

**REPORT OF THE
JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE STUDYING THE
FUNDING OF THE TRANSPORTATION
OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN
TO
THE GOVERNOR
AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



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**Report of the
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Funding of the Transportation
of Handicapped Children
To
The Governor and the General Assembly of Virginia
Richmond, Virginia
December, 1982**

To: The Honorable Charles S. Robb, Governor of Virginia
and
The General Assembly of Virginia

Origin of the Study

The Joint Subcommittee Studying the Funding of the Transportation of Handicapped Children was authorized to conduct its study by Senate Joint Resolution No. 68 agreed to during the 1982 Session of the General Assembly. The resolution may be found in the appendices of this report.

Senate Joint Resolution No. 68, 1982 requested that the Joint Subcommittee:

1. Study the mechanism for reimbursement to school divisions for the transportation of handicapped children.
2. Study the equity of the reimbursements to rural and urban school divisions and alternative methods of reimbursement or of managing such transportation.

Appointed to serve on the Joint Subcommittee were: Stanley C. Walker of Norfolk, Chairman from the Senate Committee on Education and Health; Charles J. Colgan of Manassas and Dudley J. Emick, Jr., of Fincastle from the Senate Committee on Finance; George P. Beard, Jr., of Culpeper and V. Thomas Forehand, Jr., of Chesapeake from the House Committee on Education; and Dorothy S. McDiarmid of Vienna, Vice-Chairman, Alan A. Diamonstein of Newport News and Robert E. Harris of Fairfax from the House Committee on Appropriations.

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

In 1975, Congress passed P.L. 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, to assure all such children the opportunity for a free and appropriate education. Comparable legislation was enacted by the Commonwealth in 1972. Both federal (20 U.S.C. 1401(17)) and state law (§ 22.1-221 of the Code of Virginia) require that handicapped students be provided transportation, at no cost, to and from school or class if transportation is necessary to enable the child to benefit from educational programs and opportunities. State law further stipulates that, in lieu of providing transportation, school divisions may allot funds to pay the reasonable costs of transportation, and that the Board of Education shall reimburse the local school board sixty percent of the actual cost for either providing or contracting for transportation. The method of providing such transportation ("in lieu of providing") includes the use of a personal vehicle, commercial taxi, vehicles operated by private schools which the pupil attends, and nonschool buses owned by the school board. The phrases "in lieu of" and "special arrangement transportation" are used interchangeably. In instances where parents furnish the transportation, the local school board must reimburse the parents for the cost. The local school board is then reimbursed by the State for 60% of this cost, not to exceed \$250 per pupil per year.

All other handicapped or regular transportation costs are funded primarily by the localities with the state share apportioned according to a formula established by the Board of Education. Though local school divisions must provide transportation for handicapped students, no state differential is provided to assist localities with the extra costs that they incur for transporting these students. Current economic conditions have substantially increased the cost of providing such transportation and, therefore, have placed a considerable financial burden upon school divisions.

Activities of the Joint Subcommittee

The Joint Subcommittee met during the interim to receive the staff's study and testimony from the Department of Education and from representatives of rural and urban school divisions on the administration and operation of the transportation programs for handicapped students. The Joint Subcommittee also examined specially equipped school buses furnished by the Chesterfield, Henrico and Richmond City school divisions. The staff of the Department of Education worked with legislative staff to develop an equitable formula for supplementing the funding of transportation of handicapped students.

Findings

The Initial Staff Study

The Department of Education has the responsibility of administering federal and state laws pertaining to the education of the handicapped. The Department, therefore, administers the funds allocated to reimburse school divisions for the costs of transportation of handicapped students as provided in § 22.1-221 of the Code of Virginia.

There are three categories of handicapped pupil transportation:

Category 1: Handicapped pupils who are transported on state approved school buses together with nonhandicapped pupils, (e.g. handicapped children identified as learning disabled, speech impaired, etc.). These pupils are said to be "mainstreamed" as far as transportation is concerned.

Category 2: Handicapped pupils who are transported on state approved school buses many of which are specially equipped, (e.g. hydraulic lifts) and have a limited pupil capacity (e.g. 3-5 students). This type of transportation is said to be exclusive transportation of the handicapped.

Category 3: Handicapped pupils who are transported by special arrangement in lieu of transportation on an approved school bus, (e.g. payment to parents, taxis, aides, etc.).

Of the 800,000 school children who were transported on state-approved school buses during the 1980-81 school year, 90,000 to 100,000 children were classified as handicapped. This total represents those children in categories 1 and 2. Local school divisions are reimbursed at the same rate for categories 1 and 2 though the cost of transporting the children in category 2 is substantially higher than the cost of transporting the children in category 1. For the school year 1981-82, the funding rates were \$14.84 per pupil, 13.4 cents per mile and \$608.70 per bus. Though total cost figures for 1981-82 are incomplete, state aid in previous years has amounted to 27.44% of the operational cost, not including the cost of purchase of equipment. This year, it is estimated state aid will be approximately 32% of the operational cost. There were approximately 2700 children transported by special arrangement (category 3) during the 1980-81 school year. Transportation by special arrangement is financed by the special education categorical funding. School divisions are reimbursed sixty percent of the actual cost of transportation (§ 22.1-221, Code of Virginia), not to exceed \$250 per child annually, for children transported by special arrangement (category 3 only). The average cost per pupil to the state was \$196.32 for the 1981-82 fiscal year.

