

# **ORANGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



## **2023 - 2026 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

## **ABOUT OCDE'S TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

OCDE is committed to providing safe, reliable and efficient daily home-to-school transportation services for school district referred students attending our special schools education and alternative education programs located throughout Orange County. Safety is always our number one priority.

Pursuant to authority established in Education Code Sections 56195, 56195.1, 56195.3 and 56195.5, OCDE's Special Education Services Division known as Connections provides for the education of eligible pupils ages 3 through 22 that are referred by their school district of residence based on the pupils Individual Education Program (IEP). OCDE's special education programs are located on multiple school district campuses throughout Orange County.

Upon request by a participating school district, OCDE transports the participating school district students to OCDE's special education programs located throughout Orange County. Each participating school district reimburses OCDE for all home-to-school transportation related costs to transport its' students. In addition to home-to-school transportation, OCDE also provides transportation services to participating school district referred special education students for before and after school activities, extra-curricular activities, field trips and Community Based Instruction (CBI) trips. Students are transported to various venues around the community to further develop their life skills.

In addition to the services noted above, we also provide transportation for students attending the Alternative, Community, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS) Skyview program. Buses are routed to pick up and drop off students at the closest, safest stop to the student's residence. We also provide bus passes for ACCESS program students to ride the local transit authority, Orange County Transit Authority (OCTA), buses to and from school. OCDE also supports low income and homeless students by providing OCTA bus passes to and from school to help facilitate and encourage students educational achievements. OCTA offers a Youth Ride Free Program which provides passes for all Orange County youth ages 6 to 18 to ride all OC fixed-route buses for free to travel to school, work, or fun.

## **TRANSPORTATION FUNDING BACKGROUND**

Prior to 1981, the State reimbursed school districts for home-to-school (HTS) transportation on a sliding scale for costs up to ninety percent (90%) and covered one hundred percent (100%) of costs for transporting students with severe disabilities. Transportation of students with special needs is mandated when required within the students' Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Transportation services specified in a students' IEP shall be provided at no cost to the student or his/her parent/guardian.

For the first time in more than ten (10) years, the California 2022-23 final state budget provides \$637 million in ongoing additional transportation funding for school districts and county offices of education based on prior year eligible transportation expenditures and prior year Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) transportation related add-on funding. Under the 2022-23 Budget Act, local educational agencies are eligible to receive sixty percent (60%) reimbursement of their transportation costs, or their current LCFF add-on, plus cost of living adjustments.

(a) Per California Education Code Section 39800.1, as a condition of receiving apportionments for transportation services under Section 41850.1, a local educational agency

shall develop a plan describing the transportation services it will offer to its pupils, and how it will prioritize planned transportation services to pupils. The plan shall be presented and adopted by the governing board of the local educational agency on or before April 1, 2023 and updated by April 1 if each year thereafter. The plan shall include the following components:

(1) A description of the local educational agency's transportation services that would be accessible to pupils with disabilities and homeless children and youth, as defined pursuant to federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.).

(2) A description of how unduplicated pupils, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 42238.02, would be able to access available home-to-school transportation at no cost to the pupils.

(b) (1) The plan shall be developed in consultation with classified staff, teachers, school administrators, regional local transit authorities, local air pollution control districts and air quality management districts, parents, pupils, and other stakeholders.

(2) The plan shall be presented and adopted by the governing board of the location educational agency in an open meeting with the opportunity for in-person and remote public comment.

(c) The plan may provide for local educational agency to partner with a municipally owned transit system to provide service pursuant to this section to middle school and high school pupils.

(d) Nothing in a local educational agency's plan shall preclude a local educational agency from providing no-cost transit passes to pupils.

(e) For purposes of this section, "local educational agency" means a school district or a county office of education.

## **CURRENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

OCDE provides fee-for-service transportation to school district-referred special education students with an IEP attending OCDE's special education school programs throughout Orange County. OCDE contracts with First Student to provide all home-to-school and other related transportation services. Our Special Education staff notifies our transportation team through an on-line request system that a student is placed in one of our special education programs based on the student's IEP. Once the request is received and reviewed by OCDE's transportation staff, the student is then routed for transportation by OCDE's transportation carrier, First Student. The student's district of residence will be charged for the cost of transporting students to our program.

OCDE also provides school bus transportation through First Student for Alternative, Community, and Correctional Schools and Services (ACCESS) program students attending Skyview Elementary/Middle school and provides other ACCESS program students bus passes for Orange County Transit Authority (OCTA) buses, with no cost to the student or parents/guardians. OCTA offers a Youth Ride Free Program which provides passes for all Orange County youth ages 6 to 18 to ride all OC fixed-route buses for free to travel to school, work, or fun.

