



SUBSCRIPTION BUSING



# Courtesy vs. Subscription



## Who must be transported?

In accordance with state law, *N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1*, all public elementary school students (grades K-8) who **live** more than two miles from their school. These students are said to live "remote from school."

The Fairfield School District has been providing transportation services to *all students*; this is known as **courtesy busing**.

## What is Subscription Busing?

Boards of education are not required by law to provide busing for students who live less than remote from school **even for safety reasons**. However, boards are permitted at their own discretion and expense, to provide transportation for students who reside less than remote from school and may charge the student's parents or legal guardians for this service. This transportation service is called ***Subscription Busing***.



## Current Busing



As of November 2021, the district has been providing a total of 638 students courtesy busing. This is a total of 13 buses.

Courtesy: 453 of these students live 2 miles or less - 9 buses

Required: 185 live more than 2 miles - 4 buses



## Challenges



363 students at Stevenson are reserving the offered transportation.

On average, about 200-220 students are actually riding the bus.

**60% Ridership**

The remaining 40% or about 150 students are not riding!!!

This equates to about 3 buses at Stevenson over \$100,000 a year!!!



# Other Challenges: Bus Driver Shortages

How has the bus driver shortage impacted our schools?

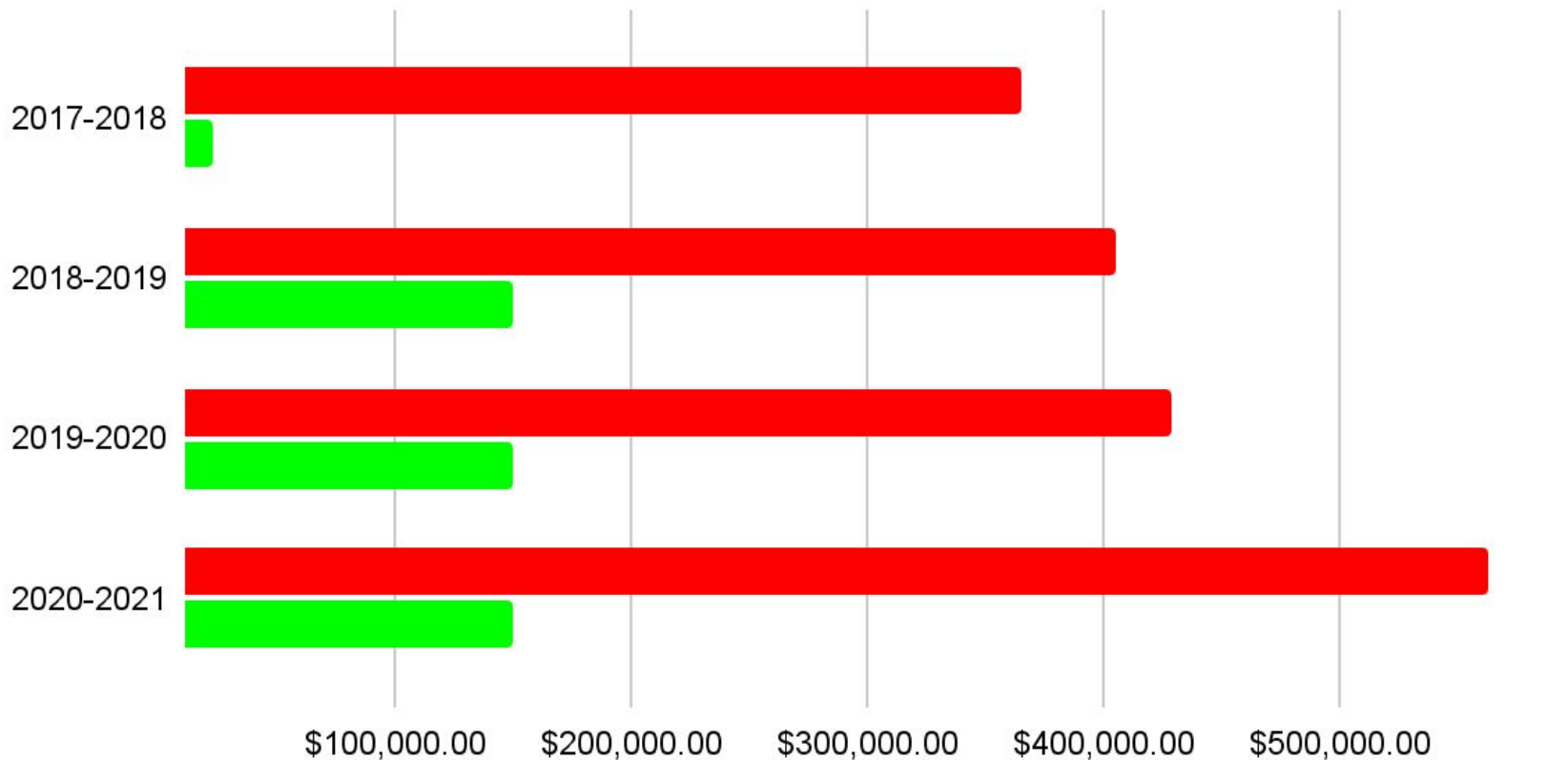
The current conditions for busing and bus drivers mirror what's happening across the nation. Covid has exacerbated these unfortunate conditions, along with longstanding issues in low driver pay, strict licensing requirements, and a transient employment population.

- Bus drivers are required to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL) and a Student School Bus and Passenger Endorsement.
- These are stricter guidelines than in the past.
- Bus driving is a part-time job requiring drivers to seek additional employment.
- Driver positions are very transient.
- Some drivers are unable/unwilling to follow mask or vaccination mandates and end up resigning.
- These challenges increase the cost of transportation.



# Transportation Expense vs. Revenue 2017-2021

Expense State Aid Revenue





# Subscription Busing



Subscription busing will allow the district to supplement the cost of transportation.

Transportation will be provided to those living 2 miles or less for a fee.

The district will be able to better budget for transportation that will actually be used.

Funds not budgeted for transportation will be used for instructional purposes.



## What is Next ?



1. January 20, 2022 -Board adopted the First Reading of a Subscription Busing Policy and Regulation
2. January 27, 2022- Informational Meeting with the Public
3. Identify Students living 2 miles or less. Send out a survey to determine participation rate.
4. Review Survey Results and if participation is over 50% then on February 15, 2022 the Board will adopt the Second Reading of the Subscription Busing Policy and Regulation and establish a fee.
5. Subscription Busing Applications will be sent to parents around the end of February. A deposit will be requested along with application. This will ensure participation and budgeting of appropriate funds.