



MEMORANDUM

Date: July 14, 2011
To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Theresa Brand, Point2point Solutions Program Manager
Re: Changes in Student Transit Pass Program

Background:

The Student Transit Pass Program was originally developed by Lane Transit District (LTD) in 2004 from a research based project that was funded by the Oregon Department of Energy. The goal was to reduce vehicle miles traveled in the region, by reducing the number of trips to schools and other regional destinations, while at the same time introducing bus ridership skills and habits to young people in the region. The State of Oregon Legislature approved the expenditure of the Business Energy Tax Credit Program (BETC) funds for this program, allowing a pass-through business partner to use the associated tax credit and enabling LTD to qualify for the related funds. Other transit districts such as Tri-Met in Portland and Cherriots in Salem-Kaiser soon followed in LTD's footsteps, seeing the benefits of this forward thinking program.

Before the Student Transit Pass Program, some of the Central Lane Metropolitan area students purchased transit passes each month by paying the youth discounted price, which is 50% of the regular adult fare price (currently \$48 month). During the five-month pilot program in spring 2005, there were 5,000 student pass holders and 325,000 student boardings (note that this doesn't include youth boardings in the other 7 months of the year when students paid to ride). By the end of 2010, there were 24,000 students, grades 6 – 12, eligible for the program and 1.8 million student boardings.

	Pilot – Feb-June 2005	2010-11 School Year
# of schools and/or education programs served	13	122
# of pass holders	5,000	24,000
# of weekly boardings	7,500	42,200
# of annual boardings	325,000	1.8 Million

Status:

As of June 2011, LTD was notified that as part of the changes to the State of Oregon's BETC Program, they will no longer receive state funding for the Student Transit Pass Program. It was hoped that the Student Transit Pass Program would be spared, but that did not occur. Legislation that passed last year had established a funding termination date of July 1, 2012, which would have allowed transportation programs to continue until that time. However, legislators determined that while they understand the benefits of the transportation programs, Oregon can no longer afford to fund such services through the Business Energy Tax Credit Program.

Action/Request: No action – for information only