

Kalil Johnson kj917b@bhsec.bard.edu | (443) 473-1325

To Chairperson Stokes and Members of the Education, Workforce, and Youth (EWY) Committee:

Hi my name is Kalil Johnson. I live in Sandtown and I am a student of Bard High School Early College, class of 2022.

For the most part, I take the bus to school with no problems. However, there are times when the buses drive past me. Or stop in a position where I can't get inside. When that happens, I have to call one of my family members to pick me up, which they can't always do. On half days, me, as well as other students, mistakenly take a bus that goes in the opposite direction of where the bus usually goes. And I have to take another bus or walk.

During the times when the bus doesn't stop where I'm at or leaves off without me I have to walk long distances.

There was a time when I tried to walk to school by foot because the bus drove past me, and another time when I walked all the way home on foot. I walk by many vacant houses and pass by people who I don't feel safe around. Not to mention that my house is a mile and a half away from my school, so my feet and legs would hurt. If the bus passes me I consider if I should just go home rather than being too late for school, due to the long distance.

My life would be different if elected leaders and MTA officials improved transit because I wouldn't have to worry about getting lost, being around people and places that make me feel uncomfortable, and getting to school on time. I wish that bus routes were developed based on student needs and that the TransitApp was better. Also, City Schools and the MTA should launch a Know Your Ride campaign aimed at helping students and parents consider commuting as part of the school choice process and providing schools with materials about the tripper routes that serve each school.