The study also cited the following factors which affect the cost of transportation for handicapped children:

Inadequate Funding - The most significant issue is the inadequacy of funding for the transportation of handicapped students by exclusive scheduling. Whereas the majority of handicapped students are transported on standard school buses with nonhandicapped students (mainstreamed), school divisions incur increased costs in providing transportation for those handicapped students who cannot ride ordinary buses. During the 1981-82 school year approximately 12,230 special education students were transported to classes by exclusive scheduling on approved school buses.

Cost of Special Equipment - The standard school bus costs approximately \$20,000-\$22,000. When equipment, such as a hydraulic lift, is added to accommodate students' special needs, the additional cost may be \$12,000-\$13,000. This does not include the cost of maintenance, gas, and labor.

Small Buses - These vehicles are costly because they are specially equipped and carry a limited number of students. Often the cost of pupil transportation is increased when a school must purchase

several small buses that carry fewer children for longer distances than the less expensive standard school buses.

Scheduling, Routing and Geographical Factors - Handicapped students do not all live together in a cluster to make pick-up and drop-off convenient for the school division. Likewise, special education programs are not always in close proximity to students' homes, and special education classes are not all assigned to one building. The location of programs and classes, the residence of students, and time (i.e., length of bus trip one way, starting and closing times of school) are all factors that must be considered when scheduling buses and mapping bus routes.

Aides - Due to the particular needs of some students, aides are sometimes assigned to the school buses or to accompany a student to and from school. The aides are usually those persons who have been trained to care for children with specific handicapping conditions.

Child's Special Needs - A child's special needs may necessitate special equipment just for him, or he alone may require an aide.

Road and Safety Factors - Road and transportation safety is always a prime consideration in transporting *all* students. However, road and transportation safety is of crucial importance in transporting handicapped students (e.g., sudden stops, road hazards, emergency stops), as most students transported by special arrangement must be picked up and dropped off near their door. Pick-up and drop-off can be difficult when the location of the child's home makes it inaccessible to the bus or the terrain does not allow the bus stop to be conveniently placed near his home. When problems such as these occur, they are resolved at the local level by parents, school officials and law-enforcement agencies meeting together to determine the best alternative based upon the individual circumstances.

Least Restrictive Environment - The least restrictive environment is the most important factor that must be considered when transporting such students. The program determined to be the "least restrictive environment" will not always be near the student's home. When a student who lives in the farthest eastern part of a county or city must be transported to the "least restrictive environment" located in the farthest western part of the county or city, that student may ride the bus for much longer periods of time than the average child--in some cases for 1 1/2 to 2 hours one way.

Special Vocational Education Classes/Other Classes - School divisions must also provide transportation between schools for handicapped students during the school day. Usually, this involves transporting a student from his home school to vocational education classes or other classes or services located in another facility.

School Bus Drivers - Bus drivers for handicapped students have to be exceptional people. Local school divisions' directors of transportation usually look for seasoned drivers who are alert, patient, compassionate and sensitive. These drivers, who often have 10-to 25-year successful driving records, must have demonstrated the ability to maintain order on the bus and to respond appropriately in emergencies. These bus drivers understand the special needs of handicapped children and the magnitude of the responsibility of transporting such students, and are willing to assume this responsibility.

Frequently, the salary scale for bus drivers of handicapped students is higher than that for drivers of regular school buses. The difference in the salary scale is an additional cost factor in transporting the students.

Parental and Community Factors - Often the attitude of parents regarding their child's needs, the parents' work schedule, and the attitude, responsiveness and support of the community affect the transportation of handicapped children.

Parents of handicapped children, like other parents, love and care for their offspring and want only the very best for them. However, these parents are keenly aware of their children's fragility and vulnerability. Some parents of handicapped children, because of their great concern for their children, may be unusually cautious and over-protective or, in some few cases, excessively demanding. These parents may make demands on the school division that are difficult or impossible to fulfill without inconveniencing the parents of other handicapped children or causing the school

division undue expense.

When a parent fails to notify the bus driver that his child does not need to be picked up, the bus driver makes an unnecessary trip to the home. The effect that this delay may have on the pick-up time of other students depends upon the distance the driver has to travel to the home and any other delays he might encounter that morning. When a parent is not at home to receive his child who needs constant supervision, the bus driver must remain with the child until the parent returns or other appropriate adult supervision (i.e., relative or neighbor) arrives to receive the child.

The support of the local community is an essential component to the success of the transportation program. Some examples of community support are:

- (1) Cooperation of local government in providing road maintenance and other safety features;
- (2) Neighbors who are understanding and willing to assist parents of handicapped children by putting the children on the bus in the morning and receiving them in the afternoon;
- (3) A community which is considerate and understanding of the need for frequent bus stops; and
- (4) A community which is understanding of the need to have special education facilities, to the extent possible, centrally located within the jurisdiction's populations. These are just a few of the ways in which community support assist in the efficient operation of the transportation program.

