



December 10, 2014

To: Fox Cities Transit Commission

From: Deborah Wetter
General Manager

Subject: Appleton Area School District Pass Update

At a previous Transit Commission meeting, commissioners asked for an update on the success of the AASD pass program. Since January 2, 2010 the Appleton Area School District and Valley Transit have worked together to provide transportation to middle and high school students in both the public and parochial schools of the Appleton Area School District. Under this program, students are allowed to ride Valley Transit fixed route buses during the school year anytime the system operates to any destination served by Valley Transit by showing their school ID.

The goal of the program was to encourage students to use the bus to get to school and school events and to introduce more students in our area to the benefits of public transportation. In order to encourage a change in travel behavior by the students, we have provided easy access to the bus system at all times. Valley Transit was able to offer this program because it has the capacity during most of the day, in the evening and on Saturdays to accommodate additional riders. By giving young people a positive transit experience, they will be more likely to be transit users and supporters when they become adults.

Allowing access at all times during the school year also simplified the administration of the program for the bus drivers and staff at Valley Transit because we did not have to monitor which days and times the students were allowed to ride. The program also reduced the administrative time required by both Valley Transit and School District staff in processing ticket orders/requests.

The program has been very successful as can be seen by the number of rides taken by middle and high school students during the school year.

AASD Ridership	
2010	110,501
2011	179,221
2012	203,620
2013	201,770

We have received numerous comments from students, parents, teachers and principals on the value of the program. Students are experiencing a new independence and ability to participate in after-school activities that was often not possible because of parents' schedules. Many parents have been relieved of carpool responsibilities and teachers and principals have let us know that this program allows

students to participate in after-school tutoring and sports which was not always possible in the past because of transportation constraints.

The cost of the program to AASD since its inception has been and continues to be \$9,000 per semester (\$18,000 annually) plus the local share of the special tripper buses. This price is based on the amount of money AASD had been spending on tickets and passes the year prior to the program being started. The number of tripper buses has increased as the ridership by students has increased. As of September 2013, AASD pays for six tripper buses, an increase of four tripper buses since the program started. The total annual cost that will be paid by AASD to Valley Transit in 2014 will be \$52,505.

AASD 2014 Payments	Jan-June 2014	Sep - Dec 2014
North AM & PM	\$6,424	\$6,374
Two East/Madison AM & PM	\$6,481	\$6,448
Additional Madison PM (new in fall 2014)	\$0	\$3,272
West/Wilson PM	\$2,827	\$2,679
Pass program	\$9,000	\$9,000
Total per semester	\$24,732	\$27,773

Valley Transit and AASD staff will continue to meet regularly to review the ridership numbers and costs to determine the ongoing effectiveness of the program. To date, the program has been so successful and a win-win for students, the school district and for Valley Transit that we have patterned the new Fox Valley Technical College student pass program on the AASD model.