

Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives



SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION REPORT 2012-2013

8/31/2013

Pupil Transportation Consulting, Inc.
Colleen A. Cavanaugh

1112 High Street, PO Box 186, Dedham, MA 02027
781.326.2473 x113 | 781.251.0874 Fax | info@moecnet.org

August 31, 2013

Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives (MOEC) this report is being submitted to summarize the activities of the Massachusetts Special Education Transportation project funded by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

Actual ridership information by vehicle was collected from various private and collaborative day programs to identify current multi-district routes and identify potential opportunities where route sharing can be initiated. An on-line resource has been created to provide actual ridership data and the October 1 DESE SIMS data. The website, www.SpEdTransSavings.org, will provide school districts and program personnel with another tool to use as they strive to maintain high quality cost-effective transportation for all special education students in the Commonwealth.

The data generated in this report is helpful and illustrative of the potential cost benefit to school districts when multi-district routing occurs and provides information on potential cost share opportunities in the future. The ridership data was provided by the private day and collaborative programs and reflects actual ridership from the fall of 2012, this provides an opportunity for school districts to review the data to see what opportunities exist to share routes, see actual routes they shared with other districts, examine existing trends and plan for future transportation services.

We believe that this project clearly demonstrates the opportunity for multi-district routing and provides districts with information that will help them to make sound fiscal decisions and maximize cost benefits. The project will be funded in FY2014 to expand and update the program data base to assist districts in the current school year to maximize cost benefits.

We would like to acknowledge the Massachusetts Association of Approved Private Schools, (maaps) and the Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives (MOEC) for their assistance in this project and a special thank you to the private and collaborative day programs that participated.

Respectfully,

Colleen Cavanaugh

Pupil Transportation Consulting, Inc.

Background

The rising cost of transporting our special needs students continues to be a challenge facing school districts across the Commonwealth, and in many cases the cost of transportation exceeds the tuition. As part of the State's ongoing efforts to create efficiencies in the area of Special Education Transportation and reduce costs, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has continued to support the State Special Education Task Force on various initiatives. An on-line resource has been created, *SpEdTransSavings.org*, to provide actual ridership data for targeted programs and the October 1 DESE SIMS data to allow school districts and program personnel to explore the potential cost benefit of multi-district routing. Information is provided that would allow school district administrators to determine if a potential ride share exists, and to be able to explore additional opportunities to cost share with contiguous communities. The actual ridership data collected at the school site is a valuable resource for school districts as they strive to maintain and reduce costs in the area of special education transportation.

The State first funded this initiative in FY2011, data was collected from targeted private day and collaborative programs on the actual ridership by vehicle at the school site. The project met with great success and clearly demonstrated the potential for generating cost savings and providing a valuable resource for districts that it has continued to receive funding. This past year efforts were focused on developing and enhancing the website, maintain a current data base and present information in the best way possible to maximize results. It is critical to maintain a current data base in efforts to best meet the needs of the districts.

According to October 1, 2012 data 10,414 students attended 395 special education programs in FY2013. Special education administrators have highlighted that they do not necessarily know if students from neighboring communities are attending the same out of district placement as students from their town. They have further noted they do not always know if there are students from neighboring towns attending the same out of district program or if these students are on the same vehicle.

Purpose

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, (DESE) continued funding in FY2013 to support the initiative. Target programs were selected based on the FY2011 October 1 DESE SIMS data. A survey was sent to 120 targeted private day and collaborative programs to collect data to include; vehicle type, vendor name, number of students, and home district for each student on the vehicle.

It is important to stress that not all routes and students can be combined, this data is for informational purposes and may not result in a cost savings. There are many factors that affect special education transportation services and this should be taken into consideration when discussing route combinations.

Outcomes

Data was received from 31 of the 76 targeted private day programs, representing a 41% participation rate, this is down from last year which was a 61% response, and from 22 of the 44 collaborative programs, representing a 50% participation rate, which is also slightly down from last year which was a 57% response . The information collected was input into the Microsoft Access Data Base. In addition to the ridership data, the October 1, DESE SIMS data for FY2013 was imported into the data base. This enables districts to view every program in the State and can further facilitate ride share opportunities. The ridership data collected is represented by 3,057 students.