Communication Among the Departments of Transportation, Special Education and Finance of the Local School Division

The departments of transportation, special education and finance must work together closely to provide the transportation services required by handicapped children. The special education department must notify the transportation department of all such students who require transportation services and of any particular needs of the students to assure their safety during the bus ride (e.g. car seats, restraints, hydraulic lift). To the extent possible, requests must be made in a timely manner to give the transportation department adequate time to purchase the equipment and to reschedule buses. The transportation department, giving due consideration to the needs of the students, must then schedule and route the appropriate vehicles to the students' homes and coordinate pick-up and drop-off times with school opening and closing times. Next, the director of transportation must select the drivers and, where appropriate, coordinate the location of the driver's residence with the starting point of a bus route.

The finance department must remain receptive to requests of either the special education or transportation department for the purchase of needed equipment. Personnel within this department must also be aware that items that they are requested to purchase are genuinely needed but are often costly because of stringent specifications and complexity of the technical equipment.

Without cooperation and good communication among these departments, as well as support from all other related areas within the school division, the transportation program could become more costly than necessary, and fail in performing its responsibilities.

Growth of Special Education Programs

Data submitted to the joint subcommittee by the Department of Education on the growth of special education programs in the state indicated that such programs had grown from 69,762 (6.4%) students in 1974 to 110,725 (11.3%) students in 1981. The latter percentage is consistent with both state and federal estimations of the percent of the population found to be handicapped (approximately 12%). The increase in the number of students judged to be handicapped is attributed to state and federal mandates for identification, diagnosis, and placement in appropriate instructional programs.

Testimony of Urban School Divisions

A. Henrico County Public Schools

Mr. Nathan Young, Director of Pupil Transportation for Henrico County Public Schools and a representative of the Virginia Association of Pupil Transportation, addressed the joint subcommittee concerning Henrico's transportation program for handicapped students. He stated that Henrico County Public Schools established an early commitment to provide the special educational needs of handicapped children.

The county began its program with two classes and two nine-passenger vans to serve a small group of students. The program now uses forty-five modified buses to transport approximately 863 students. The county attempts to maximize the use of the equipment and manpower to transport students as efficiently and economically as possible. The transport of multiple groups of students twice daily has been achieved by most large school divisions by staggering school opening and closing times. In rural or sparsely populated areas this type of scheduling is not generally possible.

Henrico County maintains separate time schedules for elementary, middle and high schools. Seventy-three percent of the bus fleet transport two or three groups of students twice daily, serving on the average 130 students. Approximately eight percent of the buses transport one group of students, an average of 46 students, each day, and primarily serve the rural or sparsely populated areas of the county. The remaining nineteen percent of the fleet transport handicapped students. These buses serve 863 students, an average of nineteen students per bus per day, with an average of seventy miles per day round trip as compared to less than thirty miles round trip per day for regular school buses. Fifteen of the buses have bus aides assigned to provide assistance to the severely handicapped.

To meet the transportation needs of handicapped students, most local school transportation administrators schedule special buses, with little control over the additional costs that are involved. Mr. Young cited the following as major considerations in scheduling transportation for handicapped students: (1) length of the school day, (2) pick up time and length of travel time, (3) number of miles traveled, (4) number of schools served, (5) number of students served, and (6) accommodations for the physically handicapped.

Comparing the costs of transporting the handicapped and nonhandicapped students, he noted that nineteen percent of the buses serve only four percent of the students at twenty percent of the operating cost. During the 1981-82 school year, the average cost of transporting handicapped students was \$614.58 per student compared to \$87.55 for transporting nonhandicapped students.

Mr. Young suggested that the joint subcommittee consider recommending that:

1. The Department of Education change its present procedure for reporting local pupil transportation costs to one which would require separate reporting of transportation costs for handicapped students and nonhandicapped students.
2. The Department of Education establish a separate funding procedure for categorical funding of special education transportation based on pupils, miles and buses.
3. The General Assembly appropriate additional funds to the Department of Education to assist localities with their special education transportation programs.

B. Norfolk Public Schools

Mr. Donald L. Long, Director of Transportation for Norfolk Public Schools, representing Dr. Albert Ayars, Superintendent, also addressed the joint subcommittee. Mr. Long stated that there are 1,266 handicapped students in his jurisdiction who require special transportation. He indicated that the number of students who require this service increases weekly. Transporting handicapped students is five to six times more costly than transporting nonhandicapped students because of the need to use specially equipped vehicles with a limited pupil capacity. The assignment of aides to the buses and long distances for home pick-up and delivery, which contribute to the buses' depreciation and increased maintenance, are factors which increase the cost of the transportation program. While the cost of transporting handicapped students has risen, the percentage of that cost reimbursed by the state has declined. Mr. Long recommended that legislative action be taken to increase the state reimbursement for special education pupil transportation.

