



Finance Committee

Action Item III-B

May 12, 2016

**Summer School 2016 Extension for
DC 'Kids Ride Free on Rail' Program**

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Board Action/Information Summary

☒ Action ☐ Information

MEAD Number:
201741

Resolution:
☒ Yes ☐ No

TITLE:

Summer School 2016 Extension for DC Kids Ride Free

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

The Board will be asked to approve a short-term extension of the existing agreement between WMATA and the District of Columbia for the Kids Ride Free on Rail program to cover the summer school 2016 term.

PURPOSE:

Staff seeks Board authorization for the GM/CEO to execute a short-term extension of the existing DC School Subsidy Agreement to continue the 'Kids Ride Free on Rail' program for summer school 2016 (approximately two months).

DESCRIPTION:

Key Highlights:

- Staff is seeking Board approval for an extension of the existing "Kids Ride Free on Rail" program for DC students to cover the summer school 2016 term, under the same conditions as the program is currently operating.
- Staff anticipates returning to the Board in June with information on proposed changes to the program for the full 2016-2017 school year.

Background and History:

Since the late 1970s, Metro has offered reduced Metrobus and Metrorail fares to students in the District of Columbia (DC) under an agreement with DC. Over time, Metro and DC have modified the student fare agreement as needed for service changes, fare policy changes, and fare payment technology changes.

In June 2013, the Council of the District of Columbia approved the "Kids Ride Free on Bus" program, which provides all DC students with free access to Metrobus and DC Circulator. Metro successfully implemented the Kids Ride Free on Bus program for the opening of the 2013-2014 school year, and the program has substantially increased the number of student trips taken on Metrobus.

In June 2015, the Council of the District of Columbia authorized the Mayor to establish a program for public and public charter school students to receive additional subsidies of up to \$100 per month for riding Metrorail. This program came to be similarly known as

"Kids Ride Free on Rail." The Metro Board approved the new rail program for the 2015-2016 school year in August 2015, and Metro and DC staff worked jointly to implement the new program in time for school opening.

Discussion:

The "Kids Ride Free on Rail" program complements the existing free student bus program and has been successful in expanding student mobility. From the student perspective, both programs offer unlimited travel at no out-of-pocket cost. However, the two programs are administered somewhat differently -- the rail program is invoiced partly on an up-front charge per student and partly on the basis of number of trips taken, while the bus program is invoiced entirely on a per-trip basis. The different physical environments of the two systems also impact the administration -- students must pass by the operator in order to board a bus, while students can frequently enter the rail system without interacting with Metro staff.

Metro and DC have faced challenges in two related areas in implementing the new rail program. The first issue concerns student registration and Metro's invoicing to DC based on those registrations -- public school students who initially registered for the Kids Ride Free program received both the bus and rail passes, but some students have only used one or the other pass and not both. The second issue concerns fare evasion and the proper use of the "Kids Ride Free on Rail" pass -- based on in-person observations at key stations, many student trips are going uncounted as students fail to use their DC One cards properly to enter the Metrorail system.

Both Metro and DC generally agree that the "Kids Ride Free on Bus" program is working as intended and does not require any significant modifications. Metro staff and representatives of the District of Columbia are currently discussing potential changes to the "Kids Ride Free on Rail" program to address the challenges identified above. However, this proposed extension for summer school 2016 -- which would cover the period from June 27, 2016 to August 5, 2016 -- would be under the same terms and conditions as the current agreement. This extension would impact approximately 100 public and public charter schools and approximately 11,000 students. Metro staff anticipates returning to the Board in June with proposed changes to the program for the full 2016-2017 school year.

FUNDING IMPACT:

Metro's FY2017 budget assumes a continuation of the DC Student Subsidy Program, including 'Kids Ride Free on Rail.' Metro's total budgeted amount for the program in FY2017 is approximately \$16 million, of which 11 percent will be billed to the District of Columbia in the first quarter (quarterly billing is not in equal increments due to lower student ridership in July and August). Budgeted amounts will be "trued up" to actual usage at the end of the fiscal year.

Project Manager:	Allen Hoppe
Project Department/Office:	CFO/TRES

TIMELINE:

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Previous Actions	August 2015 - Board approves 'Kids Ride Free on Rail' program for 2015-2016 school year.
Anticipated actions after presentation	June 2016 - Staff to present proposed changes to 'Kids Ride Free on Rail' program to address current challenges

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board authorize the GM/CEO to execute a short-term extension of the existing DC School Subsidy Agreement to continue the Kids Ride Free on Rail program for the summer school 2016 term.



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Extension of DC 'Kids Ride Free on Rail' Program for Summer School

Finance Committee
May 12, 2016



Purpose

- Requesting authorization for GM/CEO to execute extension of existing 'Kids Ride Free on Rail' program for summer school





Background

- DC Council created new student Metrorail benefit in 2015
- Board approved program for 2015-2016 school year
- Benefit available to all public and public charter school students

