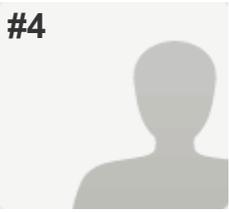


#4



COMPLETE

Collector: Web Link 1 ([Web Link](#))

Started: Tuesday, November 24, 2015 10:53:16 AM

Last Modified: Tuesday, November 24, 2015 10:56:13 AM

PAGE 1

Q1: Please enter your first and last name.

First Name

Frank

Last Name

Picciotti

Q2: Comment:

November 23, 2015

Dear Committee Members

As the business manager at Highlander Charter School, I know first hand the budgetary impact that transportation costs pose. All public schools are dealing with the exorbitant cost of transporting students to and from school. RIDE attempted to control the cost through creating the Statewide busing systems, which some districts chose to use. Other district decided to contract with First Student or Ocean State. Regardless of the provider, the costs continue to increase.

Prior to the funding formula, charters did not pay for transportation. Districts paid for all students in their district as out of district transportation. The funding formula shifted the cost as a phase in over the past five years so that charter schools pay for transporting their students including transportation for special needs students and those placed out of district, thus leveling the field for all public schools. Traditional district do bear the costs for private and parochial school students although there is categorical funding available to help them offset those expenses. Additionally as part of the funding formula regional school districts also receive categorical funding as it was found to be an larger expense when looking to transport students from more than one city or town.

Although at first glance it appears that the funding formula equalized transportation costs, Charters often transport from more than one municipality increasing costs. In addition, fewer students walk or are dropped off to charter schools with a statewide catchment area. Highlander is a statewide school and we are responsible for transportation for students from the 12 Districts in Region 3, including towns as far north as Smithfield and Lincoln. Unlike Providence, Highlander also buses high school students due to the fact that RIPTA does not currently have a stop near our high school campus. And under the current definition of the categorical funding since we are not considered a regional school district we are not eligible for additional funding despite transporting students from 11 towns and cities in Rhode Island.

7.56% of our FY 16 budget (\$591,780) is for transportation - this comes to approx. \$1254 per pupil compared to traditional districts which is approx. \$600 per pupil.

In closing, all public schools bear the high cost of transporting students and charters are public schools.

Sincerely,

Frank Picciotti
Highlander Charter School

#EdFundingRI - Public Comment Submission

Q3: By submitting this comment, you understand and acknowledge that your name and your comment will become available to the public as part of the public record.

Yes, I understand that my name along with my comment will be part of the public record and will represent me when shared or posted online.