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## Analysis of the 2017-18 Marin Transit Youth Pass Program

### Summary

Marin Transit has offered a school-based Youth Pass program to Marin County students for the past ten years. In fiscal year 2017-18, nearly 4,500 youth pass “stickers” were distributed to 33 participating public and private schools. This report provides a brief overview of the 2017-18 program results and compares them to historic participation levels.

### Program Overview

Marin Transit offers both a six month and an annual youth pass that are distributed through participating Marin County schools. With a youth pass, registered Marin County students and youth ages 18 and under are able to ride on all local Marin Transit routes. The passes are not accepted on Golden Gate Transit commuter routes or their basic, all-day regional routes (e.g., Routes 30/70/101).

The Fall/Winter passes are valid starting in August and expire in February, and the Spring/Summer passes are valid from February through August at the start of the next school year. The annual passes are valid from the start of school in August through the summer and expire just prior to the next school year the following August.

Youth passes are provided by affixing a sticker to the student’s school ID card. Used as a “flash pass,” this method speeds up boarding time and eliminates the need for students to carry cash and exact change. The six-month pass costs \$175, and the annual pass costs \$325. The annual pass provides a 5-10% discount for students who ride Marin Transit daily to and from school. Students whose families demonstrate income restrictions similar to the State-administered free and reduced price meal program participate in the Youth Pass Program at no charge. These students submit a Parent/Guardian Certification Form for eligibility to obtain a free youth pass. Marin Transit distributes and collects these forms from the school coordinators.

Marin Transit encourages all public and private schools in the County to participate in the Youth Pass Program. The majority of participating schools are public - middle or high school - though a few elementary and private schools also participate. Each participating school has a designated contact person or coordinator responsible for keeping a roster of participating students, distributing and collecting income eligibility forms, and collecting payment for the passes. Marin Transit invites the coordinators to participate in an annual coordination meeting each Spring. The coordinators perform a critically important role in the success of the Youth Pass Program throughout the school year. School coordinators also serve as the District’s liaison regarding other school transit services, including adjustments to bell time schedules and calendars.

Coordinators maintain all student rosters, financial payments, and eligibility forms electronically using the District’s integrated data management system - TransTrack. The District has assigned each school and school district unique access codes to the system for maintaining their respective records. The web-based application enables student information to be shared between schools, school districts, and District staff to reduce administrative burden. The system has helped to improve organization, tracking, and analysis of the program while supporting increased monitoring and oversight.

### Participation

Statistics from the Youth Pass program over the last three years are summarized in Table 1. During the 2017/18 school year, 33 schools distributed youth passes to students. About 96% of passes distributed last year were provided free to students from income-qualified families.

**Table 1: Youth Pass Statistics**

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Number of Participating Schools <sup>1</sup>	25	31	28	32	33
Number of Passes Distributed <sup>2</sup>	3,659	4,092	3,952	4,038	4,495
Passes Sold	9%	8%	6%	6%	4%
Passes distributed free to Income Qualified Students	91%	92%	94%	94%	96%

1. Schools that distributed passes to students

2. Equivalent 6-month passes

The 2017/18 school year had increased pass usage compared to the previous year and a higher percentage of passes were distributed free to income-qualified students.

Clipper use on the Supplemental School routes increased on most routes compared to the prior year. Riders can use Clipper on all fixed route buses and shuttles within Marin County, as well as on regional routes and other Bay Area transit services. Special youth Clipper cards automatically provide the 50% youth discount off of the regular adult fare. For students who do not ride the bus to and from school every day, Clipper provides a more flexible option for payment and benefits for those who also travel on regional routes and other Bay Area transit services.

Table 2 provides a summary of Clipper usage on the supplemental school services over the last four years. On average, Clipper is used by 10.7% of all riders on Supplemental routes. In 2017-18, Clipper usage increased on six of the nine Supplemental School routes and overall usage increased by 20% on these routes.

**Table 2: Percent of Total Passengers Using Clipper as Payment**

Supplemental School Route	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
113	0.8% <sup>(1)</sup>	1.5%	3.8%	3.5%	4.1%
115	9.1% <sup>(1)</sup>	5.8%	8.1%	6.4%	4.5%
117	0.3%	1.7%	3.8%	1.7%	4.5%
119	12.3% <sup>(1)</sup>	7.7%	8.1%	4.6%	9.3%
125	10.0%	12.0%	14.3%	7.3%	14.2%
126 <sup>(2)</sup>	24.3%	18.4%	–	–	–
127 <sup>(2)</sup>	54.1%	58.7%	–	–	–
139	27.4% <sup>(1)</sup>	15.6%	17.1%	22.9%	18.2%
145	–	2.6%	1.4%	1.5%	1.8%
151	5.9% <sup>(1)</sup>	2.6%	4.5%	3.9%	4.3%
154	14.8% <sup>(1)</sup>	5.8%	4.3%	4.9%	3.9%

1. Routes were not equipped with Clipper devices during the 2013/14 school year, but accepted Clipper as a flash pass

2. Routes 126 and 127 were discontinued and replaced with Yellow Bus service for the 2015/16 school year

In the 2017/18 school year, public schools from ten different districts participated in the program. Students from non-participating schools acquired youth passes directly from Marin Transit. Table 3 summarizes the 2017/18 Youth Pass Program statistics by district.

