

AACPS Start Time Task Force  
**Estimated Transportation Cost Determination Factors**

Factors ***included*** in determining AACPS Transportation costs for all options:

- Number of buses
  - Buses that require an adult Attendant (Aide)
  - Buses that do not require an adult Attendant (Aide)
- Actual Average Bid Cost for a Bus/Day (multiple tiered runs)
- Actual High School Only Bus Run Cost
- Staffing – *including benefit costs*<sup>+</sup>

Factors ***not included*** in determining AACPS Transportation costs for all options:

- Transportation Routing Software
- Transportation Routing Software Implementation Fees
- Bus Storage
- Staff Overtime
- Bus Driver Overtime
- Training Supplies

**Start School Later - Options A & B:**

We determined the actual number of buses needed for [Option A](#) and [Option B](#) to supplement the existing bus fleet in order to transport all students safely to and from school. Of the total number of buses needed, we estimated that 70% of the buses would not need an Attendant/Aide, and 30% of the buses would need an Attendant/Aide based on historical data. The actual average cost for a bus route without an Attendant/Aide is \$60,224, with an Attendant/Aide, it is \$85,742.

Staffing was added to handle the increased number of buses. This requires Transportation Area Specialists (2.0 FTE\*), Operational Technicians (2.0 FTE\*), Driver Trainers (2.0 FTE\*) and a Clerk (1.0 FTE\*). Based on existing salary scales, we estimate this total staffing cost to be \$520,330.

**Start School Later - Option C:**

The actual number of additional buses needed for this option would be 10, without an Attendant/Aide, with the same average cost as above, \$60,224/bus. The need for these buses arises from that buses in our existing fleet that mainly transport student to and from non-public school facilities would not be available to help with the High School tiers. The shifting of school start times in Anne Arundel County will not alter the school start times for the non-public facilities, as these facilities service children from multiple Maryland counties.

**Start School Later - Option D:**

The actual number of additional buses needed for this option would be 10, without an Attendant/Aide, with the same average cost as above, \$60,224/bus. The need for these buses arises from that buses in our existing fleet that mainly transport student to and from non-public school facilities would not be available to help with the High School tiers. The shifting of school start times in Anne Arundel County will not alter the school start times for the non-public schools, as these facilities handle children from multiple Maryland counties.

\* FTE – Full Time Equivalent

<sup>+</sup> includes health care, FICA, and retirement costs

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The costs vary by the difference in the projected enrollment in the Hybrid/Virtual learning option. We estimated the Pilot hybrid-learning program costs based on a 20% participation rate from grades 10-12 (525 students) using our official September 2014 projected enrollment, by high school. If Option D were deployed system-wide, for all 12 comprehensive high schools, we estimated an approximate 20% student participation rate from grades 10-12 at each high school (3,300 students) across the county, using the same September 2014 enrollment projections.

When AACPS High School students are taking the High School Assessments (HSA's), all AACPS high schools have a staggered start time, requiring a second bus run. The actual average one day cost for this additional bus run, for high schools only, is \$18,841. Using this estimate for a full 180 day schedule equates to a \$3.4M additional expenditure. If 20% of the high school students select Option D, then this second bus run designed to transport these students would cost no more than an estimated \$1.7M annually, based on the conservative estimate that no more than 50% of the high school buses would be employed in making the second run with these hybrid-learning students.

**NOTE 1:** Factors not included in the cost scenarios above include a computerized routing system and implementation. We estimate this cost to be in excess of \$550,000 - year 1, with ongoing costs of \$126,000 per year thereafter. AACPS uses the routing experience of their Area Specialists (over 100+ years) to determine bus routes and the tiering structure for our buses. In a recent independent survey among all Maryland school systems, AACPS was shown to have the second most efficient cost structure for student transportation services. Computerized routing systems installed in several adjacent districts have shown to produce savings, perhaps as high as 10%. We do not anticipate that level of savings from implementing such a system, however there are additional advantages over a manual based system that are not part of this discussion such as GPS student tracking.

**NOTE 2:** Also not included in transportation costs are increases for bus storage. Many of our contractors do not have sufficient space at their facility to store many, if any, more buses above the current levels. If Options A or B are selected, AACPS and its contractors definitely have a bus storage issue. AACPS currently leases a facility in the Pasadena area to store the county-owned buses, but AACPS anticipates that lease may not be renewed at some point in the near future. The cost of a new facility, including land acquisition and facility costs could easily surpass \$2.5M. Whether a new, county owned facility could alleviate or offset over-crowding at the bus contractors facilities is yet to be determined. Finding a centrally located piece of property, large enough to handle the number of buses and required out buildings, will be a difficult challenge. Regardless of the outcome of the school start time initiative, AACPS must develop a long term plan related to the storage of its bus fleet.

**NOTE 3:** The final factor discussed will be the availability to recruit, hire and train capable bus drivers and attendants. Based on discussions with our current contractors, they are finding it increasingly difficult to hire drivers that meet certification requirements ([click here](#) to learn more about the certification process).

\* FTE – Full Time Equivalent

+ includes health care, FICA, and retirement costs