C. Fairfax County Public Schools

Mr. Joe Higgins, Director of Transportation for Fairfax County Public Schools, appeared on behalf of Dr. Burkholder, Superintendent, to present Fairfax's special education transportation program. Mr. Higgins was accompanied by Mr. Dick Cunningham, Director of Special Education. Mr. Higgins stated that Fairfax's special education bus fleet consisted of 147 buses which transport children of varying disabilities to 74 mainstream centers each day. In addition to these buses, 186 buses transport the learning disabled (LD), mildly mentally retarded (MMR), English Second Language (ESL), and the gifted and talented (GT). The distance traveled each day varies from 11 to 40 miles one way and the time length of the bus routes varies from 40 minutes to 1 hour and 45 minutes one way. Of the 9,334,080 miles traveled during the 1981-82 school year by the county's school buses, 2,596,860 miles were traveled by special education buses. The cost of transporting nonhandicapped students for the 1981-82 school year was \$135 per student compared to \$2,032 per student for handicapped students. Special education bus drivers and bus attendants are also provided additional training in Fairfax County. Special education transportation requires communication and coordination with parents, guardians, instructional personnel, school staff, maintenance personnel, transportation services personnel, school community relations personnel, local P.T.A.s' and citizen groups.

Testimony of Rural School Divisions

C. Southampton County Public Schools

Mr. W. F. Grizzard, Jr., Administrative Assistant for Administration, represented Mr. J. W. Harville, Superintendent of Southampton County Public Schools. Mr. Grizzard commented that Southampton County is located in Southeast Virginia. It has an area of 603.19 square miles of which 599.36 square miles are rural. The school division began its special education program in the early 1970's with an enrollment of 4,500 students and two special education staff members for thirty special education students. During the 1976-77 school year, a preschool homebound assistance program for eight children was begun which required the use of an automobile with operation and maintenance costs of approximately \$750. The school division, during the 1978-79 school year, began transporting eleven multihandicapped students to Courtland on a 16-18 passenger school bus purchased and equipped with a wheelchair lift at a cost of \$15,132.50. Two aides to assist the driver were employed at a total cost of \$11,687.00, (aides, \$9,600; driver, \$2,187.). In 1980-81, Southampton began transporting eight preschool multihandicapped students to a special education center in Courtland. A ten-passenger van was purchased to transport the children and an aide was employed to assist the driver with the students. The cost of the van was \$12,330 and the aide's salary was \$3,766. These additions have not eliminated the need for the automobile because preschool teachers must make a minimum of two home visits monthly.

For the 1981-82 school year, the statewide cost per pupil mainstreamed was \$203.28. The cost per handicapped pupil on special transportation was \$1,888.52. This figure does not include aides' salaries or any capital outlay costs. The cost for transporting handicapped children in 1982-83 is projected to be as much as the cost in 1981-82, in addition to increased operational costs for fuel, parts, another bus for the multihandicapped and the possibility of providing transportation to a regional school in Suffolk.

At present, the enrollment has decreased to 2,700 students and the special education staff has increased to 30 for 322 special education students. Of the 322 special education students, 304 are transported with nonhandicapped students on state-approved school buses. However, major problems are occasioned by the transportation for eighteen multihandicapped students.

Mr. Grizzard also attested to the problems in scheduling when the families of handicapped students move from one part of the county to another.

B. Amelia County Public Schools

Mr. Charles F. Shell, Assistant Superintendent for Administration, represented Mr. Waverly E. Copley, Superintendent of Amelia County Public Schools. Mr. Shell described Amelia County as a small, rural county with a land area of 366 square miles. There are 1,500 students in average daily membership. The transportation program for handicapped students has become a complex problem and a large expense to the transportation budget. Transportation costs for handicapped students amounted to approximately \$19,500 for the 1981-82 school year, representing 8.6% of the total

transportation expenditures. This expenditure was for less than one percent of the total pupils transported.

There are three classes of transportation expenditures for handicapped students: regular day school, the Southside Special Education Consortium, and direct payment of money in lieu of school bus transportation. In the regular day school program, handicapped pupils are transported to and from school on a van specially equipped with a wheelchair lift. The cost of the van was \$15,400 and three children were transported this year. The operating cost for this program in 1981-82 was \$6,139.

Amelia County participates in the Southside Special Education Consortium, which is composed of the seven counties in the Piedmont Planning District. The consortium, established to meet the needs of low-incidence handicapping conditions, is located in the Prince William County Public Schools. Four children are transported to the consortium and two to the sheltered workshop in Farmville. These children have multiple handicaps and severe emotional disturbances. There were ten students in the program last year, which cost \$9,354 for the 1981-82 school year.

During the 1981-82 school year, there were two students who attended school in Chesterfield County and were transported under the direct payment in lieu of transportation program. These students have a special handicapping condition for which Amelia County does not have a program. Chesterfield County Public Schools serve the children on a tuition basis and their parents are reimbursed the cost of transportation. The cost of this program for the 1981-82 school year was \$3,964.22.

