

City of Providence
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 151

EFFECTIVE March 31, 2014

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
RECOMMENDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL
ON 03/11/14
CITY OF PROVIDENCE

WHEREAS, In order to be eligible for a free student bus pass, Providence public high school students must live outside of a three-mile radius of their school; and

WHEREAS, Limiting bus passes to only those who live outside a three-mile radius places an undue burden on students, causing tardiness, absenteeism, and placing financial strain on many families; and

WHEREAS, Many students who are ineligible for school bus passes report walking for an hour or more each way just to get to and from their high school; and

WHEREAS, Without a school bus pass, taking RIPTA buses to school costs families up to \$5 per day per student; and

WHEREAS, A family with two children enrolled in high school taking RIPTA to and from school every day without a free school bus pass would spend \$1,800 per year on their children's transportation; and

WHEREAS, Providence's three-mile walking distance is the largest such requirement in Rhode Island; and

WHEREAS, According to Serve Rhode Island, no other public school system in New England requires that students live more than three miles away from their school to receive a bus pass; and

WHEREAS, Boston, Fall River, Hartford, and Worcester all use a two-mile radius requirement for school bus passes; and

WHEREAS, Providence sees a greater increase in daily absenteeism rates between the winter and non-winter seasons than any other Rhode Island public school district; and

WHEREAS, According to Serve Rhode Island, the average daily absenteeism rate in Providence last winter was more than double the absenteeism rate during the spring, whereas East Providence, Cumberland, Bristol-Warren, and West Warwick - which all have walk distances of two miles or less - saw an increase in winter absenteeism of only 1.91%; and

WHEREAS, According to Providence Student Union students cannot reasonably be expected to learn and perform at their best in the classroom if they must walk such long distances in winter weather before the school day has even begun.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council does hereby urge the Providence School Board to provide funding in its 2014-15 budget to expand subsidized transportation for high school students, including those who live between two and three miles from their school, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council does hereby urge the Providence School Board to look at other issues related to student transportation, including pedestrian access issues that may exist in addition to the issue of distance "as the crow flies"; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Providence City Council requests that the Providence School Board consider all possible funding sources (including anticipated increases in State aid and reallocation of existing spending) to pay for the increased transportation service to high school students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, upon passage, copies of this resolution be sent to the members of the Providence School Board.

IN CITY COUNCIL

MAR 20 2014

READ AND PASSED



PRES.



ACTING CLERK

Effective without the Mayor's Signature



Lori L. Hagen
Second Deputy City Clerk