

**Free Metro Passes for Students
Recommendation
Submitted by the School Attendance Task Force**

Adopted by the LAC Education Coordinating Council on April 4, 2013

Background:

- Increasing school attendance is essential to increasing student achievement
- The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) provides metro passes to students for \$24 per month, a cost that is prohibitive for far too many youth and their families
- The highest number of citations issued by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to youth under the age of 18 is for fare evasion; law enforcement, the courts and the Probation Department then spend more money processing these citations than they would purchasing student metro passes

Recommendation:

That the Education Coordinating Council collaborate with school districts, other organizations, and the MTA to secure free metro passes for all students, from pre-school to college

Justification:

In addition to directly benefiting youth, providing free student metro passes could have multiple benefits for a variety of other stakeholders, by:

- Increasing school attendance
- Increasing participation in after-school programs
- Enabling schools to redirect current transportation costs toward needed educational services
- Improving financial resources for low-income families
- Reducing the burden on public safety officials
- Reducing traffic congestion and pollution

Because of these significant benefits, several cities across the U.S., including New York, Boston, San Francisco and Oakland have instituted policies that provide students with free transportation during school hours and beyond.