The service providers are represented by 120 private vendors, 8 collaborative, and 57 public school transportation providers. Not included on this list are the Collaboratives that coordinate transportation services on behalf of their member districts these include; the Assabet Valley Collaborative, LABBB/EDCO,BICO and GLEC. The list of participating programs and transportation service providers are included in this report, Addendum A and B.

The information generated from this project will assist districts in assessing their current transportation routes to ensure the per day cost reflects the actual ridership and to create additional multi-district route opportunities when possible.

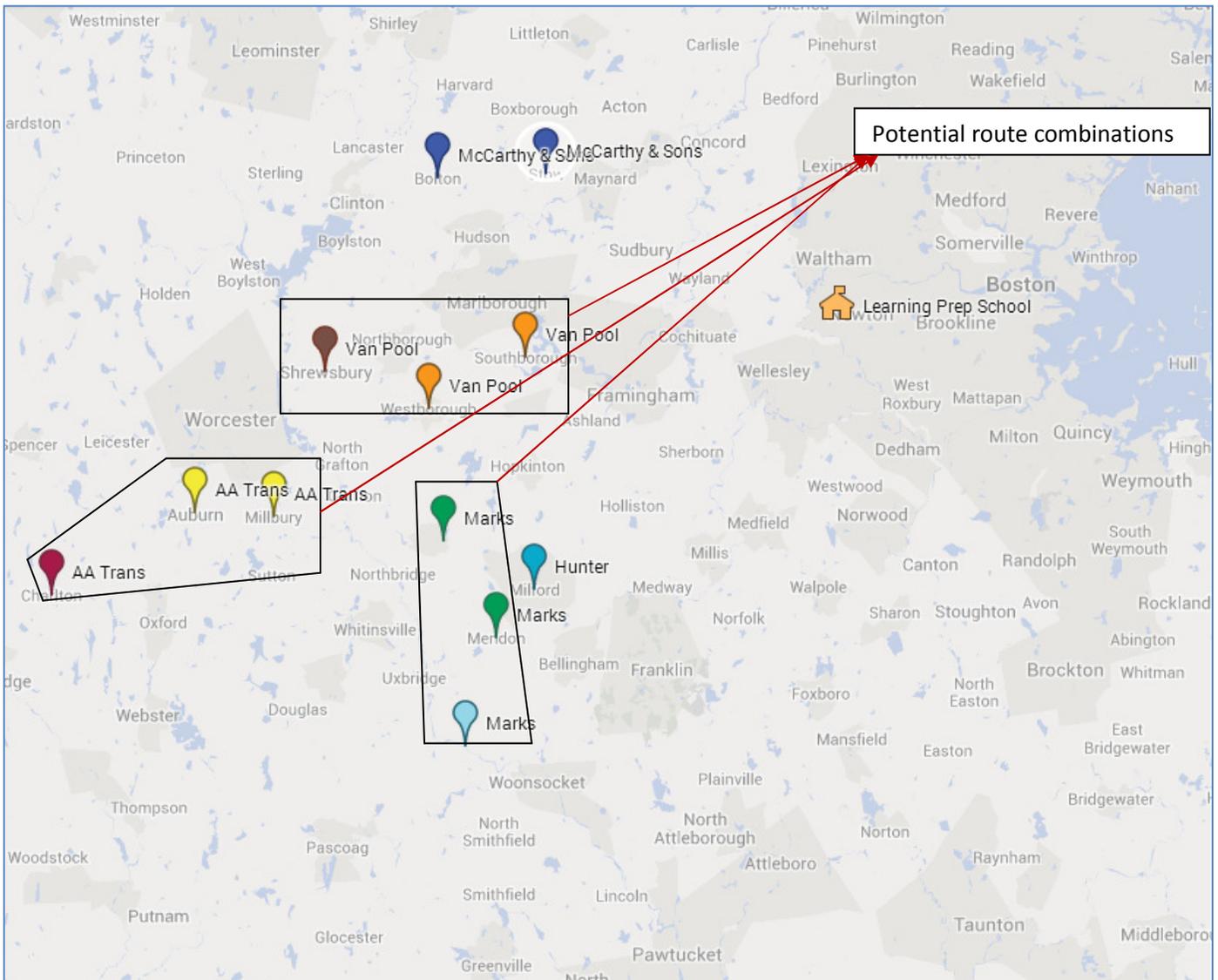
Process

Districts can utilize the district data tab on the website to look at programs they send students to or they can obtain the Oct 1 data which shows every program in the state and the districts sending students to those programs. This information can be exported into an Excel spreadsheet and sorted by county to show districts other communities within close proximity that may be sending students to that same program. Districts should then reach out to that district to explore a ride share potential. Districts can also see their ridership information and check their billing to make sure they are receiving a cost benefit on a shared ride. In many cases school districts own and operate their own vehicles, by sharing the cost of that route with another district, they can reduce their operating budget. The example below will highlight the potential to consolidate routes and create substantial savings.

