



BALTIMORE CITY

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Baltimore City Council Informational Hearing –
From Front Door to Schoolhouse Door**

Council Bill 21-0056R


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City Schools Traditional Services Provided

MTA	Corner-to-Corner	Curb-to-Curb 	Swing Space	Extracurricular & Special Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility: >1.5 miles from school • Grades 6 to 12 • 5am to 8pm-4 trips per day/120 minutes each 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility: >1.0 mile from school • Grades: K to 5 • Yellow bus only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility: IEP, 504 plan, medically fragile, homeless, foster care, pre-school, ESOL and sibling • Grades: PK to 12 or until student ages out at 21 • Yellow bus or taxi cab assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility: Students who attend a 21st Century school under construction • Grades: PK to 8 • Yellow bus only • Funded by Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades: PK to 5 • Special Olympics • Athletics • Pre-K at Play • Cultural Events
32,000 Students	1,800 Students	3,600 Students	700 Students	
• Normally: 28,000 Students	2,000 Students	4,000 Students	1,500 Students	

Yellow Bus Services



This group receives the bulk of yellow bus and cab services



General MTA Services Provided to Students

MTA is a public service that serves Baltimore City Schools' students

- Over 40% of Baltimore City students are eligible for MTA services to travel to and from school sites; these students make up 18% of MTA ridership.
- Many Local Bus lines connect with Light Rail, Metro Subway and MARC Train service; however, most students rely on local buses.
- MTA provides specialized tripper bus service to some schools.
 - Tripper buses are altered public service lines that accommodate students but will provide access to public commuters.
 - The AM tripper starts at a major transit hub.
 - The PM tripper service starts at the school.
 - Both AM and PM trippers also serve the public.
 - This service is not available for all schools; it is unclear how MTA determines where the service will be provided but it is reviewed upon request by City Schools' Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) due to student and parent complaints.

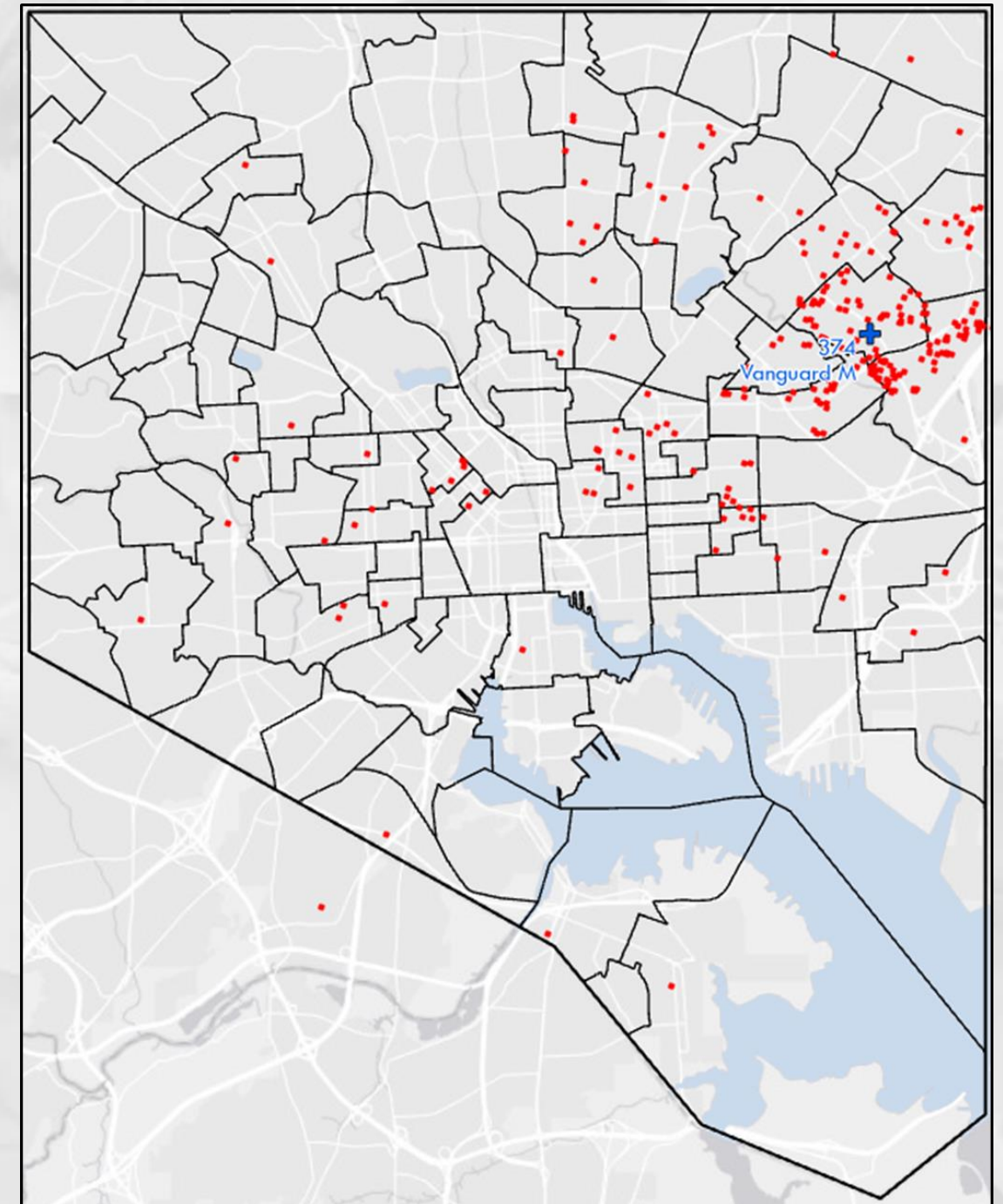
Baltimore City Schools Students that use MTA