Mr. Shell stated further that, of the County's \$19,500 expenditure for the transportation of handicapped students, the Department of Education reimbursed the county \$3,666. He noted that the total expenditure did not include the depreciation for vehicles.

C. Henry County Public Schools

Dr. Paul H. Jones, Superintendent of Henry County Public Schools, introduced Mr. Lawrence, Chairman of the Henry County School Board, who gave a brief overview of the school division's transportation program for handicapped students. Mr. Lawrence commented that the program began simply, with three handicapped students being transported in private cars. Today, 195 handicapped students are transported on five specially equipped buses which travel 30,000 miles per year. Aides are assigned to accompany students on the vans operated by the school division and each van is equipped with a two-way radio.

Dr. Jones noted that the cost of transporting handicapped students during the 1981-82 school year was \$1,590 per student compared to \$124 per student for nonhandicapped students.

Funding Mechanism for the Transportation

of Handicapped Students

During the course of its study, the joint subcommittee was advised that the figures on the cost of transporting handicapped children on state-approved school buses were not available statewide. Though a few of the larger school divisions have been able to identify this cost, the majority of school divisions are unable to do so because there is no subdivision for handicapped children in the statewide reporting system for pupil transportation.

The joint subcommittee determined that data detailing the cost of such transportation by school division was essential to its work and any recommendations it deemed advisable to submit to the Legislature. The joint subcommittee therefore requested the Department of Education to survey each school division to determine the number and cost of transporting handicapped children on state-approved school buses.

Results of the survey revealed that the current formula for reimbursing school divisions for the cost of transporting handicapped students on state-approved school buses does address, in part, the extra costs involved. The survey results indicated that, statewide, approximately 12,230 handicapped students were transported on approved school buses used exclusively for the handicapped during the

1981-82 school year at a cost of \$1,083.05 per pupil compared to 690,517 students on routine schedules at \$111.77 per pupil. In addition, there were twenty-two counties and nine cities at a cost range of \$500-\$1,000 per pupil transported on exclusive scheduling and seventeen counties and five cities at a cost range of \$1,000-\$1,500 per pupil transported on exclusive scheduling. It was noted, however, that 2,147 pupils were transported on exclusive scheduling at a cost range of \$2,000-2,500 per pupil. These pupils were distributed among seven counties: one county, 2,000 students and among six counties, 147 students. The data showed further that the state contribution to local school divisions for the cost of transporting handicapped students on exclusive scheduling was 16.60% and 32.9% for routine (mainstream) scheduling.

Considering these data, current fiscal constraints, and extra costs incurred by school divisions in transporting handicapped students by exclusive scheduling, the joint subcommittee determined that the most appropriate means to address the problem would be to equalize state funding of routine (mainstream) scheduling and exclusive scheduling by increasing the state funding level for exclusive scheduling. The Department of Education estimated that such an increase would require 2.1 million dollars per year, based on calculations for the 1981-82 school year, in the next biennium. The Department of Education was requested to analyze the data obtained from the survey to determine the additional cost to each school division for transporting handicapped students via exclusive scheduling, and the additional funds that each school division would receive if the state funding level for exclusive scheduling were increased to that of routine scheduling, thirty-two percent. The analysis of the data is presented in the following charts:

CHART 1.

PROPOSAL: DISTRIBUTION OF SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS

Senate Joint Resolution No. 68, 1982

County		Percent of Total Handicapped Pupil Population	Additional Aid (Dollars)	Percent of Total Fund Supplement
Accomack	001	.18	3,793	.18
Albemarle	002	.67	14,111	.64
Alleghany	003	.12	2,484	.12
Amelia	004	.03	922	.05
Amherst	005	.21	4,944	.24
Appomattox	006	.13	3,269	.16
Arlington	007	2.90	56,066	2.63
Augusta	008	1.02	21,421	1.01
Bath	009	.07	2,328	.11
Bedford	010	.64	13,406	.63
Bland	011	0	0	0
Botetourt	012	.17	4,629	.22
Brunswick	013	.11	2,312	.11
Buchanan	014	.13	3,090	.15
Buckingham	015	.06	1,428	.07
Campbell	016	1.32	26,819	1.26
Caroline	017	.04	1,420	.07
Carroll	018	.09	2,869	.14
Charles City	019	0	0	0
Charlotte	020	0	0	0
Chesterfield	021	3.54	84,335	3.96
Clarke	022	.10	2,342	.11
Craig	023	0	0	0
Culpeper	024	.36	7,763	.37
Cumberland	025	.06	1,502	.07
Dickenson	026	.20	6,595	.31
Dinwiddie	027	.45	10,008	.47
Essex	028	.13	2,757	.13
Fairfax	029	16.36	366,534	17.19
Fauquier	030	.09	2,808	.14
Floyd	031	.06	2,108	.10
Fluvanna	032	0	0	0
Franklin	033	0	0	0
Frederick	034	.12	3,119	.15
Giles	035	.10	2,694	.13
Gloucester	036	.11	2,356	.11
Goochland	037	.04	1,157	.06
Grayson	038	.21	4,107	.20
Greene	039	.08	1,912	.09
Greensville	040	.06	1,565	.08
Halifax	041	.30	7,167	.34
Hanover	042	.21	5,189	.25
Henrico	043	7.06	141,158	6.62
Henry	044	.55	13,692	.65
Highland	045	0	0	0
Isle of Wight	046	.05	1,476	.07

