

CITY OF BOSTON



IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENTS ON THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL

WHEREAS: This 2024- 2025 school year, Boston Public Schools (BPS) enrolled 50,600 students. Of the 50,600 students, BPS Transportation serves 22,000 students and transports them across the city's nine different districts every day; *and*

WHEREAS: Last week, on the first week of school, many parents complained of school bus delays and in some instances, no shows for students who were expecting to be picked up. Parents waited with their children for as long as 30 to 45 minutes for school buses, and while some students were eventually picked up, others had to make alternative arrangements to drop off their children when their buses did not come. According to the WBUR, at the Lee Elementary K-8 school, most school buses arrived 20 to 30 minutes after the school's 7:30am start time; *and*

WHEREAS: In and around District two, one parent drove their child from Hyde Park to a South End School when their bus did not arrive. In South Boston, a parent whose child has autism had to rush to a neighbor's house to ask for a ride to school when school transportation did not show up. Another parent tracked the school bus on the new Zum app for 45 minutes, only for the app to become unavailable, and had to bring her child to school. On the way back, her child was on the school bus for over 2 hours from Dorchester to South Boston, and had to provide the bus driver directions to his house; *and*

WHEREAS: School bus delays and no shows on the first week of school is unfortunately not a new issue. The Boston Globe reported that in 2023, 61 percent of school buses were on time for the first day, while the state mandate is to have 95 percent of buses arrive on time; *and*

WHEREAS: There should be reliability and predictability in BPS transportation. It is unacceptable for students, students with disabilities, and their parents and caretakers to wait over 30 minutes for school buses to pick up and drop off. While the new Zum app provides real-time information and better predictability, BPS and BPS transportation should consider coordinating a dry-run with school bus drivers, parents and students before the first day of school so that drivers can familiarize themselves with the bus route, and parents and students can meet the drivers and resolve any issues with pick up and drop off ahead of time; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss Boston Public Schools transportation for students on the first week of school. Representatives from Boston Public Schools and other relevant and interested parties shall be invited to testify.

Filed in Council: September 11, 2024