

Memorandum

DATE: Sept. 21, 2011

TO: Education Partnerships Council Committee

FROM: Sue Taaffe, Community Outreach/Marketing Coordinator

SUBJECT: Youth Transit Pass Program Update

Background/Policies:

The Tempe Youth Free Transit Pass program allows youth ages six to 18, who live in Tempe, to ride all Valley Metro bus routes and the METRO light rail free for one year. A parent or guardian must accompany the youth and bring the youth's birth certificate and proof of residency when registering for the program, as approved by the City Council in 2005.

Registration:

Youth passes are available at the Tempe Transit Store from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Off-site registration is also held on one Saturday in both May and August at the Tempe Public Library.

Effectiveness:

The following is a summary of the Youth Transit Pass Program since the program began in August 2005, for years 1 through 6 as defined below:

- Year 1: August 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006
- Year 2: July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007
- Year 3: July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008
- Year 4: July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009
- Year 5: July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010
- Year 6: July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011

According to a 2010 telephone survey of 427 Tempe residents, 38 percent indicate they have heard of the Tempe Youth Free Transit Pass. Word of mouth and the local schools continue to be the top two most commonly cited sources of information for people who are familiar with program (27 percent and 21 percent).

According to the 2010 US Census, there are 10,778 youth between the ages of 6 and 17 in Tempe. The Year 6 total participant enrollment for youth 6 to 17 was 4,248. Therefore, 39 percent of eligible participants are enrolled in the program. As of Sept. 15, 2011, there are 3,220 participants enrolled in the program.

Table 1: Passes Distributed – Existing v. New Riders

	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Year 6	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Existing Riders	2,155	92%	2,325	89%	2,502	89%	3,535	92%	4,424	93%	4,347	93%
New Riders	168	7%	282	11%	234	9%	311	8%	277	6%	216	5%
Unknown	21	1%	8	0%	64	2%	15	0%	36	1%	74	2%
Total	2,344	100%	2,615	100%	2,800	100%	3,861	100%	4,737	100%	4,638	100%

Table 2: Distribution by Age Groups

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Age Group	#	#	#	#	#	#
6-10	252	329	392	710	876	844
11-13	496	557	589	844	972	912
14-15	911	921	899	1,093	1,313	1,260
16-18	670	805	919	1,209	1,564	1,606
Unknown	15	3	1	5	12	16
Total	2,344	2,615	2,800	3,861	4,737	4,638

Below is the breakdown for Year 6 with regards to enrollment at three Tempe high schools:

- Tempe High: 291
- Marcos de Niza: 406
- McClintock: 596

Interestingly, the homeless rate continues to increase with 125 homeless youth enrolled in the program in Year 6 as part of the McKinney-Vento Act.

Table 3: Usage and Boarding Information:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Boardings	347,662	360,346	312,045	464,769	638,174	632,509
# of Passes Used	14,151	15,794	17,737	21,772	30,464	31,299
Ave. Use Per Card	24.57	22.82	17.59	21.34	20.94	20.20

Table 4: Annual Youth Pass Usage Cost

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Total Pass Usage Cost	\$118,577	\$128,052	\$158,527	\$224,522	\$410,584	\$407,416

The costs above do not include the costs of purchasing the passes from the city of Phoenix, equipment or the promotional materials associated with the program. It is estimated that about 75% of the boardings occur in Tempe making the net cost \$101,854.

Table 5: FY 2010/11 Costs



Item	Amount
Usage	\$407,416
Pass Encoding/Printing	\$10,500
Equipment Maintenance Fee	\$404
Printing Brochure	\$2,300
Advertisements	\$1,000
Total	\$421,620

When the “other” costs of purchasing passes and promoting the program are taken into consideration, the net cost increases to \$116,058 for Year 6.

Communication:

Staff works with local schools and community partners to promote the redistribution of passes. Communication methods include:

- 1) Press releases, Twitter, Facebook
- 2) Web site (TIM, Valley Metro)
- 3) Letter sent to all existing participants
- 4) Articles in TD3, Kyrene and TUHSD parent newsletters
- 5) Tempe 11, PSA video on YouTube
- 6) Tempe Today (articles in April and July issues with ongoing articles throughout year)
- 7) Flyers distributed through Youth Library
- 8) Brochures at the library and at TD3, Kyrene and TUHSD for distribution to all schools
- 9) Coordination with homeless liaisons
- 10) Student newspapers print and web advertisements
- 11) Advertisements on azcentral.com, azfamily.com and Facebook
- 12) Tempe Opportunities
- 13) Tempe Transit System Map
- 14) Annual Back to School city-wide effort

Intergovernmental Agreement

The Tempe Union High School District (TUHSD) and the city of Tempe have an intergovernmental agreement to administer youth transit passes onsite at selected Tempe high schools. TUHSD is responsible for the administration of the program and distribution of transit passes at TUHSD properties. TUHSD responsibilities include:

- 1) verifying participant age and Tempe residency
- 2) printing youth photo and transit pass graphic on encoded passes
- 3) maintaining a database including participant name, address, age, parental consent and pass number to be shared with the city on a weekly basis
- 4) providing the city with original permission forms
- 5) notifying the city of passes to be deactivated on a weekly basis

Attachment: Advertisements