County		Percent of Total Handicapped Pupil Population	Additional Aid (Dollars)	Percent of Total Fund Supplement
James City	047	-	-	-
King George	048	.21	4,198	.20
King & Queen	049	0	0	0
King William	050	0	0	0
Lancaster	051	0	0	0
Lee	052	.22	4,904	.23
Loudoun	053	1.01	22,816	1.07
Louisa	054	0	0	0
Lunenburg	055	0	0	0
Madison	056	0	0	0
Mathews	057	.12	2,533	.12
Mecklenburg	058	.40	8,872	.42
Middlesex	059	0	0	0
Montgomery	060	.71	17,536	.83
Nelson	062	.05	1,394	.07
New Kent	063	.06	1,571	.08
Northampton	065	0	0	0
Northumberland	066	.09	1,955	.10
Nottoway	067	.03	924	.05
Orange	068	0	0	0
Page	069	.20	4,700	.22
Patrick	070	0	0	0
Pittsylvania	071	.30	8,264	.39
Powhatan	072	0	0	0
Prince Edward	073	.09	2,306	.11
Prince George	074	.21	5,315	.25
Prince William	075	7.67	164,180	7.70
Pulaski	076	.63	12,786	.60
Rappahannock	077	0	0	0
Richmond	078	0	0	0
Roanoke	079	.70	16,867	.79
Rockbridge	080	.49	11,788	.56
Rockingham	081	.31	9,565	.45
Russell	082	.23	7,384	.35
Scott	083	.32	7,752	.37
Shenandoah	084	.36	8,979	.42
Smyth	085	.24	5,598	.27
Southampton	086	.14	3,587	.17
Spotsylvania	087	.45	10,822	.51
Stafford	088	.36	9,454	.45
Surry	089	.08	1,987	.10
Sussex	090	.06	1,805	.09
Tazewell	091	.27	7,840	.37
Warren	092	.12	2,405	.12
Washington	093	.47	11,165	.53
Westmoreland	094	0	0	0
Wise	095	.36	9,669	.46
Wythe	096	.15	2,986	.14
York	097	.51	13,404	.63

Total Counties

1,244,966

Towns		Percent Handicapped Pupil Population	Additional Aid (Dollars)	Percent of Total Fund Supplement
Cape Charles		0	0	0
Colonial Beach	202	0	0	0
Fries		0	0	0
Saltville		0	0	0
West Point	207	.13	2,665	.13
Total Towns			2,665	
Cities				
Alexandria	101	1.45	29,169	1.37
Bedford		0	0	0
Bristol	102	.22	4,039	.19
Buean Vista	103	0	0	0
Charlottesville	104	.58	11,327	.53
Chesapeake	136	2.53	50,800	2.39
Clifton Forge	105	0	0	0
Colonial Heights	106	.32	6,290	.30
Covington	107	0	0	0
Danville	108	.64	13,265	.63
Emporia		0	0	0
Fairfax		0	0	0
Falls Church	109	0	0	0
Franklin	135	0	0	0
Fredericksburg	110	.19	4,232	.20
Galax	111	0	0	0
Hampton	112	5.43	108,615	5.10
Harrisonburg		0	0	0
Hopewell	114	.27	4,889	.23
Lexington	137	0	0	0
Lynchburg	115	1.77	34,641	1.63
Manassas	143	1.80	32,145	1.51
Manassas Park	144	0	0	0
Martinsville	116	.17	3,302	.16
Newport News	117	.49	10,745	.51
Norfolk	118	9.22	197,340	9.26
Norton	119	0	0	0
Petersburg	120	1.04	20,882	.98
Poquoson	142	.13	3,041	.15
Portsmouth	121	5.37	95,424	4.48
Radford		.06	1,480	.07
Richmond	123	4.67	87,603	4.11
Roanoke	124	3.03	60,744	2.85
Salem		0	0	0
South Boston		0	0	0
Staunton		.36	6,914	.33
Suffolk	127	1.24	25,297	1.19
Virginia Beach	128	2.25	45,359	2.13
Waynesboro		0	0	0
Williamsburg	131	.41	12,410	.59
Winchester	132	.11	2,501	.12
Total Cities			872,454	
GRAND TOTAL			2,120,085	