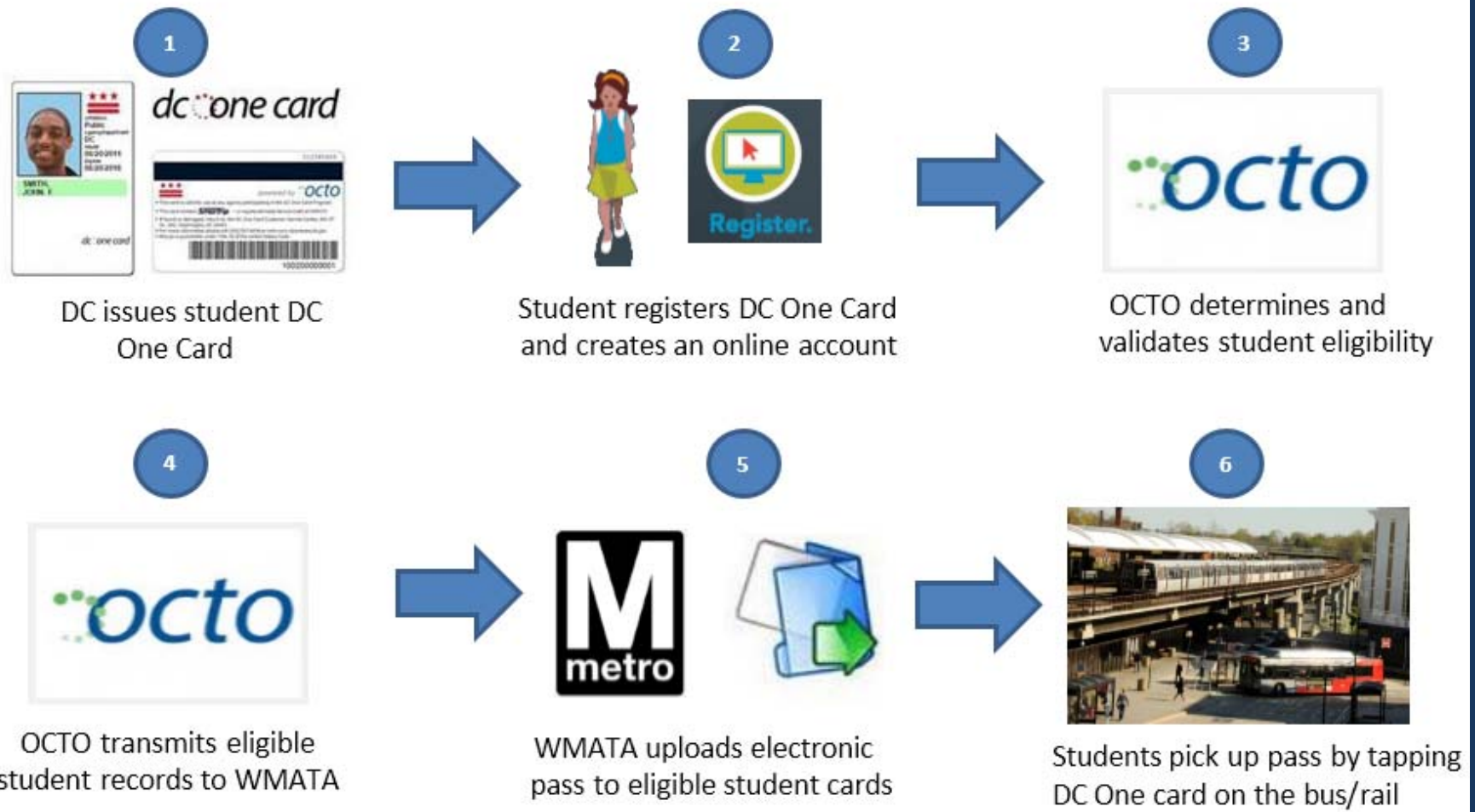


Experience with Student Rail Program in First Year

- Good complement to bus program and successful in expanding student mobility
- Facing challenges in two areas:
 - Student registration and billing
 - Fare evasion and proper use of the pass
- DC and Metro working to improve administration of the program for 2016-2017 school year



DC Student Card Process



OCTO = District of Columbia Office of the Chief Technology Officer



Summer School 2016

- Summer school dates: June 27 to August 5
- Approximately 100 public and public charter schools and 11,000+ students impacted
- Summer school extension would maintain current terms and conditions of agreement





Recommendation

- Authorize GM/CEO to execute short-term extension of existing agreement between WMATA and District of Columbia for 'Kids Ride Free on Rail' program to cover summer school 2016



Next Steps

- **June 2016:** Staff to return to Finance Committee with proposal for possible changes to program for 2016-2017 school year

SUBJECT: APPROVAL TO EXTEND AND AMEND THE REDUCED FARE AGREEMENT FOR DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STUDENTS TO INCLUDE 2016 SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM

RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors adopted Resolution 2015-49 to authorize the creation of a new reduced fare program for public and public charter school students in the District of Columbia; and

WHEREAS, The Kids Ride Free Metrorail Benefit was successfully implemented for the 2015-2016 DC Public School Year; and

WHEREAS, District of Columbia public and public charter schools are open for summer school in the months of June, July, and August; and

WHEREAS, The District of Columbia desires to extend the Kids Ride Free on Metrorail Benefit on substantially the same terms and conditions through the 2016 Summer School Program; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors authorizes the General Manager and Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute an extension and amendment to the Reduced Fare Agreement for DC Students, as is necessary to continue the Metrorail benefit on substantially the same terms and conditions as is currently imposed; and be it further

RESOLVED, That in order for staff to implement the summer program in advance of the DC Summer School Program, this Resolution shall be effective immediately.

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,



Mark R. Pohl
Acting General Counsel