Learning Prep School

The Learning Prep School was selected to provide an example of potential consolidation by using the ridership data found on the, *SpEdTransSavings.org*, website. The data was exported from the website into an Excel spreadsheet, sorted by county, then exported into a Google map by county for demonstration purposes. The pins on the map are color coded by vehicle, the same color pin in two locations indicates a ride share, the vendor name is also provided. Note, the pins are town locations they do not represent a student address. In the example below the data is for Worcester County. The information shows eight vehicles currently being used. The text box outline around the colored coded pins shows a hypothetical consolidation, length of ride, distance and age factors may affect this potential combination. If the consolidation were to work, three vehicles would be eliminated, creating a total cost savings of \$116,100 dollars (see example below).

WORCESTER COUNTY RIDERSHIP DATA



RIDERSHIP DATA WORCESTER COUNTY		
Vendor	Town	# Students
AA Trans	Auburn	2
AA Trans	Millbury	1
AA Trans	Charlton	1
Marks	Mendon	1
Marks	Upton	3
Marks	Millville	1
Hunter	Milford	4
McCarthy & Sons	Bolton	1
McCarthy & Sons	Stow	1
Van Pool	Southborough	1
Van Pool	Westborough	2
Van Pool	Shrewsbury	3

Potential Cost Savings Example

	Current Cost per Day*	Potential Cost	Annual Savings
Vehicle 1			
Auburn	\$ 107.50	\$ 71.66	\$ 6,451
Millbury	\$ 107.50	\$ 71.66	\$ 6,451
Charlton	\$ 215.00	\$ 71.66	\$ 25,801
Vehicle 2			
Mendon	\$ 107.50	\$ 71.66	\$ 6,451
Upton	\$ 107.50	\$ 71.66	\$ 6,451
Millville	\$ 215.00	\$ 71.66	\$ 25,801
Vehicle 3			
Southborough	\$ 107.50	\$ 71.66	\$ 6,451
Westborough	\$ 107.50	\$ 71.66	\$ 6,451
Shrewsbury	\$ 215.00	\$ 71.66	\$ 25,801
TOTAL COMBINED SAVINGS:			\$ 116,110

*Based on state wide average of \$215 per day per vehicle

In this example, the cost per day for Auburn and Millbury on vehicle #1 is shared, Charlton is riding alone, therefore, pays the full cost. This route consolidation will result in savings for each district. The maximum number of students that can ride on a 7D special needs vehicle is eight, so that must be taken into consideration when planning routes.