Chart 2

STATE APPROVED SCHOOL BUSES
COMPARISON OF MAINSTREAMED AND EXCLUSIVE HANDICAPPED PUPIL TRANSPORTATION DATA

	Average Statewide Mainstreamed costs	Average Statewide Exclusive Handicapped costs	Ratio of Exclusive H/Ced Costs to Mainstreamed Costs	Estimated Funding Values for 1982-83 for Mainstreamed	Proposed Funding Values for 1982-83 for Exclusive
Per Pupil	\$111.77 (690,517 pupils)	\$1,083.05 (12,230 pupils)	9.69/1	\$15.50	\$150.00 (9.69 X 15.50 = \$150.00)
Per Bus	\$9,817.62 (7,967 buses)	\$15,997.21 (828 modified buses)	1.63/1	\$640.00	\$1,044.00 (1.63 X \$640.00 = \$1,044)
Per Mile	\$1.173 (66,706,960 miles)	\$1.293 (10,247,876 miles)	1.10/1	\$.145	\$.160 (1.10 X .145 = \$.160)
Totals	\$78,216,945.19	\$13,245,686.41	1/5.9 (H/Ced = 14.5%; Mstrd = 85.5%)	\$15.50 per pupil \$640.00 per bus \$.145 per mile	\$150.00 per pupil \$1,044 per bus \$.160 per mile

STATE PERCENT AID TO COST OF MAINSTREAMED TRANSPORTATION = 32.9%

STATE PERCENT AID TO COST OF EXCLUSIVE HANDICAPPED TRANSPORTATION = 16.6%

ADDITIONAL AID NEEDED TO RAISE THE LEVEL OF STATE AID FOR EXCLUSIVE TRANSPORTATION TO APPROXIMATELY THE LEVEL OF AID FOR MAINSTREAMED = \$2,120,085.00

All costs, allocations and percentage figures are based on information obtained by surveys and local transportation reports, which have not been audited. Final percentages and allocations may change slightly when based on certified figures, which are subject to audit.

Recommendations

The joint subcommittee recommends that:

1. The state funding level for the transportation of handicapped students on exclusive scheduling be increased to thirty-two percent of the operational cost to equalize the funding level percentages for exclusive and routine (mainstream) scheduling.
2. The General Assembly appropriate the funds (\$2.1 million) necessary to achieve equalization in the funding level percentages for exclusive and routine (mainstream) scheduling.
3. The Board of Education adopt regulations which would (1) establish eligibility criteria for transporting handicapped students by exclusive scheduling, and (2) require that each school division: (a) submit, as a component of its annual pupil transportation funding report, documentation of cost-effective measures undertaken during its regular route development process to improve the efficiency of its special education transportation program; or (b) provide justification for maintaining its current arrangements as a prerequisite for receiving supplemental aid for the exclusive scheduling of handicapped students for the 1983-84 school year and each school year thereafter.¹
4. The Department of Education change its present procedure for reporting local pupil transportation costs to one which would require separate reporting of transportation costs for handicapped students and nonhandicapped students on state-approved school buses.
5. The Department of Education structure the budget format so that all pupil transportation allocations will be placed in a single line item in the budget.
6. Appropriate legislation be introduced to amend § 22.1-221 to require that (1) a local school board may allot funds to pay the cost of transportation of handicapped students in lieu of providing transportation on state approved school buses, and (2) that, pursuant to Board of Education regulations which shall include a formula based on the number of handicapped students, the number of buses and miles traveled, local school divisions shall be reimbursed for the cost of operating approved school buses during the time that they are used exclusively for transporting handicapped students.
7. Board of Education adopt a formula which shall include the number of handicapped students, the number of buses and miles traveled, to reimburse local school divisions for the cost of operating approved school buses during the time that they are used exclusively for transporting handicapped students.
8. Board of Education regulations limit eligibility to those students who are classified as handicapped by P.L. 94-142, the Code of Virginia, and regulations of the Board and whose handicapping conditions dictate exclusive transportation.

CONCLUSIONS

The joint subcommittee believes that while the increase (\$2.1 million) in state funding for exclusive scheduling transportation will not eliminate the extra costs incurred by local school divisions for transporting handicapped students, it will equalize the state funding level for exclusive and routine (mainstream) scheduling statewide.

The joint subcommittee also believes that regulations which would establish students' eligibility for exclusive scheduling should be developed. It is recommended that eligibility for exclusive scheduling be limited to those students classified as handicapped pursuant to P. L. 94-142, the Code of Virginia, and regulations of the Board of Education whose handicapping condition dictates exclusive transportation. Local school divisions would only be reimbursed differentially for the costs of operating state-approved school buses while they are used exclusively for transporting handicapped students.² This mechanism for reimbursing school divisions for the exclusive scheduling of handicapped students would be an incentive to school divisions to transport all handicapped students, for whom mainstreaming is appropriate, on routine scheduling which is least costly to the state. This mechanism would also satisfy federal requirements for least restrictive environment (LRE), and it would minimize the possibility of abuse of the supplemental aid.

The joint subcommittee recommends a change in the statewide pupil transportation reporting system and the line item allocation for the funding of pupil transportation. Prior to the joint subcommittee's study, there was not a means of determining the cost of transporting handicapped students on state-approved school buses or the total number of such students served in this manner. A change in the reporting system to require separate reporting of the cost to transport handicapped and nonhandicapped students would make this information accessible and enable the state to better track students, allocations and expenditures for pupil transportation. A single line item for all pupil transportation allocations would facilitate improved fiscal control of such funds and permit the legislature to focus on the fiscal needs for this specific program.

