



## PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

501 North Dixon Street / Portland, OR 97227  
Telephone: (503) 916-3304 / Fax: (503) 916-3100  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 3107 / 97208-3107  
Email: [williams@pps.k12.or.us](mailto:williams@pps.k12.or.us)  
Government Relations

David Williams  
Director

MEASURE: HB 3582  
EXHIBIT: C

Joint Committee on Tax Credits 76<sup>th</sup> Session

DATE: 5/26/11 PAGES: 1  
SUBMITTED BY: DAVID WILLIAMS

**Date:** Tuesday, May 24, 2011  
**To:** Joint Committee on Tax Credits  
**Re:** Use of BETC for Transit Passes for High School Students

- In order to provide transportation to high school students in Portland Public Schools, the district has implemented a unique and highly effective model that leverages alternative funding streams, alternative methods and coordinated partnerships, providing TriMet annual passes to each and every PPS high school student through the YouthPass program.
- Portland Public Schools has a waiver from ODE in order to provide this alternative transportation to secondary students while still complying with a state transportation mandate.
- The YouthPass program leverages existing district transportation funding (used to support low income and NCLB eligible students) as well as the State Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC) to cover the full cost of the program. This has allowed us to expand coverage from roughly 3,000 students to all 13,000 high school students including many of our "at risk" kids at charter schools and district alternative programs.
- It is estimated that the cost of traditional Yellow Bus service would be significantly higher and would service just over half of our high school students and only for transportation to and from school. The current YouthPass program not only provides passes for all students it also opens doors to enrichment opportunities available beyond the traditional school day and school site.
- YouthPass costs the state \$3.5m in forgone tax revenues from the pass-through partner(s) purchasing the BETC.
- If the district were to provide traditional Yellow Bus service to all eligible high school students it would cost the State School Fund approximately \$4.2 million/year (this represents the 70% reimbursement we would receive from the SFF for \$6m/year total transportation costs). This model would only service around 7,500 kids for only to and from school routes. Unlike yellow bus service, transit passes are good 24/7 during the academic school year. Therefore, students are able to use the pass to access jobs, extra-curricular activities, and community events beyond the school day.
- The YouthPass program at PPS has many other benefits beyond the financial benefit to the district. It provides greater equity to our students and has reduced traffic in and around our high schools as more kids now utilize public transit. This takes more cars off the roads alleviating traffic on roadways for all other users. As well the program introduces public transit for a generation of users.