Listed below are the participating school districts that OCDE provides home-to-school transportation for district-referred pupils with disabilities attending OCDE’s Special Education programs in fiscal year 2023/2024:

School District	2023/2024
<b>Special Education</b>	
ABC Unified	17
Anaheim Elementary	12
Anaheim Union High	20
Bellflower Unified	1
Buena Park	4
Capistrano Unified	28
Centralia	4
Cypress	10
East Whittier	1
Fountain Valley	2
Fullerton	11
Fullerton Joint Union High	11
Garden Grove Unified	31
Huntington Beach City	1
Huntington Beach Union High	2
Irvine Unified	13
Laguna Beach Unified	2
Long Beach Unified	4
Magnolia	2
Newport-Mesa Unified	4
Norwalk-La Mirada Unified	2
Orange County Educational Arts Academy	1
Orange Unified	2
Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified	3
Saddleback Valley Unified	14
Santa Ana Unified	13
Tustin Unified	10
Westminster	4
Whittier City	2
Whittier Union	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>236</b>
<b>ACCESS</b>	

**2023 - 2024**  
**PROJECTED SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION COST CALCULATION**

<b>Transportation Services Cost Data</b>		
A.	Total 2023-24 Transportation Expenses (Function 3600)	\$7,206,700.00
B.	Less Capital Outlay (Object 6xxx, Function 3600)	0
C.	Less Non-Agency Expenditures (Goal 7110, 7150, Function 3600)	0
D.	Estimated 60% Reimbursement	\$4,324,020.00
E.	Less 2023-2024 Transportation Add-on From LCFF	(\$1,759,912.00)
<b>Total Estimated HTS Transportation Reimbursement</b>		<b>\$2,564,108.00</b>

<b>EXPENDITURES AND OTHER FINANCING USES</b>		
2000-2999: Classified Salaries	\$142,528.00	
3000-3999: Employee Benefits	\$61,615.00	
4000-4999: Books and Supplies	50.00	
5000-5999: Services and Other Operating Expenditures	\$7,002,507.00	
6000-6999: Capital Outlay	0	
7000-7999: Other Outgo	0	
<b>Total Estimated Expenditures</b>		<b>\$7,206,700.00</b>

**2024 - 2025**  
**PROJECTED SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION COST CALCULATION**

<b>Transportation Services Cost Data</b>		
A.	Total 2024-25 Transportation Expenses (Function 3600)	\$7,639,126.03
B.	Less Capital Outlay (Object 6xxx, Function 3600)	0
C.	Less Non-Agency Expenditures (Goal 7110, 7150, Function 3600)	0
D.	Estimated 60% Reimbursement	\$4,583,475.62

E.	Less 2023-2024 Transportation Add-on From LCFF	(\$1,759,912.00)
<b>Total Estimated HTS Transportation Reimbursement</b>		<b>\$2,823,563.62</b>

<b>EXPENDITURES AND OTHER FINANCING USES</b>		
2000-2999: Classified Salaries	\$147,596.70	
3000-3999: Employee Benefits	\$68,821.91	
4000-4999: Books and Supplies	50.00	
5000-5999: Services and Other Operating Expenditures	\$7,422,657.42	
6000-6999: Capital Outlay	0	
7000-7999: Other Outgo	0	
<b>Total Estimated Expenditures</b>		<b>\$7,639,126.03</b>

**2025 - 2026**  
**PROJECTED SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION COST CALCULATION**

<b>Transportation Services Cost Data</b>		
A.	Total 2025-26 Transportation Expenses (Function 3600)	\$8,101,999.82
B.	Less Capital Outlay (Object 6xxx, Function 3600)	0
C.	Less Non-Agency Expenditures (Goal 7110, 7150, Function 3600)	0
D.	Estimated 60% Reimbursement	\$4,861,199.89
E.	Less 2023-2024 Transportation Add-on From LCFF	(\$1,759,912.00)
<b>Total Estimated HTS Transportation Reimbursement</b>		<b>\$3,101,287.89</b>

<b>EXPENDITURES AND OTHER FINANCING USES</b>	
2000-2999: Classified Salaries	\$158,478.02
3000-3999: Employee Benefits	\$75,454.93
4000-4999: Books and Supplies	50.00
5000-5999: Services and Other Operating Expenditures	\$7,868,016.87

6000-6999: Capital Outlay	0
7000-7999: Other Outgo	0
<b>Total Estimated Expenditures</b>	<b>\$8,101,999.82</b>

**ACCESSIBILITY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND HOMELESS YOUTH**

OCDE will continue to provide transportation for students with disabilities when specified in the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) as required by law. OCDE will determine the most appropriate mode of transportation for an individual student at no cost to their parent/guardian. Transportation is scheduled so that students with disabilities do not spend an excessive amount of time on buses compared to other students ensuring arrivals and departures do not reduce the length of the school day for these students except as may be prescribed on an individual basis.

OCDE continues to provide support for students and families who are experiencing homelessness, as defined by the federal McKinney-Vento Act through our ACCESS Homeless Educational Services Program. ACCESS McKinney-Vento liaisons connect students with academic support and other resources to help eliminate barriers to educational success. If transportation is needed, OCDE provides bus passes for students to ride the public transportation bus system. Students also receive free transportation through OCTA Youth Ride Free program.

**FREE TRANSPORTATION FOR UNDUPLICATED PUPILS**

OCDE will continue to provide all district-referred special education students with no cost transportation services. Students are provided door to door home-to-school transportation and any related services as specified by their IEP. Students enrolled in OCDE’s ACCESS program are provided with a no-cost means of transportation via the local transit authority (bus passes or free fare).

**STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

In accordance with Education Code 39800.1 OCDE has engaged Special Education school administrators, teachers, paraeducators, classified staff, business officials, transportation management, Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), our contracted transportation service provider, and the parents and students we serve who provided valued input, insight and recommendations to our Transportation Plan and how to safely transport all students.