

STH Routed-Unrouted Comparison: December 2024 and December 2025

This report compares student transportation outcomes for **December 2024 and December 2025**.

The DOE remains committed to ensuring the safety and accessibility of transportation for **students in temporary housing (STH)**, including **newly arrived students**.

Students residing in shelters are identified through a data feed from the **NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS)** to the DOE. This feed does reflect NYC Emergency Management (NYCEM) HERRC-placed asylum-seeking students and families from other temporary housing placements, such as non-DHS shelters. Transportation eligibility and assignments for all identified students follow the same criteria and processes applied to students in non-DHS shelters and other temporary housing arrangements.

Consistent with DOE policy, students in temporary housing are provided **OMNY passes**, and **MetroCards are made available to parents or guardians regardless of distance**, enabling families to travel together. Parents or guardians should contact their child’s school to request a MetroCard.

Changes observed in routed and non-routed transportation outcomes reflect a combination of **ongoing enrollment dynamics, family transportation preferences, and operational routing capacity**. The year-over-year decrease in routed students, alongside increased OMNY usage, reflects a combination of DOE policy, family preferences, and operational timing—not a reduction in transportation access.

December 2024 and December 2025 DHS Routed-Unrouted Comparison		
Category	Count of Students: December 2024	Count of Students: December 2025
Routed	7,191	6,733
Waiting To Be Routed ¹	2,114	2,296
OMNY (MetroCard)	2,386	2,749
Self-Transport by Parent Choice	2,261	1,693
Total	13,952	13,471

¹ **Note:** “Waiting to Be Routed” includes transportation-eligible students who do not yet have an assigned yellow bus route during the reporting period. This category may include students whose families have not finalized a transportation preference and remain eligible for routing consideration.

Key Factors Driving Year-over-Year Changes

- **Shift in Family Transportation Preferences:**
An increasing number of families are opting for **OMNY/MetroCard** options rather than yellow bus service, particularly among students in temporary housing, where flexibility and family travel are priorities.
- **DOE Policy Supporting Family Travel:**
DOE provides **OMNY passes to students and MetroCards to parents/guardians regardless of distance**, enabling families to travel together. This policy, in addition to the new student OMNY card and increased usage flexibility, naturally increases OMNY usage while reducing reliance on yellow bus routes.
- **Stabilization of the STH Population:**
While newly arrived students continue to enter the system, a portion of the population that initially required yellow bus service has transitioned to OMNY as families become more familiar with transit options and school locations.
- **Parent Preference Not Fully Reflected in Real Time:**
Some students remain transportation-eligible but are using OMNY while their parent preference has not yet been updated in the system, contributing to higher OMNY counts and lower routed totals during the reporting period.
- **Operational Routing Capacity and Timing:**
Yellow bus routing is subject to vehicle availability, route optimization, and standard processing timelines. During this period, OMNY provides an immediate and reliable transportation option for eligible students.