

Turlock Unified School District

Transportation Plan

This Transportation Plan was developed collaboratively staff, faculty, neighboring agencies, the community and approved by the Turlock Unified School District Board of Trustees.

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BOARD ADOPTED:
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TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR TURLOCK UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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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.

OUR DISTRICT

The Turlock Unified School District (TUSD) is the third largest school district in Stanislaus County, educating over 13,000 students from Turlock and surrounding areas. The district includes nine elementary schools, two middle schools, two comprehensive high schools, one continuation high school, one adult education center, and one dependent charter.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Turlock Unified School District has 29 school busses serving the transportation needs of 15 schools (with 6 buses in reserve as trade-in vehicles.) The department provides services for the transportation of study trips throughout California that support educational activities of the schools, including curricular, extracurricular, and athletic trips for students. Currently the District offers 21 AM/PM routes, 2 mid-day routes to RHS, 6 mid-day routes for Kinder, and 2 routes for CTE as we support daily ridership of approximately 2200 students per day.

TUSD offers free home-to-school transportation to all eligible students attending their home school as well as choice schools. In accordance with AR 3541, Students are eligible for transportation services to and from school if the distance between their school-established bus stop and the school is beyond the minimum listed below:

- Elementary Schools (Grades K-6): One Mile
- Middle Schools (Grades 6-8): One Mile
- Junior High School (Grades 7-8): Two Miles
- High Schools (Grades 9-12): Three miles.

The Superintendent or designee may authorize transportation within walking distance when safety problems or hazards exist (for example, Roselawn students are provided transportation within the 3-mile boundary due to the freeway.) For choice schools (Walnut, Wakefield, and Osborn), transportation is provided from a student's home school to the choice school.

TUSD has deployed Route Finder to manage routes, ridership, etc. This system is tied into the Aeries database to allow the District to develop the most effective and efficient routes and stop possible. Capitalizing on this data, TUSD will be deploying Info Finder beginning in the summer of 2023, a product that will allow parents and

guardians to go to a website, type in their address, and find which bus stop and route is available to them for home to school transportation. Additionally, capitalizing on the Route Finder data and the GPS capabilities installed in each bus, the District will pilot Stop Finder in the summer of 2023 (with plans to place it into full use for the 2023-34 school year). This software will provide parents real-time information on when busses are expected to arrive at their stop. Additionally, it will easily allow the Transportation Department to notify parents proactively if there are any delays with routes.

With our current eligibility distances, 7002 of 13510 general education students (51.8%) are eligible for home-to-school transportation.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR HOMELESS, FOSTER YOUTH, AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In accordance with Board Policy 0410, all individuals shall be treated equitably in the receipt of district and school services. As such, TUSD offers transportation services in the least restrictive environment to all homeless students, foster youth, and students with disabilities that meet the criteria for severely disabled and/or non-ambulatory. These services are provided through a combination of TUSDs in-house transportation services (including door-to-door services), free transportation for youth 18 and below on City busses (Turlock Transit), a contract with Kango, as well as third-party contracting through SELPA for Storer Transportation providing door-to-door services for special needs populations.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR TK-6 AND STUDENTS WHO ARE LOW INCOME

TUSD has modified home to school transportation routes to service eligible bus riders with the implementation of routing software - Routefinder. Utilizing this program provides access to view demographics of transitional kindergarten (TK), kindergarten and grades 1-6 to identify the transportation needs and define ridership and school buses needed to accommodate pupils.

With our current eligibility distance for elementary schools, 3449 of 6564 general education TK-6 students (52.5%) are eligible for home-to-school transportation.

As it relates to students who qualify for the National School Lunch Program (e.g. low income), 3413 of 6619 NSLP students (51.6%) are eligible for home-to-school transportation.

SAFETY, RULES, AND REGULATIONS

TUSD has developed a robust transportation safety plan as well as a bus accountability chart to address behavioral issues. Those plans can be found on the district website at <https://www.turlock.k12.ca.us/Page/1567>.

AB-2731 SCHOOL BUSES: ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLES

If passed, AB-2731 will “require, commencing January 1, 2035, 100% of all newly purchased or contracted school buses or a school district [...] to be zero-emission vehicles where feasible.” In preparation for this pending legislation, as well as environmental and community concerns, TUSD has begun working towards incorporating zero-emissions buses into our fleet. TUSD has successfully applied for a \$3.6M grant through the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution District (SJVAPD) for the purchase of 9 all-electric busses (these units are on-order.) Additionally, to support the infrastructure needs of electrification of the our bus fleet, TUSD has applied for \$5.3M with the SJVAPD.

INCREASING HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION PARTICIPATION

As TUSD believes home to school transportation is a critical component of reducing tardiness and absences while at the same time increasing learning outcomes, providing increased opportunities for home to school transportation is a key component of future student success. Additionally, increasing transportation participation is seen as a key strategy to reduce traffic (and increase safety) in our school parking lots. Over the coming year TUSD will be evaluating opportunities to increase transportation eligibility with a review of our current eligible boundaries as well as continually evaluating our current route offerings.

In the end, our current busses and routes are at capacity; there are no opportunities to increase rider participation without increasing our bus fleet and qualified drivers. Understanding that need, the District purchased the 2 acre lot adjacent to the current transportation yard in 2017 for future expansion. Expansion of the transportation yard and supporting facilities to support additional busses and drivers is planned in conjunction with the grant funded infrastructure upgrades to support electrification of the fleet.

REIMBURSEMENT

2021-22 Transportation Allowance Data		
A.	Total 2021-2022 Transportation Expenses (Function 3600)	\$ 2,104,545
B.	Less Capital Outlay (Object 6xxx, Function 3600)	\$ 15,449
C.	Less Non-Agency Expenditures (Goal 7110, 7150, Function 3600)	\$ 0
D.	Estimated 60% Reimbursement	\$ 1,253,457
E.	Less 2021-22 Transportation Add-on From LCFF	\$ 447,516
Total Transportation Reimbursement		\$ 805,941

The estimated \$805,941 reimbursement is for the 2022-23 fiscal year only and may vary year to year. These additional funds will be used to offset the purchase of 9 new electric school busses. Combined with the \$3.6M grant from the SJVAPD, this will cover \$4,405,941 of the \$4,484,843 cost for the new busses, leaving \$78,902 which will be covered by District funds.

Future reimbursements will be used for future bus purchases as well as renovations to the transportation yard in preparation for additional busses and drivers to support additional routes and additional opportunities for students to take advantage of home to school transportation.

DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The transportation plan is being developed in consultation with stakeholders including classified staff, teachers, parents, students, and administrators. The District is also working with the Turlock Transit, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution District (SJVAPD), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and California Air Resources Board (CARB).

The plan is posted on the district website at <https://www.turlock.k12.ca.us/Page/1567>. In addition to providing feedback via our district website posting, public comments may be submitted during the Regular Board Meeting on Tuesday, March 21, 2023.