paths
 - b. Liberty Elementary
 - i. Shared boundary and proximity to Arellanes Jr. High
2. Tier 2 - Very far distances from student homes
 - a. Taylor Elementary and Kunst Jr High
 - i. Priority is based on the safety of students crossing Hwy 101 on their path to school
3. Tier 3 - Far distances from student homes
 - a. Libbon Elementary and Fesler Jr High
 - i. Priority is based on the safety of students crossing wide intersections on busy roads and long walking distances to school.

- b. Miller Elementary
 - i. Shared boundary and proximity to Fesler Jr High
- 4. Tier 4
 - a. Rice Elementary, Tunnell Elementary, El Camino Jr High
 - i. Priority is based on the safety of students walking to school.
 - b. Battles Elementary and Jimenez Elementary
 - i. Priority is based on the safety of students walking to school.

Route Design

The criteria for bus route design is to provide a safe route to and from school, minimize miles driven, allow adequate time for schedules to be met, and to effectively utilize staff and equipment resources. Bus stops shall only be assigned within the transportation eligibility areas established. The District shall adjust and modify routes and schedules as appropriate to maintain an optimum level of transportation services. A complete file of all current bus schedules shall be maintained at the Maintenance and Operations Office and on the District website. The District shall furnish each school with the current bus schedules for that school. The respective schools shall maintain their files with the most current bus schedules as provided by the Transportation Department.

Current Service Design v. Model Service Design

The District started the School year with 21 Special Education routes, 10 General Education routes, and 2 White Vans for students experiencing homelessness. This design used 24 Local Drivers and 7 Out of Town Drivers employed by the contractor.

Currently, there are 23 Special Education routes, 10 General Education routes, and 2 White Vans for students experiencing homelessness. This design uses (33 Local Drivers, 7 were identified and trained during the year.

The District and FirstStudent are working towards a design that provides all of the services needed by the community. Together we are striving to have 25 Special Education routes which will allow for greater flexibility when students move during the year. We are also endeavoring to offer 20 General Education routes. This will provide transportation to Priority 1 and Priority 2 students and schools in Tiers 1-3, 4 White vans for students experiencing homelessness and allowing for flexibility when students move residences. Additionally, the best design will provide 2 Field Trip Buses, 3 Stand-by Substitute Drivers and a sense of confidence that every student who needs a bus ride to school is going to receive that ride every day.

Consultation

This plan has been developed with assistance and feedback received from many education partners. The District has collaborated with Site Leaders to identify the best use of resources for students' transportation needs. The District has partnered with Santa Maria Regional Transit to provide bus passes to students that reside outside the minimum transportation distance. The District and County Special Education departments have helped shape the transportation services for students with disabilities. The District values and actively responds to parent and community input. The California Highway Patrol frequently provides the District with guidance on safe bus stops for student use. Each of these partners have played an important role in providing the best services available to our students. The following list contains several of the opportunities when staff have engaged directly with these partners.

California Highway Patrol Transportation Meeting, 06/08/2022
Principal Advisory Meeting, 07/26/2022
Leadership Institute, 08/01/2022
Santa Maria Regional Transit Meeting, 08/08/2022
District Special Education Transportation Services Meeting , 08/16/2022
Teaching Learning - Saturday School Transportation, 08/23/2022
Bonita, Liberty & Arellanes Transportation Services Meeting, 09/20/2022
Taylor & Kunst Transportation Services Meeting, 09/21/2023
Pupil Personnel - McKinney Vento Transportation Services Meeting,
09/27/2022
County Special Education Transportation Services Meeting, 10/25/2022
Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District, 03/11/2023
Parent Advisor Meeting, 03/13/2023
Office Managers Transportation Meeting, 03/15/2023
SMEEA Transportation Services Meeting, 03/15/2023
Student Advisor Transportation Meeting, 03/17/2023
Tunnell School Site Council Meeting, 03/20/23

Transportation Services Allowance Calculation

For the 2022-23 school year

The estimated Home To School Transportation (HTS) Reimbursement Allowance is \$2,101,206.50, reduced by the amount of the current Transportation Add-on of \$528,887.00 provides an estimated HTS reimbursement allowance of \$1,572,319.50.