In addition, the joint subcommittee believes that appropriate legislation is needed to implement its recommendations. Therefore, legislation which it proposes is appended to this report.

The joint subcommittee appreciates the contribution of all persons who testified before it and provided pertinent technical assistance. It is especially grateful to the Chesterfield County, Henrico County and Richmond City School Systems for providing and demonstrating the use of modified state-approved school buses used exclusively for the transportation of handicapped students. Further, the Joint Subcommittee commends Mr. R. A. Bynum and Mr. Richmond T. Zehmer, Jr. of the Department of Education for their assistance and cooperation.

Respectfully submitted,

.....
Senator Stanley C. Walker, Chairman

.....
Delegate Dorothy S. McDiarmid, Vice-Chairman

.....
Delegate George P. Beard, Jr.

.....
Senator Charles J. Colgan

.....
Delegate Alan A. Diamonstein

.....
Delegate V. Thomas Forehand, Jr.

.....
Delegate Robert E. Harris

I generally concur with this report, however, since I advised the Senate of my availability to participate this year in the study, I feel that I can only concur in this report and not approve.

.....
Senator Dudley J. Emick, Jr.

Appendices

A. Footnotes

B. Proposed Legislation

C. Senate Joint Resolution No. 68, 1982

Appendix A

Footnotes

1. This recommendation is offered as an incentive to school divisions to initiate cost-effective measures during their regular route development process.

2. "While used exclusively" means during the time that state-approved school buses are used *only* for the transportation of handicapped children who have been identified as such by Public Law 94-142, the Code of Virginia, and regulations of the Board of Education and whose handicapping conditions dictate exclusive transportation.

3. "Exclusive transportation" is the transportation of handicapped pupils on state-approved school buses which may be specially equipped, (e.g. hydraulic lift; passenger restraints) and have a limited pupil capacity (e.g. 3-5 students).

4. "Mainstreaming or routine transportation" is the transportation of handicapped pupils on state-approved school buses together with nonhandicapped pupils, (e.g. handicapped children identified as learning disabled, speech impaired, etc.).

5. "Special arrangement or in lieu of transportation" may include the use of a personal vehicle (payment to parents), commercial taxi, vehicles operated by private schools which the pupil attends, and nonschool buses owned by the school board, in lieu of providing transportation on a state-approved school bus.

Appendix B

§ 22.1-221. Transportation of handicapped children attending public or private special education programs.— *A.* Each handicapped child enrolled in and attending a special education program provided by the school division pursuant to any of the provisions of § 22.1-216 or § 22.1-218 shall be entitled to transportation to and from such school or class at no cost if such transportation is necessary to enable such child to obtain the benefit of educational programs and opportunities.

B. A school board may, in lieu of providing transportation *on an approved school bus* , allot funds to pay the reasonable cost of *special arrangement* transportation. The Board of Education shall reimburse the school board sixty ~~per centum~~ *percent* of such cost if funds therefor are available.

C. *Costs for operating approved school buses while used exclusively for transporting handicapped children shall be reimbursed according to the regulations promulgated by the Board of Education from such state funds as are appropriated for this purpose.*

Appendix C

Senate Joint Resolution No. 68

Requesting a joint subcommittee of the Senate Committees on Education and Health and Finance and the House of Delegates Committees on Education and Appropriations to study the funding of transportation of handicapped children.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 5, 1982

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 3, 1982

WHEREAS, § 22.1-221 of the Code of Virginia requires that "each handicapped child enrolled in or attending a special education program provided by the school division pursuant to any of the provisions of § 22.1-216 or § 22.1-218 shall be entitled to transportation to and from school or class at no cost if such transportation is necessary to enable such child to obtain the benefit of educational programs and opportunities"; and

WHEREAS, this section further provides that a school board may, in lieu of providing transportation, allot funds to pay the reasonable cost of transportation, and that the Board of Education shall reimburse the school board sixty percent of the cost for either providing or contracting for transportation of such students if funds are available; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children's Act of 1975, and corresponding state statutes have contributed to the increase in the identification of handicapped children, and such laws also require that these children receive a free and appropriate education, which may necessitate placement in private or other institutions if educational programs and services, appropriate for the child, are not available within the school division; and

WHEREAS, vehicles designed to transport such children are costly due to stringent specifications and complexity of the technical equipment; and

WHEREAS, the size of these specially equipped vehicles is small, thereby limiting passenger capacity; and

WHEREAS, current economic conditions have substantially increased the cost of fuel and maintenance and places considerable financial burden upon school divisions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That there is hereby established a joint subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Education and Health and the House of Delegates Committee on Education to study the mechanism for reimbursement to school divisions for such transportation, the equity of these reimbursements to rural and urban school divisions, alternative methods of reimbursement or of managing such transportation. The subcommittee shall consist of one member of the Senate Education and Health Committee and two members of the Senate Finance Committee, to be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee on Privileges and Elections and two members of the House Committee on Education and three members of the House Appropriations Committee to be appointed by the respective chairmen.

The Subcommittee shall submit its recommendations to the 1983 Session of the General Assembly.

The cost of this study shall not exceed \$5,400.

