

## Parental Flat Rate Pilot Program

### FAQ's

**\*\*Please do not mail, fax, or email forms to the Department of Transportation. Forms will be sent to the school.**

### Enrollment

- How do parents get notified of the pilot?
  - Parents of eligible students will be mailed a letter inviting them to sign up for the program during the enrollment period through August 28, 2020.
- After receiving the letter how do parents enroll in the pilot program?
  - The Flat Rate enrollment form is available on the District website at the following link: <https://www.philasd.org/transportation/parent-flat-rate-pilot/>. There are two enrollment periods:
    - August 7th - August 28th
    - September 28th - October 16th
- What is needed for families to be eligible for the program?
  - Students had to be assigned to a District bus, van, or cab in the school year 2019-20.
  - Parents must fill out an enrollment form (provided on the District website).
  - Parents must complete a federal W-9.
  - Parents must submit a monthly form to their school. At the end of each month the school will send the form to the Department of Transportation.
  - Students must attend 70% of the **in-person** school days for each given month.
  - Parents must submit a correct VIN number for their registered automobile on the monthly form.
- When will parents know if they've been approved for eligibility?
  - They will receive a letter from the District of their enrollment status. Letters will be mailed out by September 11th for the first enrollment period and November 1st for the second enrollment period.

## **Forms**

- Why am I being asked to print out a monthly form?
  - The monthly form will be filled out by the parent/guardian and submitted to the school at the end of each month. The school will confirm attendance and email a batch of their students' forms to Michael Prete ([MPrete@Philasd.org](mailto:MPrete@Philasd.org)) of the Department of Transportation.
- Why am I being asked to print out a federal W-9 form?
  - The federal W-9 form will be completed to confirm residence and tax information. The W-9 will be submitted to the school who will email the W-9s in a batch to Michael Prete ([MPrete@Philasd.org](mailto:MPrete@Philasd.org)).
- If a school is not comfortable with holding onto the W-9 forms, what should they do?
  - Please email the W-9s to Michael Prete ([MPrete@Philasd.org](mailto:MPrete@Philasd.org)), and if applicable shred the hard copies.
- When and how do schools submit the monthly forms to the District?
  - Monthly forms are submitted at the end of each month. In-person attendance days must be confirmed (virtual days do not apply) and the school official will sign the forms and email all of their eligible forms, in one batch, to Michael Prete ([MPrete@Philasd.org](mailto:MPrete@Philasd.org)).

## **Opt-Ins/Outs**

- What are the expectations regarding when parents can opt in/opt out?
  - Parents can opt-in at any time by having their schools submit a TAR requesting the Flat Rate program. It will take 10-14 days for the student(s) to be removed from their route and placed in the program. Parents will also have the ability to opt-out at any time by completing the, "Opt-Out," form on the District website at the below link:  
<https://www.philasd.org/transportation/parent-flat-rate-pilot/>  
**\*Please note that the form is currently being created and is not yet on the Website (9-14-20). Until it is on the website, please inform schools to submit a TAR asking to be placed back on transportation.**
- If a school begins in-person learning in November, when should families opt-in?
  - Parents/guardians have the ability to opt-in to the program each month. The process takes approximately 10-14 days. For schools starting in-person learning in November, it is recommended that their students enroll in the program by the second enrollment period, which takes place September 28th - October 16th.
- How are schools notified of students who opted in/out or want to make changes? Does a formal accessible list exist for Schools?

The School District of Philadelphia  
Department of Transportation

- Schools will receive a list from the Transportation Scheduling Analyst of all eligible/non-eligible students that have enrolled in the program
- Once confirmed as eligible, the students will be taken off their route. If deemed ineligible they will remain on their route.
- Students who have opted-out of the program (**Pre “Opt-Out” form**) must notify their school. The school will then submit a Transportation Action Request (TAR) to the analyst to request the student be placed back on their assigned route.  
**\*Please note that the process for contacting schools once the “Opt-Out” form is on the website, is still being discussed. (9-14-20).**
- Once my family opts-in to the program are we committed to participate through the end of the school year?
  - No, the guidelines have changed and parents will have the ability to opt-out any time through a TAR or the, “Opt-Out, “ form which will be available on the District website. **\*Please note the “Opt-Out” form is currently being created (9-14-20)**
- I have enrolled in the program but have already decided it will not work for my family. I would like to opt-out prior to the start of the school year and stay on my transportation route. Will I be able to be placed back on my route at the start of the school year?
  - Families will ask their schools to submit a TAR and they will be placed back on their route within 10-14 days..

## **Enrollment Issues**

- Why is my child’s attended school not listed in the drop-down list on the enrollment form?
  - The school may not be eligible because busing services are from a private third party and not provided by the District.
  - The school may be named differently than what is familiar to the parent (i.e. MAST Community Charter - Byberry, is (3328) Math Science and Technology in the drop-down list).
  - The school may not be eligible.
- Where do I find my child’s student ID number?
  - Each student’s ID number will be located in the upper right corner of the letter they received in the mail that invited them to enroll in the pilot program. Some students may be eligible for the first time, and may not yet have a student ID. The student ID question for new students will be left blank on the enrollment form.

## **Guidelines**

- Do parents get paid for each child they drive to school?

The School District of Philadelphia  
Department of Transportation

- No, parents will receive one monthly check per household.
- My child's school has decided to go 100% virtual for the first semester, will I still receive payment?
  - No, the program is only for in-person days attended. Payment will not be made for virtual days. The program will not begin for that school until it begins in-person learning.
- Are schools eligible which provide their own private busing?
  - No, the program is only for schools that are provided busing, van, or cab services by the District.
- I received a letter inviting me to enroll in the pilot program, but my child has changed schools since last school year. Am I still eligible?
  - The new school will have to contact the Scheduling Analysts of Transportation Services to determine eligibility.
- I have received mileage reimbursement in previous years, should I fill out a Flat Rate form?
  - No, parents that were in the mileage reimbursement program for the school year 2019-20, and are still eligible, will remain in the program, and should not fill out a Flat Rate form.
- Will there be a Compass indicator letting dispatchers know if a student is in the program?
  - Yes, students will be marked, "Flat Rate," in Compass, once eligibility is approved by the analyst.
- Can a child be on two forms of transportation (i.e. Flat Rate and busing).
  - No, each student is only eligible for one form of transportation.
- If a parent participated in the Mileage Reimbursement Program in the school year 2019-20 can they switch over to the Flat Rate Program for 2020-21?
  - No, any parent who participated in the Mileage Reimbursement Program in 2019-20 will be offered the same program for 2020-21 (if still eligible), and will not be eligible for the Flat Rate Program.
- If a student was eligible for bus, cab, or van transportation in 2019-20, can their parent/guardian choose which Parental Program (Flat Rate or Mileage) they will be in for 2020-21?
  - No, all students who received District bus, cab, or van transportation in 2019-20 and wish to participate in a Parental program this year, will automatically be placed in the Flat Rate Program.

## **Payments**

- When will I receive my first payment?
  - The first payment will take time due to processing. Please allow for 60 days after the initial month to receive the payment.

The School District of Philadelphia

Department of Transportation

- When will I receive payments as the school year moves along?
  - Please allow 30-45 days after the prior month to receive payments (Post Initial Payment).