Baltimore City Students that use MTA :

- Are Middle and High school students
- Tend to travel approximately 2 miles for middle school and approximately 4 miles on average for high school (elementary students accompanied by an older sibling or adult may also use MTA)
- Commute to schools across the city that require numerous transfers

The map to the right is an example of Vanguard stand-alone middle school. Based on the map, students travel across the city to attend the school. Sixty percent of students travel by MTA with only 23 (7%) students eligible for yellow bus.

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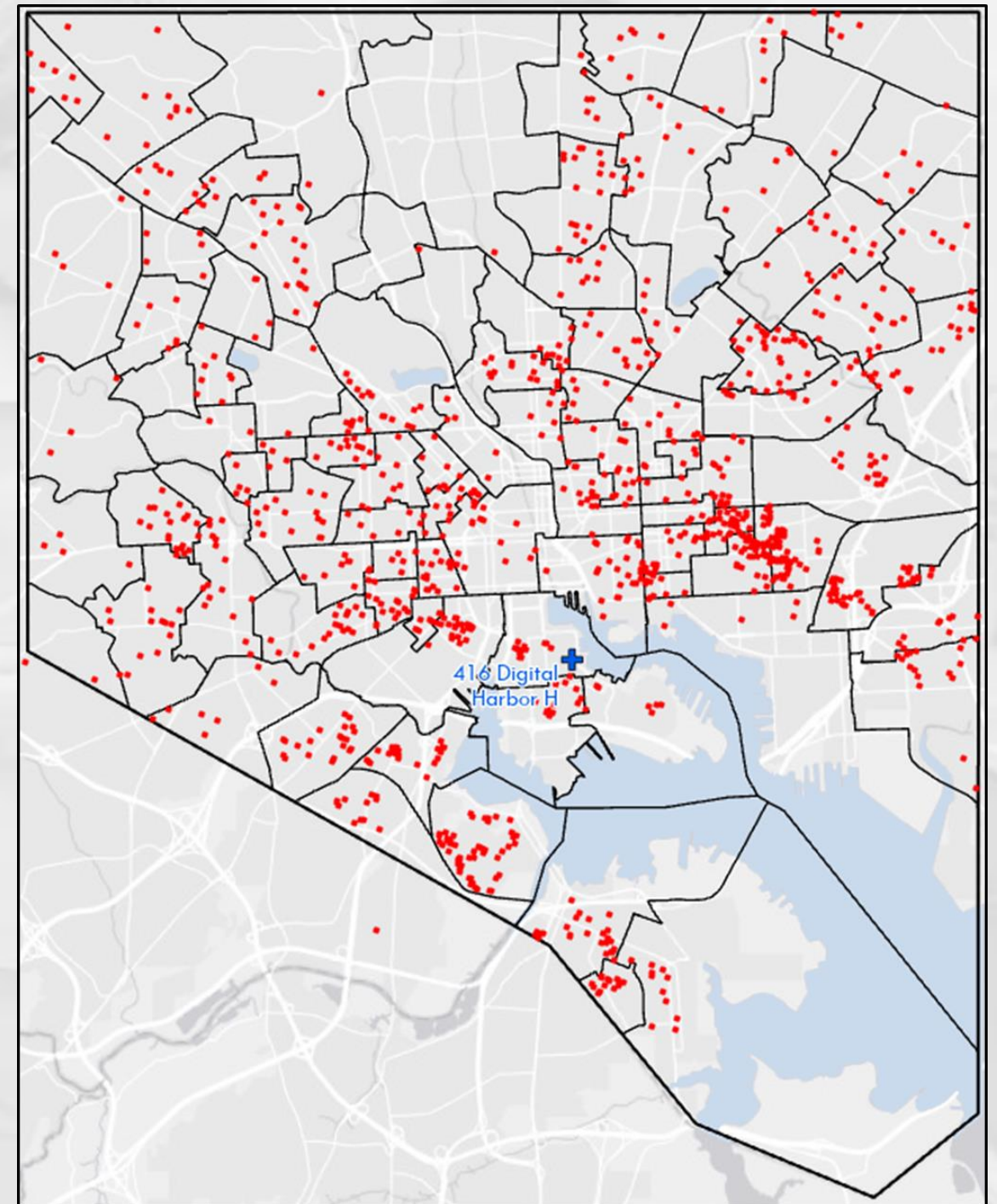
Vanguard Middle School students' home location related to school location. Average travel is 2 miles.