Hall Middle School in the Larkspur-Corte Madera School District has the highest number of purchased passes of any school in the County. This is primarily a result of the school district offering an additional subsidy to its students that reduces the cost of the paid passes by 35% equivalent to a full-year pass for \$210. The reduced price of the pass combined with the dedicated Supplemental Route 117 makes it particularly advantageous for parents to purchase the Youth Transit Pass as opposed to having their students pay per ride.

The Larkspur Corte-Madera School District issued approximately 50% fewer Youth Transit Passes in 2017/18 as compared to 2016/17 levels as a result of transitioning service to Cove School from Supplemental service to yellow bus service. The yellow bus route serving the Cove School was developed in partnership with the Tiburon Traffic Relief Joint Powers Authority. Marin Transit supported the transition by providing planning support to develop the schedule and routing for the new yellow bus route. With a dedicated route for students traveling from Larkspur to the school in Corte Madera, Marin Transit discontinued timed service the Cove School with the Route 117.

**Table 3: 2017/18 Youth Pass Statistics by District**

District	# Schools	# Passes	% Free
Dixie	1	4	100%
Lagunitas	1	8	100%
Larkspur-Corte Madera <sup>1</sup>	1	143	50%
Marin County Office of Education	1	140	100%
Mill Valley <sup>1</sup>	1	6	100%
Novato Unified	10	1,259	99%
Reed Union <sup>1</sup>	1	2	100%
Ross Valley <sup>1</sup>	1	36	72%
San Rafael	6	2,105	100%
Sausalito-Marin City <sup>1</sup>	2	194	100%
Tamalpais Union <sup>2</sup>	5	579	83%
Private/Independent	3	19	84%

1. Elementary and middle school only district

2. High school only district

## Discussion

In 2005, Marin Transit staff recommended that your Board implement a program offering free bus tickets for students in middle and high schools who qualify for the free and reduced price lunch programs. Staff proposed this ticket program as an interim solution prior to your Board's adoption of the current Youth Pass Program initiated in the 2006/07 academic year. As the program continues to develop, staff have formed strong partnerships with the local school districts and schools that help administer the program. A list of 2017/18 participating schools is provided in Table 5.

## Fiscal/Staffing Impact

Revenue and expenses for the Youth Pass Program over the last four years are summarized in Table 4. About 96% of the youth passes distributed last year were distributed free to students. The cumulative face value for these free youth passes was

approximately \$688,225, an 8% increase from the 2016/17 value of \$636,875. Revenue earned from youth pass sales totaled \$37,750, a decrease from the FY 2016/17 total of \$45,713 in sales. Staff estimates annual administrative expenses associated with this program including labor, materials, and supportive technology at approximately \$10,000 per year.

**Table 4: Youth Pass Revenue and Expense**

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Total Value of Subsidized Passes:	\$543,125	\$610,275	\$602,250	\$636,875	\$688,225
Est. Staff Administrative Costs:	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Net Cost of Program to Marin Transit:	\$553,125	\$620,275	\$612,250	\$646,875	\$698,225
Total Revenue from Pass Sales:	\$52,885	\$56,020	\$40,625	\$45,713	\$34,870

**Table 5: 2017/18 Youth Pass Participating Schools<sup>1</sup> in Marin County**

	School	Address	City
1.	Bahia Vista	125 Bahia Way	San Rafael
2.	Davidson Middle School	280 Woodland Avenue	San Rafael
3.	Del Mar Middle School	105 Avenida Miraflores	Tiburon
4.	Hall Middle School	200 Doherty Drive	Larkspur
5.	Hamilton School	5530 Nave Drive	Novato
6.	Lagunitas	1 Lagunitas School Rd	San Geronimo
7.	Loma Verde	399 Alameda de la Loma	Novato
8.	Lu Sutton	1800 Center Rd	Novato
9.	Lynwood School	1320 Lynwood Drive	Novato
10.	Madrone High School	310 Nova Albion Way	San Rafael
11.	Marin Academy	1600 Mission Ave	San Rafael
12.	Marin City Academy	200 Phillips Drive	Sausalito
13.	Marin Oaks	720 Diablo Ave	Novato
14.	Mill Valley Middle School	411 Sycamore Avenue	Mill Valley
15.	Miller Creek	2255 Las Gallinas Ave	San Rafael
16.	MLK Jr Academy	200 Phillips Drive	Marin City
17.	Novato High School	625 Arthur St	Novato
18.	Phoenix Academy	PO Box 4925	San Rafael
19.	Redwood High School	395 Doherty Drive	Larkspur
20.	San Andreas School	599 William Avenue	Larkspur
21.	San Jose Middle School	1000 Sunset Parkway	Novato
22.	San Marin High School	15 San Marin Drive	Novato
23.	San Rafael High School	185 Mission Avenue	San Rafael
24.	San Ramon Elementary School	45 San Ramon Way	Novato
25.	Sinaloa Middle School	2045 Vineyard Drive	Novato
26.	Sir Francis Drake High School	1327 Sir Francis Drake Blvd	San Anselmo
27.	Tamalpais High School	700 Miller Avenue	Mill Valley
28.	Tamiscal School	305 Doherty Drive	Larkspur
29.	Terra Linda High School	320 Nova Albion Way	San Rafael
30.	The Branson School	39 Fernhill Ave	Ross
31.	Venetia Valley School	177 N. San Pedro Road	San Rafael
32.	White Hill School	101 Glen Drive	Fairfax
33.	Willow Creek School	636 Nevada Street	Sausalito

*1. Schools that distributed passes to students and have an assigned youth pass coordinator*