

REFERENCE TITLE: schools; transportation support; programs; appropriation

State of Arizona
Senate
Fifty-fifth Legislature
First Regular Session
2021

SB 1683

Introduced by
Senators Boyer: Bowie, Gray, Leach, Peshlakai, Shope; Representatives
Bolick, Chávez, Hernandez D

AN ACT

AMENDING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE 1, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY ADDING SECTION 15-217; AMENDING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 9, ARTICLE 2, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY ADDING SECTION 15-924; APPROPRIATING MONIES; RELATING TO SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Title 15, chapter 2, article 1, Arizona Revised
3 Statutes, is amended by adding section 15-217, to read:

4 15-217. Transportation support for enrollment options grant
5 program; rules; program termination

6 A. THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH THE TRANSPORTATION
7 SUPPORT FOR ENROLLMENT OPTIONS GRANT PROGRAM. BEGINNING IN THE 2021-2022
8 SCHOOL YEAR, THE PARENT OF A STUDENT IN THIS STATE MAY APPLY FOR MONTHLY
9 TRANSPORTATION GRANTS BASED ON AVAILABLE MONIES NOT TO EXCEED \$80 A MONTH
10 IF BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING APPLY:

11 1. THE PARENT'S CHILD OR CHILDREN ATTEND EITHER:

12 (a) A SCHOOL UNDER CHAPTER 8, ARTICLE 1.1 OF THIS TITLE.

13 (b) A CHARTER SCHOOL.

14 2. THE PARENT EITHER:

15 (a) NEEDS FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO EXERCISE THE OPTION PRESCRIBED IN
16 PARAGRAPH 1 OF THIS SUBSECTION.

17 (b) LIVES WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARY OF
18 THE SELECTED SCHOOL UNDER CHAPTER 8, ARTICLE 1.1 OF THIS TITLE, BUT A BUS
19 PROGRAM IS NOT AVAILABLE TO PICK UP THE STUDENT IN THE PARENT'S
20 NEIGHBORHOOD.

21 B. THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL ADOPT RULES TO ADMINISTER THE
22 PROGRAM ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

23 C. THE PROGRAM ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION ENDS ON JULY 1,
24 2031 PURSUANT TO SECTION 41-3102.

25 Sec. 2. Title 15, chapter 9, article 2, Arizona Revised Statutes,
26 is amended by adding section 15-924, to read:

27 15-924. Parent options for school transportation grant
28 program; program termination

29 A. BEGINNING IN THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT OF
30 EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH THE PARENT OPTIONS FOR SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION
31 GRANT PROGRAM. SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS MAY APPLY TO THE
32 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM. NOTWITHSTANDING
33 ANY OTHER LAW, A PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL MAY USE A
34 PORTION OF ITS TRANSPORTATION FUNDING TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION GRANTS TO
35 PARENTS OF STUDENTS IN THAT SCHOOL OR DISTRICT. EACH PARTICIPATING SCHOOL
36 DISTRICT AND CHARTER SCHOOL SHALL REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ON
37 A MONTHLY BASIS THE AMOUNT OF GRANT MONIES AWARDED UNDER THIS SECTION.

38 B. THE PROGRAM ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION ENDS ON JULY 1,
39 2031 PURSUANT TO SECTION 41-3102.

40 Sec. 3. Appropriation; state board of education; public
41 school transportation modernization grants; family
42 transportation stipend grants; improved municipal
43 bus route grants; transportation solution committee

44 A. The sum of \$10,000,000 is appropriated from the state general
45 fund in fiscal year 2021-2022 to the state board of education to

1 distribute public school transportation modernization grants, family
2 transportation stipend grants and improved municipal bus route grants as
3 provided in this section. The state board of education shall collaborate
4 with the state board for charter schools in both:

5 1. Developing grant applications and application procedures,
6 including a requirement that an applicant explain how it would use grant
7 monies to both:

8 (a) Improve access to transportation for students.

9 (b) Support transportation innovations and efficiencies.

10 2. Determining grant recipients.

11 B. The state board of education, in collaboration with the state
12 board for charter schools, may appoint a transportation solution committee
13 consisting of any combination of the following members:

14 1. County school superintendents.

15 2. Parents.

16 3. Community advocates.

17 4. Education and regional transportation policy experts.

18 C. At the request of the state board of education, in collaboration
19 with the state board for charter schools, the transportation solution
20 committee may do any of the following:

21 1. Consider and approve approaches to solving the challenge of
22 helping students access safe and affordable transportation to school.

23 2. Assist in developing grant applications and application
24 procedures.

25 3. Assist in selecting grant recipients.

26 D. The state board of education shall distribute the \$10,000,000
27 appropriated in subsection A of this section as follows:

28 1. \$5,000,000 to school districts and charter schools as public
29 school transportation modernization grants. The state board shall award
30 at least twenty-five percent of these grants to support rural and remote
31 proposals, except that if an insufficient number of rural and remote
32 proposals are submitted, the state board may award fewer than twenty-five
33 percent of these grants to rural and remote public proposals. A school
34 district or charter school shall use public school transportation
35 modernization grants to support the development and implementation of
36 innovations in public school transportation, including for any of the
37 following:

38 (a) Transportation resource sharing with neighboring school
39 districts or charter schools.

40 (b) Developing or contracting with rideshare programs.

41 (c) Developing options for reducing costs and improving
42 efficiencies while improving access to transportation for families,
43 including exploring the use of vans instead of buses and engaging
44 neighborhood carpool strategies.

45 (d) Options to address personnel challenges.

1 2. \$3,000,000 to school districts and charter schools as family
2 transportation stipend grants. The state board of education shall award
3 at least twenty-five percent of these grants to support rural and remote
4 proposals, except that if an insufficient number of rural and remote
5 proposals are submitted, the state board of education may award fewer than
6 twenty-five percent of these grants to rural and remote public proposals.
7 A school district or charter school shall use these grant monies to issue
8 grants to families to help cover the costs of any of the following:

- 9 (a) Driving students to school.
10 (b) Neighborhood carpools.
11 (c) Bus fare.

12 3. \$2,000,000 to municipalities as improved municipal bus route
13 grants. A municipality shall use these grant monies to do any of the
14 following:

15 (a) Plan for and build capacity to ensure bus stops exist in front
16 of multifamily and low-income housing and every public school within the
17 municipality's boundaries.

18 (b) In partnership with school district and charter school leaders,
19 reevaluate bus routes to eliminate ride time for students in kindergarten
20 programs and grades one through twelve and families wishing to engage with
21 the public schools in the municipality.

22 (c) Develop creative partnerships with public schools in the
23 municipality and community partners to ensure students' safe passage to
24 school.