Baltimore City Schools Students that use MTA

MTA buses are optimal choices in comparison to yellow bus services offered to young riders eligible for transportation services.

- Students with Individualized Education Programs utilize yellow bus services.
- Baltimore City Schools' yellow bus services provide curb-to-curb or corner-to-corner service to students with IEPs.
- MTA services are optimal for middle and high school students who commute longer distances to different schools due to school choice.
- The map to the right is an example of Digital Harbor High School. Based on the map, students travel across the city to attend the school. Ninety-seven percent of students travel by MTA with only 41 (3%) students eligible for yellow bus.

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Digital Harbor High School students' home location related to school location. - average travel 4 miles



Student Safety During MTA Commute

During ongoing discussions with school leaders about student safety on MTA buses, leaders identified the following challenges listed below as impacts to students riding buses:

- Lengthy wait times for bus arrivals going to and returning from school.
IMPACT: Students crowd at bus stops with incidents of bullying/harassment and fighting.
- Lack of MTA police presence when incidents occur in and around buses/bus stops.
IMPACT: Stretch school police resources to sites off school grounds to protect students, staff, and community.
- Buses with sufficient capacity pass students waiting for transportation.
IMPACT: Long wait time for buses sometimes lasting from 45 minutes to an hour with larger impacts during winter months.
- MTA driver treatment of students on bus as depicted by students to school leaders was defined as rude; especially during instances that students lost or forgot OneCard.



Student Safety During MTA Commute (Continued)

- Limited time periods for changes to routes after bell times identified and school session begins (schedules due to traffic issues, bell time changes or delays only occur two times per year).
- Ongoing delays due to traffic or roadway challenges not addressed soon after school starts and are flagged by students and parents via the OPT.

IMPACT: Students have longer wait times for bus arrival with greater impacts during winter months, students must identify other options to get to school until bus schedules are modified to deal with ongoing delays.

- **NOTE: Many bus related issues are addressed at the school level. When a resolution is not found to an identified issue, the schools will escalate the issue to the Office of Pupil Transportation to remediate with the MTA designated school liaison.**



Recommendations

- Provide flexibility related to modification of bus schedules to account for challenges outside of the control of Baltimore City Public Schools such as driver shortages which required changes to Bell Schedules after May target date.
- Provide additional data sharing related to on-time performance, student ridership and tripper data so City Schools can better review bell time schedules during peak hours of service and identify service needs.
- Provide additional tripper services to school to address students' longer wait times due to buses being over-capacity and base tripper bus decisions on student ridership data rather than student commuter complaints.
- Increase bus frequency outside of AM and PM peak hours as some schools' start and release times occur during non-peak hours.

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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