

City Council Unit of Appropriation 438: School Transportation for Homeless Students Summary Report

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Requirements

As a condition of the funds in unit of appropriation number 438, the Department of Education (“DOE”) shall submit to the Council semi-annual reports on busing provided for students living in shelters. Such reports shall detail the number of students who have been routed and a snapshot of the number of students who are waiting to be routed. The semi-annual reports shall be submitted as follows: the first report shall be submitted no later than January 15, 2026, and shall cover the period beginning September 1, 2025, and ending December 31, 2025. The second report shall be submitted no later than July 15, 2026, and shall cover the period beginning January 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2026.

Assumptions

- “Students living in shelters” was interpreted as students living in NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelters
- Students are considered eligible for busing if they meet one of the following criteria:
 1. The student is in grade K-6, lives 0.5 miles or more from the school, and has a parent transportation preference for busing, or the transportation preference is unknown
 2. The student is in grades 7-8, has an IEP (without a mandate for busing), lives more than 0.5 miles from the school, and has a parent transportation preference for busing or the transportation preference is unknown
 3. The student has an IEP mandate for busing, regardless of parent transportation preference
- Students living in shelters were identified by a feed of data to DOE from DHS between September 2025 and December 2025
- A monthly snapshot for each month from September 2025 through December 2025 was used to represent students living in DHS shelters over the reporting period
- All distinct, eligible students who appeared on the DHS snapshots were included
- Any student who was routed as of the snapshot date was counted as routed, irrespective of the parent preference transportation indication
- A student was recorded as routed if they were routed at any point during the reporting period

Notes

- The DOE is committed to ensuring safe and reliable transportation for students in **temporary housing**, including newly arrived students. Asylum seekers are included in the **Students in Temporary Housing (STH)** designation until they secure permanent housing.
- Changes in transportation outcomes reflect broader enrollment patterns, including the arrival of newly arrived families beginning in the 2022–2023 school year, which increased overall transportation demand within the STH population.
- Students living in shelters are identified through a daily data feed from the **NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS)** to the DOE. The DHS data does not distinguish between asylum-seeking families and other shelter placements. Transportation eligibility and assignments for these students follow the same criteria and processes used for all students living in shelters and other temporary housing arrangements.

Definitions

Category	Definition
Routed	The student was assigned to a yellow bus route at any point in the DHS data snapshots between September 2025 and December 2025 . This includes all students with a route assignment, regardless of the parent’s indicated transportation preference.
Waiting To Be Routed	The student is eligible for busing but does not have an assigned bus route. This includes students whose parent preference is Busing or Unknown , as well as students with an IEP mandating transportation . A student may appear in this category due to route or vehicle availability, standard processing timelines, or system update timing between DHS and DOE.
OMNY pass (previously student MetroCard)	The student is eligible for busing, and the parent opted for an OMNY pass, but the student is not assigned to a bus route.
Self-Transport by Parent Choice	The student is eligible for busing, and the parent opted for private transportation or alternate arrangements for the child to commute to and from school, and the student is not assigned to a bus route.

Data

Count of Distinct Eligible DOE Students Living in DHS Shelters September-December 2025	
Category	Count of Students
Routed	6,733
Waiting To Be Routed ¹	2,296
OMNY	2,749
Self-Transport by Parent Choice	1,693
Total	13,471

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.