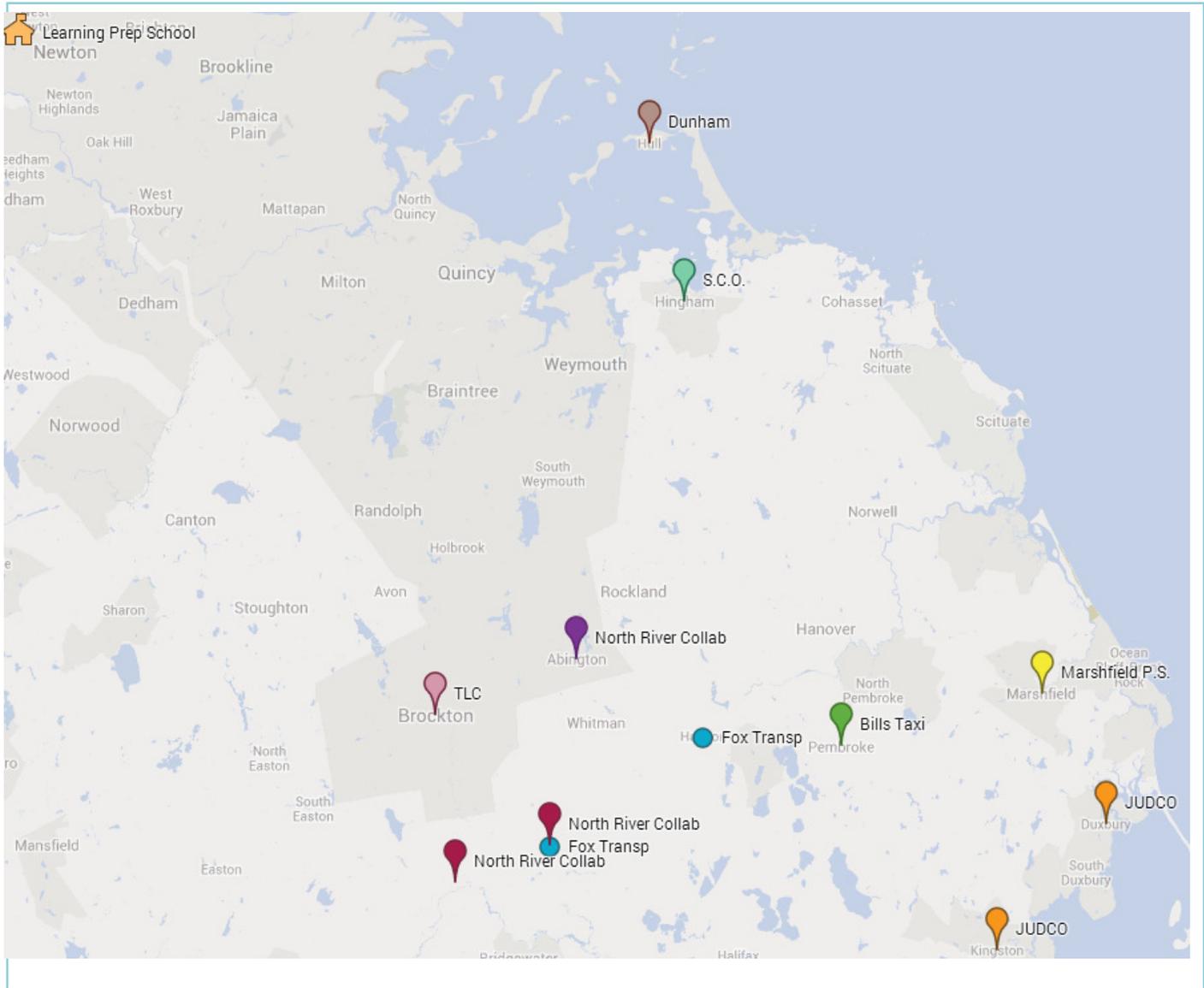
In reviewing the maps for Middlesex, Norfolk, Bristol, Plymouth, Essex and Suffolk counties, it looks possible to eliminate a total of seventeen (17) vehicles, at an average annual cost of \$38,700 per vehicle (\$215 x 180 days), the total savings would be \$657,900 dollars, including Worcester, the total savings at the Learning Prep School could potentially be **\$774,000** dollars.

On a daily basis the Learning Prep School receives 207 students transported on 78 vehicles.