Revenue Calculation		
Total 2021-22 Transportation Expenses (Function 3600)		3,502,010.84
Less Capital Outlay (object 6XXX, Function 3600)		-
Less Nonagency Expenditures (Goal 7110,7150, Function 3600)		-
Estimated 60% Reimbursement		2,101,206.50
Less 2021-22 Transportation add-on (from LCFF Calculator)		528,887.00
Total Revenue (Object 8590, Resource 0000)		1,572,319.50
Expenditures and Other Financing Uses		
2000-2999 - Classified Salaries		-
3000-3999 - Employee Benefits		-
4000-4999 - Books and Supplies		1,500.00
5000-5999 - Services and other Operating Expenditures		3,500,510.84
6000-6999 - Capital Outlay		-
7000-7999 - Other Outgo		-
Total Expenditures		3,502,010.84

For the 2023-24 school year

The estimated Home To School Transportation (HTS) Reimbursement Allowance is \$4,060,285.80, reduced by the amount of the current Transportation Add-on of \$528,887.00 provides an estimated HTS reimbursement allowance of \$3,531,398.80.

Revenue Calculation		
Total 2022-23 Projected Transportation Expenses (Function 3600)		6,767,143.00
Less Capital Outlay (object 6XXX, Function 3600)		-
Less Nonagency Expenditures (Goal 7110,7150, Function 3600)		-
Estimated 60% Reimbursement		4,060,285.80
Less 2022-23 Projected Transportation add-on (from LCFF Calculator)		528,887.00
Total Revenue (Object 8590, Resource 0000)		3,531,398.80
Expenditures and Other Financing Uses (2022-23 Estimate)		
2000-2999 - Classified Salaries		-
3000-3999 - Employee Benefits		-
4000-4999 - Books and Supplies		-
5000-5999 - Services and other Operating Expenditures		6,767,143.00
6000-6999 - Capital Outlay		-
7000-7999 - Other Outgo		-
Total Expenditures		6,767,143.00

EDUCATION CODE - EDC

TITLE 2. ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION [33000 - 65001]

(Title 2 enacted by Stats. 1976, Ch. 1010.)

DIVISION 3. LOCAL ADMINISTRATION [35000 - 45500]

(Division 3 enacted by Stats. 1976, Ch. 1010.)

PART 23.5. TRANSPORTATION [39800 - 40090.5]

(Part 23.5 added by Stats. 1999, Ch. 646, Sec. 14.)

CHAPTER 1. Transportation Services [39800 - 39860]

(Chapter 1 added by Stats. 1999, Ch. 646, Sec. 14.)

ARTICLE 1. General Provisions [39800 - 39809.5]

(Article 1 added by Stats. 1999, Ch. 646, Sec. 14.)

39800.1.

(a) As a condition of receiving apportionments under Section 41850.1, a local educational agency shall develop a plan describing the transportation services it will offer to its pupils, and how it will prioritize planned transportation services for pupils in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and any of grades 1 to 6, inclusive, and pupils who are low income. The plan shall be adopted by the local educational agency's governing board on or before April 1, 2023, and updated by April 1 each year thereafter. The plan shall include the following components:

(1) A description of the local educational agency's transportation services that would be accessible to pupils with disabilities and homeless children and youth, as defined pursuant to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.).

(2) A description of how unduplicated pupils, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 42238.02, would be able to access available home-to-school transportation at no cost to the pupils.

(b) (1) The plan shall be developed in consultation with classified staff, teachers, school administrators, regional local transit authorities, local air pollution control districts and air quality management districts, parents, pupils, and other stakeholders.

(2) The plan shall be presented and adopted by the governing board of the local educational agency in an open meeting with the opportunity for in-person and remote public comment.

(c) The plan may provide for the local educational agency to partner with a municipally owned transit system to provide service pursuant to this section to middle school and high school pupils.

(d) Nothing in a local educational agency's plan shall preclude a local educational agency from providing no-cost transit passes to pupils.

(e) For purposes of this section, "local educational agency" means a school district or a county office of education.

(Added by Stats. 2022, Ch. 52, Sec. 14. (AB 181) Effective June 30, 2022.)