



LEGISLATIVE ANALYST REPORT

TO: HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FROM: Gabriel Cabrera, Legislative Analyst

DATE: July 14, 2000

SUBJECT: **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS**

Summary of Requested Action

Motion requesting that the Office of the Legislative Analyst (OLA) research transportation programs offered within California for before and after school programs. The report should include factors such as program delivery design, cost, funding sources, number of students served and procedures for parental release.

Executive Summary

This report is divided into two parts. The first part contains a brief overview of existing transportation services for before and after school programs in San Francisco. The second part examines similar transportation services in other jurisdictions in California. It describes transportation for San Diego's "6 to 6" Extended School Day Program, Los Angeles's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow) and Sacramento's START (Students Today Achieving Results for Tomorrow).

As discussed below, SFUSD does not currently provide transportation for *before* school programs and its busing for *after* school programs is sparse. SFUSD offers busing for after school programs at only 12 of the 116 schools within the District. With respect to its provision of transportation for before and after school programs, SFUSD is similar to other jurisdictions in California. All of the above-noted jurisdictions provide busing for only a percentage of the students enrolled in their respective programs. Additionally, most of these jurisdictions (a) support before and after school transportation with State Integration/Desegregation funds and monies from their respective General Funds, (b) do not maintain parental release procedures and (c) in the absence of "district-sponsored" transportation, expect students to walk home or get picked up by their parents.

Background and Current Practice

The Transportation Department of the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD, or the District) is currently responsible for the busing needs of approximately 116 elementary, middle and high schools within San Francisco. It operates two main transportation programs: Special Education and Integration/Desegregation

(also referred to as General Education).¹ Transportation Department officials report that SFUSD maintains a total of approximately 200 buses to serve approximately 1,500 to 1,600 special education students and between 9,000 to 10,000 general education students in schools throughout the District.²

SFUSD does not currently provide transportation for *before* school programs and its busing for *after* school programs is sparse. According to Transportation Department officials, SFUSD provides transportation for after school programs at only 12 schools where students are already receiving busing from the District. The Attachment to this report contains a list of the schools with busing for after school programs. There are no parental release procedures for after school transportation, according to Transportation Department officials.

During the 1999-2000 school year, the District bused approximately 317 students per day in after school programs at the above-noted schools. Transportation Department officials estimate that the cost to bus these students totaled between \$80,000 and \$100,000, and was paid from SFUSD's Consent Decree Fund. This fund includes a mixture of State allocations for school integration/desegregation and monies from the District's General Fund. Moreover, there are at least two non-profit organizations that provide transportation for students in other after school programs within the District. One organization operates a van serving about 5 to 10 students five days per week, while the other organization runs a bus serving approximately 10 to 15 students two days per week.

Before and After School Transportation in Other Jurisdictions

The City of San Diego - In 1998, the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) created the "6 to 6" Extended School Day Program. The purpose of this program is to open schools before and after normal school hours to provide a safe place where elementary and middle school-aged children can participate in academic and recreational activities during the hours that their parents are at work. Beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, the program will serve 171 schools within the City of San Diego. Hours will vary from site to site depending on the schools needs, but the typical schedule will be 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

According to Ms. Deb Fair, the City's Child Care Coordinator, SDUSD does not provide transportation for all students participating in the "6 to 6" program. Instead, it offers busing only to those students who both participate in the after-school "90-Minute Literacy Project" (a sub-component of the "6 to 6" program) and already receive busing from the District. The majority of "6 to 6" program participants are expected to walk home or get picked-up by their parents, according to Ms. Fair. The District also provides transportation to students who participate in after school sports, music and tutoring programs, and there are no parental release procedures for children receiving after school busing, according to SDUSD officials.

During the 1999-2000 school year, the District provided after school transportation to an estimated 3,715 students per day at a total cost of approximately \$981,000. According to SDUSD officials, the District paid for these transportation costs with a combination of State allocations for school integration/desegregation and special education, as well as monies from its General Fund.

¹ The Special Education program provides transportation for special education students and shuttle service for therapy on as needed basis, and the Integration/Desegregation program includes but is not limited to busing for non-special education students, bus scheduling and liaison services to schools and parents as it relates to transportation services.

² During the 1999-2000 school year, total student enrollment was 60,936. Source: San Francisco Unified School District. School Profiles 1999-2000 (Fall 1999).

The City of Los Angeles - Created in 1988, LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow) is a partnership including the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and the private sector. The mission of LA's BEST is to provide a safe and supervised after school education, enrichment and recreation program for children ages 5-12 during the hours between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. In FY 1999-2000, there were 12,000 children enrolled in 69 elementary schools offering extended school day activities through LA's BEST.

Ms. Carla Sanger, LA's BEST President and Chief Executive Officer, states that except for busing to and from field trips, LA's BEST does not provide transportation for students participating in the program. Instead students are expected to either walk home or get picked-up by their parents. Ms. Sanger points out that this policy works because the majority of program participants attend a school near their home. However, according to Ms. Sanger, there are at least two schools within the District that changed their regular bus schedules to provide transportation for students who both participate in LA's BEST and live far from their school. There are no parental release procedures for after school transportation, according to LAUSD officials. As of the writing of this report, LAUSD officials could not estimate how many students are bused or how much it costs to bus them. However, they reported that the District uses State Integration/Desegregation funds to pay for such costs.

The City of Sacramento - Students Today Achieving Results for Tomorrow (START) is a Sacramento-based partnership among both the City and County of Sacramento, 7 school districts in the Sacramento area, the County Office of Education, the California Department of Education and numerous corporations, foundations and community-based organizations. START is a structured, supervised after school program located at 40 elementary schools in low income neighborhoods. During the school year, more than 5,000 students participate in START for approximately three hours a day.

Ms. Pamela Haynes, START Program Manager, advised the Legislative Analyst that START does not (as a matter of policy) provide transportation for students in the program. However, according to Ms. Haynes, during the winter months, START provides busing for an unspecified number of students at one school site. The cost of this busing totals approximately \$3,000. Ms. Haynes reports that this transportation is made possible by a \$1,500 recurring grant from the Blue Diamond Corporation, and that the remaining balance is paid by START. During the rest of the school year, START participants are expected to either walk home or get picked-up by their parents, according to Ms. Haynes. As of the writing of this report, START officials had not yet responded to our question about whether or not parental release procedures are maintained.

Conclusion

As noted earlier, SFUSD does not currently provide transportation for *before* school programs and its busing for *after* school programs is sparse. SFUSD offers busing for after school programs at only 12 of the 116 schools within the District. With respect to its provision of transportation for before and after school programs, SFUSD is similar to other jurisdictions in California. All of the above-noted jurisdictions provide busing for only a percentage of the students enrolled in their respective programs. Additionally, most of these jurisdictions (a) support before and after school transportation with State Integration/Desegregation funds and monies from their respective General Funds, (b) do not maintain parental release procedures and (c) in the absence of "district-sponsored" transportation, expect students to walk home or get picked up by their parents.