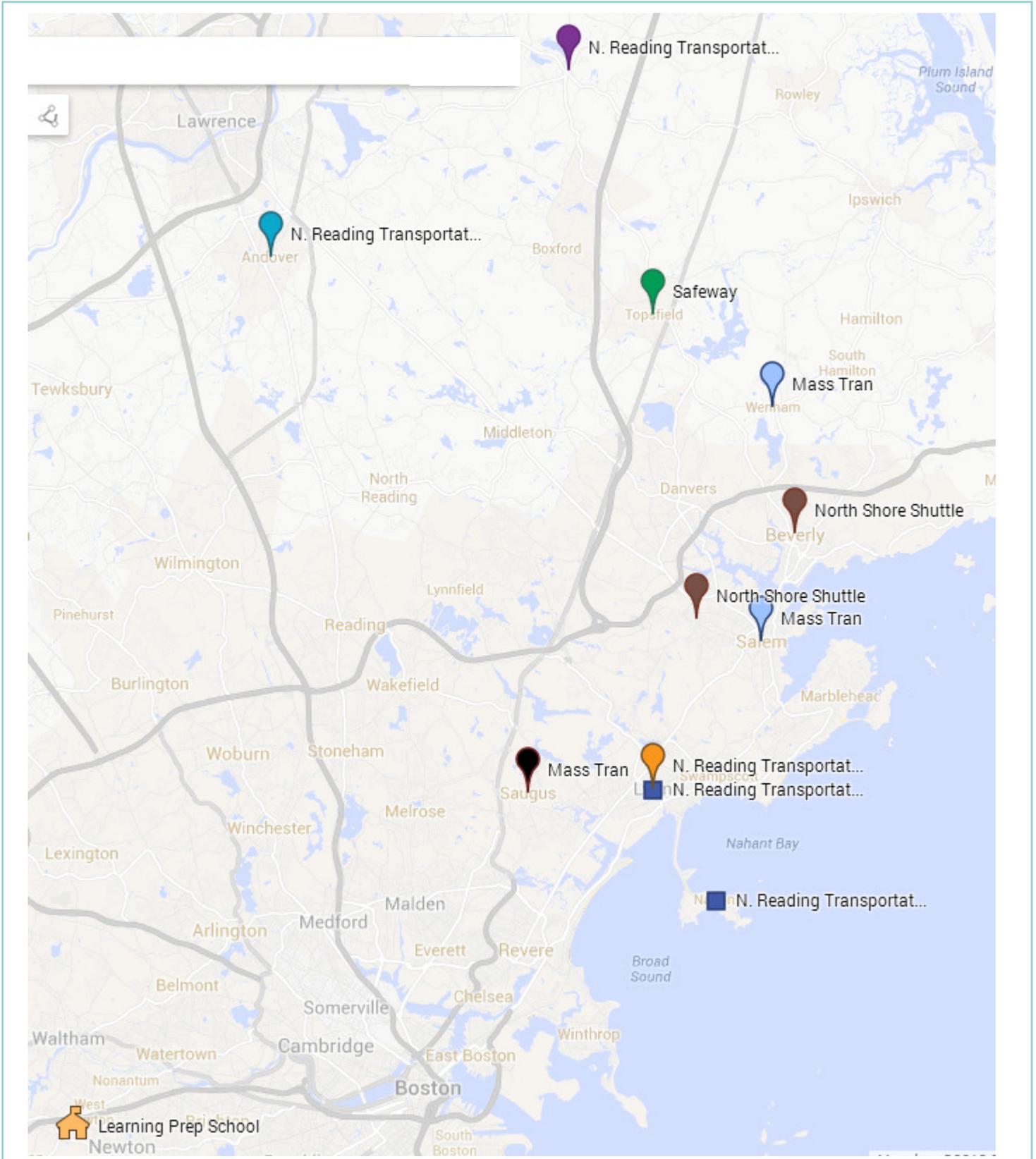
County	# Vehicles	# Students	Potential Reduction
Worcester	8	21	3
Middlesex	27	82	6
Norfolk	17	47	5
Bristol	4	9	1
Plymouth	9	18	2
Essex	8	17	2
Suffolk	5	13	1
TOTAL	78	207	20

The information also shows the on-going efforts school districts are making to ride share when possible, as indicated on the maps with same colored pins.

