



Government of the District of Columbia
ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 3/4G

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ANC 3/4G Resolution
Transportation to School for
Students with Special Needs
March 27, 2023

Rationale:

1. Transportation is a service on the signed Individualized Education Program (IEP) document as agreed to by the parents or caregivers of a student and school district under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
2. The DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is responsible for providing transportation for special needs students across the District.
3. OSSE has a long-standing history of failing to provide timely and safe transportation for students with special needs.
4. For the past eight weeks, late and no-show buses have caused students with special needs, including those residing in our ANC, to miss class time and have left families frustrated, scrambling and not knowing what to expect from one day to the next.
5. As a result, parents and guardians have to make arrangements on extremely short notice to help their children get to school.

6. Parents and caregivers are also having to pay out of pocket to get their children to school and have to wait at least 30 days minimum for reimbursement¹ with no “maximum” amount of time defined.

7. Teachers and staff are being forced to work overtime to care for these students and make sure they are picked up.

8. Special need students are being denied FAPE (free and appropriate public education) and services required by their IEP because they cannot access their schools.

9. These issues were highlighted in a February 8, 2023, Washington Post article entitled “D.C. is Failing Disabled Students Who Rely on Buses to Get to School.”²

10. OSSE has yet to find an acceptable resolution to this important and pressing issue facing communities across the District.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

ANC 3/4G asks the Mayor and Council to take immediate action to bring relief to these students, families, and caregivers by:

1. Providing gas and ride-share gift certificates to impacted families;
2. Work with families who need to be reimbursed to fill out paperwork³ and get reimbursement to them as soon as possible;
3. Hold harmless in evaluations the teachers, staff and schools who are losing countless instructional hours with their students because of buses;
4. Investigate exactly why this situation has happened and hold those in OSSE leadership positions accountable;

¹ <https://osse.dc.gov/service/parents-transportation-students-disabilities>

² <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/02/08/disabled-students-buses-dc/>

³ https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/service_content/attachments/DOT%20Parent%20Transportation%20Certification%20Form%202022.pdf

5. Come up with a plan to address the loss of special education and related service provider services to students due to bus delays or no-shows;
6. Provide a timeline to parents about the resolution of the late and down routes;
7. Implement an application similar to those used in surrounding counties where parents and students can track their buses so they know when they are coming or if they are coming at all;
8. When transportation is going to be earlier or later than its scheduled window, make sure drivers can communicate that information directly to families/caregivers/students via phone and/or text based on student/guardians preference;
9. Allow drivers to communicate directly with the schools they are servicing to let them know about delays and schedule changes;
10. Require ESY (Extended School Year) planning to be made public earlier so families, caregivers, and students can plan their lives;
11. Create calendars to be shared directly with parents/guardians/students receiving transportation services that clearly communicate when OSSE will and won't be providing transportation services before the beginning of the new school year so families, caregivers and students can make alternative arrangements on days when there is school and no transportation service;
12. Ensure that student drivers are properly vetted and make the vetting process transparent for students, guardians, and DCPS; and
13. Create an incentive program to attract and hire more bus drivers who are so desperately needed.
14. The ANC also supports the recommendations to fully fund OSSE to resolve its driver issues and attendant shortages put forth in Councilmember Matthew Frumin's FY23 Budget Request⁴ for Ward 3.

⁴ <https://www.dropbox.com/s/68nc2yre92qy4xa/FY24%20Budget%20Priorities%20for%20Ward%203.pdf>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Commission designates Commissioners Lisa R. Gore, ANC 3/4G-01 to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this resolution.

APPROVED at a regular public meeting, notice of which was properly given and at which a quorum of four (4) or seven (7) members was present on March 27, 2023, by a vote of X yes, X no, X abstentions.

Lisa R. Gore, Chair

James L. Nash, Secretary