

August 5th, 2019

Andy Byford, President
NYC Transit
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Chancellor Richard Carranza
NYC Department of Education
65 Court St
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear President Byford and Chancellor Carranza,

I write to urge New York City Transit and the New York City Department of Education to expand the student discount fare program to include express bus fares. I represent a large population of students who commute long distances from southern Brooklyn to Manhattan, and express buses are often the only viable public transportation available to them. The high cost of express bus fares is a big concern for many parents in my district.

The average annual cost each student pays to use the express bus is nearly \$2,700. This cost is exceptionally high, and in some cases, can be the difference between being able to send a child to a particular school or not. Expanding the discounted fare program to high school students who travel to and from school on MTA express buses would positively impact the lives of these students and their families. Students traveling long distances from outer borough communities commonly encounter train delays, shutdowns, or diversions. As a result, oftentimes express buses are the only viable and reliable transportation option available to these students, especially those who stay after school for student activities.

This issue has received considerable support from parents across the city. More than 1,100 people have signed a petition in support of this proposal, representing a significant number of the approximately 2,600 students citywide who ride the express bus to school daily. Expanding the discounted fare program should not result in significant cost increases, as this finite group of students currently receive standard student Metrocards that go unused. The costs of the unused cards can be rolled over into a discounted express bus fare.

As your agencies continue to support students traveling to school via mass transit, I strongly urge you to consider this proposal as another way to help ease the burden being placed on students and families. Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss this further.

Sincerely,



Andrew S. Gounardes, Member of Senate

cc: Veronique Hakim, Patrick Foye