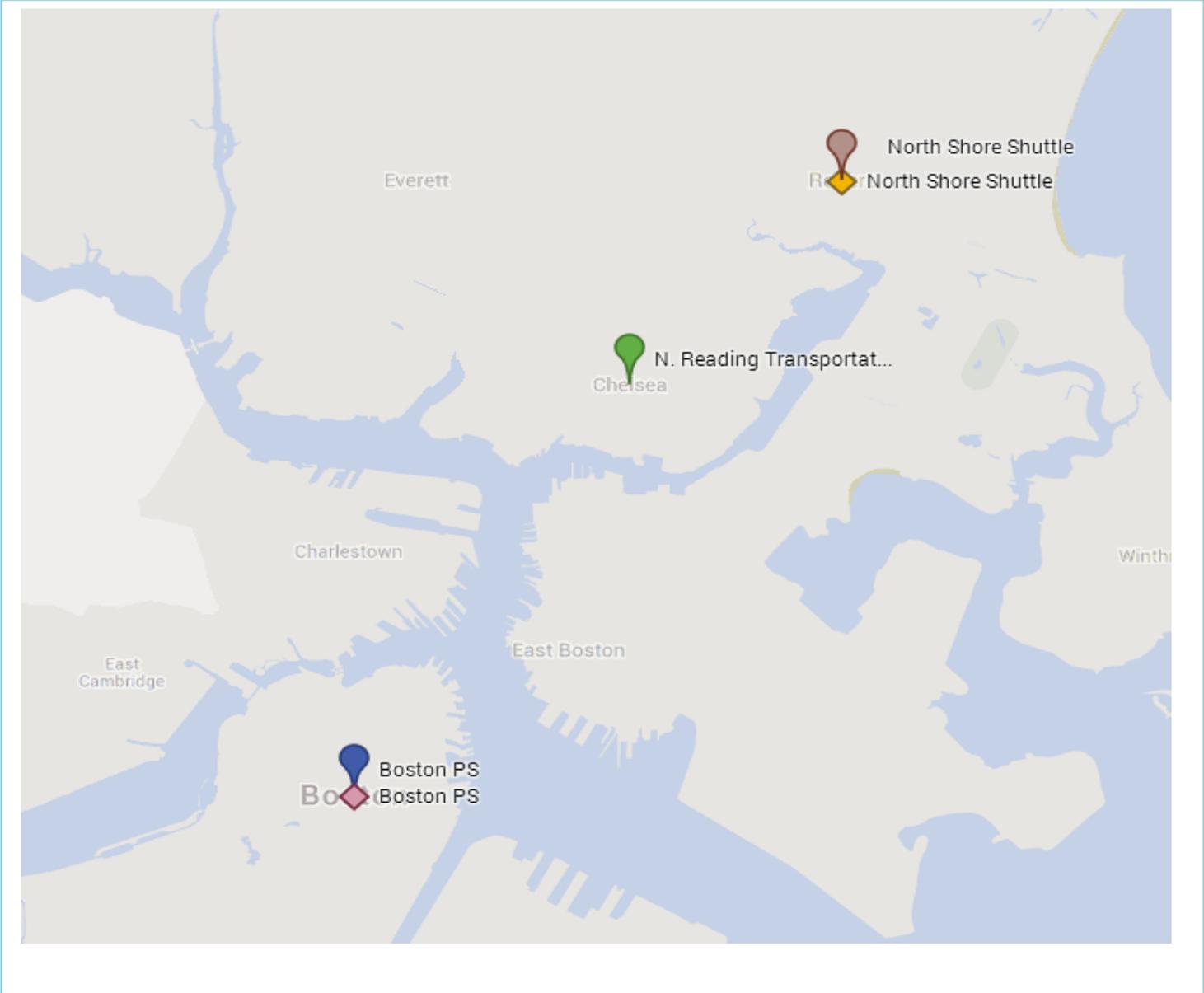
Learning Prep Ridership: Plymouth County



Learning Prep Ridership: Essex County



Learning Prep Ridership: Suffolk County



Conclusion

The actual ridership data collected at the school site is a valuable resource for school districts as they strive to maintain costs in the area of special education transportation. It allows a district to determine if a ride share exists and they can reference their cost to see if they are receiving a discounted rate, and explore additional opportunities to cost share with other communities. As shown in the case of the Learning Prep School, there is potential to consolidate vehicles thereby creating cost savings for districts.

The October 1 Data provides districts with information for all special education programs in the state and can also assist with the transportation planning process.

The DESE has continued funding in FY2014 to sustain and support this initiative. It is critical to maintain current data; one of the goals for next year is to create an on-line data entry capability for programs submitting ridership information to ensure a more timely and efficient means of collecting the data.

The website will provide school districts and program personnel with another tool to use as they strive to maintain high quality cost-effective transportation for all special education students in the Commonwealth.

ADDENDUM A

PARTICIPATING PROGRAMS	
Private Day	Collaborative
Arlington School	Bi-County Collaborative: Secondary Therapeutic Program
Bay Cove School	Bi-County Collaborative: SEAP-Anna Ware Jackson School
B C Campus School	Bi-County Collaborative: THS-Finberg Public Day School
Boston Higashi	C.A.S.E. : Colebrook High School
Braintree St. Coletta Day School	C.A.S.E. : CASE Programs for Developmental Disabilities
Brandon School	FLLAC Collaborative: FLLAC Collaborative ASD Program
Cardinal Cushing Centers School	Greater Lawrence Educational Collaborative : Alt School
Children's Center for Communication	LABBB Lexington @ Lexington High School
Clarke School	LABBB Arlington @ Arlington High School
Clearway School	LABBB Bedford @ John Glenn Middle School
CNS/Pathways Academy	Merrimack Special Education Collaborative: Alt Middle School
Community Therapeutic School	Merrimack Special Education Collaborative: Alt Voc School
Cotting School	North River Collaborative: North River School
Darnell School for Educational and Behavioral Service	Northshore Education Consortium: Northshore Academy
Devereux School	Northshore Education Consortium: Kevin O'Grady School
Granite Academy	Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC): Pilgrim Academy
Hillcrest Educational Centers School	SEEM Collaborative: Hurd School
Italian Home For Children	SEEM Collaborative: SEEM Middle School
League School	SEEM Collaborative: SEEM Theraputic Beebe Sch
Learning Prep School	The Education Cooperative (TEC): TEC High School
Lighthouse School	The Education Cooperative (TEC): Phoenix School
Manville School	
Mercy Centre School	
Milestones Day School	
N.E.A.R.I. School	
RCS Learning Center	
Schwartz Center School	
St Ann's School	
The Victor School	
Walker Home and School	
White Oak School	

