



PAYMON ROUHANIFARD
SUPERINTENDENT

CAMDEN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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PRESS RELEASE, with infographic attached

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Superintendent Announces Increase in Bus Access

District investment in response to community's call for greater funding to support more transportation options

Thursday, September 1, 2016 – Office of the Superintendent, Camden, NJ – With the new school year less than a week away, Superintendent Rouhanifard announced this morning that more than 200 additional high school students will receive bus access through a significant investment intended to promote student safety.

Prior District policy only provided bus passes to high school students who lived 2.5 miles or farther from their high school. In response to community feedback, the District has now revised this policy and will provide NJ Transit bus passes to students who live at least 2.0 miles, increasing access for 223 additional high school students across all five District high schools. In order to implement this policy change, the District will invest an additional \$150,000 for transportation.

In early June, the community group The Village organized parents, students, staff, and community leaders for a 2.4-mile walk from Parkside to Morgan Village that clearly demonstrated the need to provide greater support for students making this long walk each morning and afternoon. Superintendent Rouhanifard was among the dozens of participants on the walk, which made a real impact on him.

“It’s one thing to review data and policies in an office, and it’s another to live them by walking in the shoes of our students and families,” said Rouhanifard. “I deeply appreciate the Village for advocating on behalf of Camden residents for these changes and getting hundreds of students a safer way to get to and from school. Today’s announcement is progress, and I hope to build on these gains in future years.”

John Royal, a founder of the Village and alum of Camden High School who oversees public relations, welcomed the announcement.

“For years, too many students have had to walk too far, through dangerous areas and bad weather, to get to school,” Royal said. “We should be making it as easy as possible for kids to get to school, and today’s announcement is a helpful step in that direction. No Camden superintendent that I’ve seen has gotten in to the community as much as Superintendent Rouhanifard, and I think he makes more informed decisions because of his experiences talking to residents throughout the city.”

This week, all District high schools will receive a list of students who are eligible to receive transportation. To receive the bus passes, students should go to the main office of their school and complete a transportation application. Their school will notify them when their bus passes have arrived.

Assemblyman Arthur Barclay, an alumnus of Camden High School who is pursuing legislative changes to fund greater transportation options for students in areas like Camden, applauded the move.

“I walked to Camden High every day, and I had to go through areas and see things that our students shouldn’t be exposed to on their way to and from school. Even though Camden today is safer than it was when I was a student, the city still has its challenges, and it is our responsibility to protect our students from them. While I continue to fight for increased funding in Trenton, I’m grateful that Superintendent Rouhanifard is making this change that will help hundreds of students.”

Across the District, more than 1,150 students receive transportation at a cost over \$3.7 million.

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