

SUMMARY STATEMENT

ITEM NO.: PATCO-17-043

SUBJECT: Promotion of PATCO to Students in 2018

COMMITTEE:

Operations & Maintenance

COMMITTEE MEETING DATE:

November 28, 2017

BOARD ACTION DATE:

December 6, 2017

PROPOSAL: That the Board authorizes staff to promote PATCO ridership through special programs for students in 2018.

Amount:

For School Field Trips:	
Annual estimated value of free rides =	\$1,600
For FREEDOM Card Discount:	
Annual estimated 300 cards x \$5/card =	\$1,500
Total Cost of Special Student Programs:	\$3,100

PURPOSE: To promote future ridership by familiarizing students with PATCO.

BACKGROUND: PATCO's basic fare structure offers no student or group discounts. To familiarize the young people of a primarily car culture region with public transit and to make school field trips affordable, PATCO has in the past allowed school groups to travel at half fare. School groups have purchased a one-ride ticket for each student and chaperone participating in a field trip. Staff accompanied the group on their initial trip, using this opportunity to convey essential safety tips and the advantages of public transit. The school group then has used its tickets for its return ride. With the limited budgets that schools have for activities such as field trips, the half fare encourages them to use PATCO, thereby introducing students to the benefits of public transportation. We have hosted such field trips and provided tickets as follows:

Year	# of Field Trips	Dollar value of Discount
2013	11	\$1,500
2014	10	\$1,000
2015	17	\$1,430
2016	11	\$1,100
2017	16	\$1,586

In 2013 PATCO expanded this initiative by offering an incentive to students to become regular riders. Typically a customer purchases a FREEDOM card from the vending machine for \$5 and preloads at least \$20 value onto the card. To encourage students to commute on the train, PATCO made the FREEDOM card available to students who register at the FREEDOM Card Service Center, waiving the \$5 fee for the card itself. (Students would pay the regular fare for each trip.) The \$5 saving for the card itself has been promoted on PATCO’s website; the “coupon” is also available to local colleges and universities to post on their websites, and PATCO has provided cards to students who register at various campus events. Through this student FREEDOM card discount initiative, we distributed the following number of cards to new customers, with the interest in the program growing significantly (29% for the first ten months) in 2017:

Year	# of Student FREEDOM Cards
2013	171
2014	168
2015	191
2016	197
Through 11/3/2017	254

The cost to PATCO for this program is estimated at \$1,500 (300 students x \$5 per FREEDOM card). The benefit to PATCO is the fares paid not only as the student is commuting to school but also over his/her lifetime.

These initiatives to promote PATCO to students had been approved by the Board for calendar year 2017 via PATCO-16-033.

It is recommended that the Board authorize PATCO to continue its promotion of public transit through school discounts in 2018.

SUMMARY:	Amount:	\$3,100
	Source of Funds:	Operating Budget
	Capital Project #:	N/A
	Operating Budget:	General Fund
	Master Plan Status:	N/A
	Other Fund Sources:	N/A
	Duration of Contract:	N/A
	Other Parties Involved:	N/A

PATCO-17-043
Operations & Maintenance: November 28, 2017
Board Date: December 6, 2017
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RESOLUTION

RESOLVED: That the Board authorizes PATCO to promote use of public transit by students throughout 2018.

SUMMARY:	Amount:	\$3,100
	Source of Funds:	Operating Budget
	Capital Project #:	N/A
	Operating Budget:	General fund
	Master Plan Status:	N/A
	Other Fund Sources:	N/A
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