ADDENDUM B

VENDORS PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION					
Private Vendor			Collaborative	Public School	
120 Providers			8 Providers	57 Providers	
AA Trans	Gokey & Quinn	R Fiore	ACCEPT	Amherst PS	Seekonk PS
A Ride Trans	Green Taxi	RAZ	C.A.S.E.	Arlington PS	Sharon PS
Action EMS	Greenfield Van	Response Transit	Cape Cod Collaborative	Attleboro PS	Southwick-Tolland PS
Ameiken	H&L Bloom	Ride Rite Rite Way	LPVEC	Barnstable PS	Springfield PS
American Caren	Heritage	Transportation	MEC	Berkley PS	Sutton PS
American Carrying Co	Hunter	Royal Taxi	N. Shore Ed Consort.	Beverly PS	Swansea PS
AR-BEL Trans	J & P Transportation	S.C.O.	North River Collab	Boston PS	Tantasqua Reg
Arlington-Belmont Cab	J & R Trans	Safeway	SWCEC	Braintree PS	Tyngsborough PS
Assist	J.S.C. Trans	Sboro Village Trans		Brookfield PS	Wareham PS
Atlantic Express	JAM Transp	SP&R Transp		Canton PS	Wellesley PS
Bedford Charter	JB Trans	Spence		Carver PS	Westfield PS
Belmont Cab	JBL	Springfield Trans		Dartmouth PS	Westford PS
Bill's Taxi	Jen's Trans	Statewide Trans		East Longmeadow PS	Winthrop PS
Boston/First Choice	JFK	TABCO		Easton PS	Worcester PS
Braintree Blue Cab	Judco	Taunton Motor Coach		Falmouth PS	
Brewer & Lowe	Kabco	Tellstone & Sons		Framingham PS	
Broadway Trans	Keissling	TLC		Freetown/Lakeville PS	
Cape Cod Trans	KJ	TMC		Gloucester PS	
Cape Taxi	KTI	Towne & Country		Groton Dunstable PS	
Caring Choice	LBI 57	Transit Services		Hanover PS	
Churchill Trans	LBK	Travelers Transit		Haverhill PS	
CJ's Transportation	Lencrenski Brothers	Tremblay Bus Co		Holliston PS	
Clinton Livery	Lisa Transportation	Trombly Motor		Holyoke PS	
CMK Wayland	Lizak Bus Company	Van Pool		Hopedale P.S.	
Community Action	Luncini	Varneys		Ipswich PS	
Country Cab	Malden Taxi	VHS Transport		Lawrence PS	
Country Carriage	Marks	Village Trans		Lynn Ps	
CRP	MART	VSP		Malden PS	
D&R Transportation	Mass Opportunity	W. Spence		Marshfield P.S.	
Danvers	Mass Tran	WCT		Medway PS	
Dee Bus	McCarthy & Sons	Whaling City		Melrose PS	
Dunham	MCJ Transportation	Windsor Transit		Middleboro PS	
Durham	Mill City Transit	Weymouth		Millis PS	
ENOS	MS 99	YCN		Monson PS	
EJ Transport	Mystic Services Inc			Norfolk PS	
Family Cab	N. Reading Transportation			North Attleboro PS	
First Call	Need-A-Lift			Norton PS	
First Choice	North Shore Shuttle			Norwood PS	
First Medical	Northeast Network			Oxford PS	
First Student	On Time Vans			Quincy PS	
Fisher	Precious Cargo			Rockland PS	
Fox Transp	PRN			Salem PS	
Fred Bus Co.	Provider			Sandwich PS	

