

# City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia  
Office of the Chief Clerk  
Room 402, City Hall  
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 260441)

## RESOLUTION

Authorizing the Committee on Transportation and Public Utilities to hold hearings examining the status of transit mobility and access for Philadelphia's students and the expansion of the SEPTA Student Fare Program.

WHEREAS, With almost 200,000 students enrolled in the School District of Philadelphia (SDP), the City of Philadelphia has one of the largest school districts in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia offers a wide range of Out-of-School Time (OST) programs and initiatives to support students after school hours, including 90 programs run by Philadelphia Parks and Recreation; and the Literacy Enrichment Afterschool Program (LEAP), a free, drop-in, after school program offered at 54 Library locations across the City. Furthermore, many older students hold jobs, and do community service activities, outside the home and often outside their own neighborhood or the neighborhood of their schools; and

WHEREAS, A growing body of research into the critical development phase of adolescence, roughly defined as young people aged 12-25, identifies that this period requires support and opportunity for exploration and identity formation, which necessarily includes the ability to move throughout the City safely; and

WHEREAS, As currently allowable under PA State Code 1949 on Pupil Transportation, school districts may provide free transportation to students who live over 1.5 miles away from or school, or if they would need to walk on what PennDOT deems as a hazard route. Within the SEPTA service area, Students in grades 7 through 12 who live 1.5 miles or farther from school are generally eligible for free Student Fare Cards through their school; and

WHEREAS, For School District of Philadelphia students, SEPTA Student Fare Cards can be used only for travel to and from school with a limit of no more than 8 taps per day, during the hours of 5:30am and 8:00pm; and

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WHEREAS, Under these guidelines, students who live less than 1.5 miles from their school, who have jobs after school, enrichment activities on the weekend, activities on school holidays or programs over the summer are unable to use their SEPTA passes to reach them; and

WHEREAS, Student safety is paramount. Access to transit for students who live under 1.5 miles to school can ensure they can get to school and after school activities on time and safely, and free from the possibility of criminalization from fare evasion as a result of not having the resources to pay for transit fares; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia will be full of opportunities for students to participate in events like the America's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, the FIFA World Cup, and other cultural events and celebrations in the summer of 2026. Student fare cards currently do not allow students to participate in summer enrichment activities, jobs, and opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Other cities have made it possible to expand transit ridership for their students, including New York City which offers four free trips to students any hour on any day, and Washington D.C. which has universally free fares for students anywhere within the district; and

WHEREAS, Given the developmental opportunities for youth, the need to support students in riding safely and the potential investment in our future workforce and leaders by expanding student fares; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby authorizes the Committee on Transportation and Public Utilities to hold hearings examining the status of transit mobility and access for Philadelphia's students and explore the expansion of the SEPTA Student Fare Program.

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*RESOLUTION NO. 260441 continued*

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the thirtieth day of April, 2026.

Kenyatta Johnson  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Landau

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Landau, Phillips, Gilmore Richardson,  
Gauthier, Jones, Young, Brooks, O'Rourke and Squilla