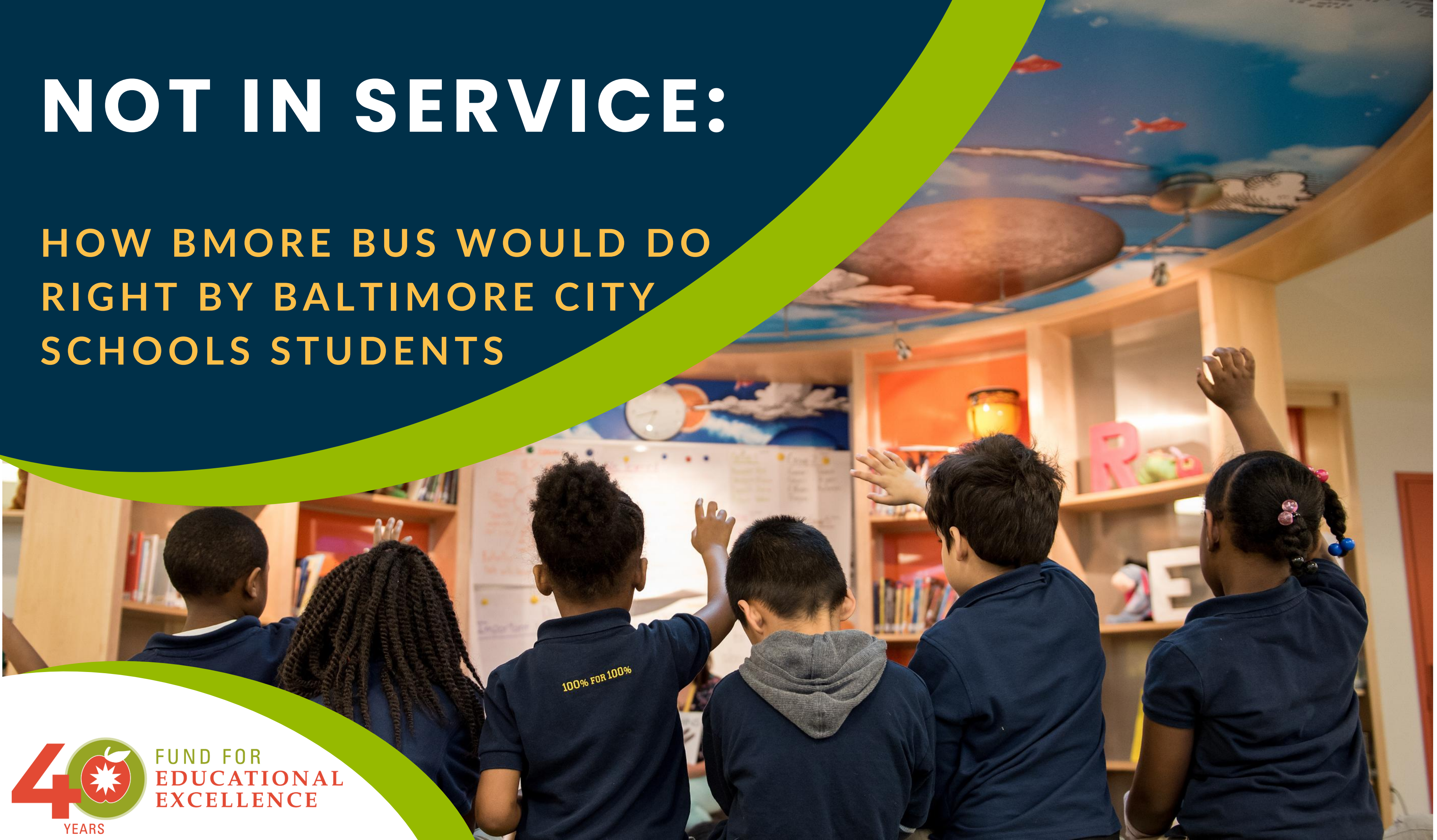


NOT IN SERVICE:

HOW BMORE BUS WOULD DO RIGHT BY BALTIMORE CITY SCHOOLS STUDENTS



ABOUT US

WHO WE ARE

The Fund for Educational Excellence believes that all Baltimore City Public School students deserve an excellent and equitable education. Through its relationships with the school district and philanthropic, corporate, and community leaders, the Fund builds support for school system improvements, promotes racially equitable public policy and practice, attracts and oversees philanthropic investments, and manages innovative programs that support City Schools' students and communities. The nonprofit, founded in 1984, serves as Baltimore's independent public education fund and works for every student to reach their full potential. To learn more, visit fsee.org.



THE BASICS OF BMORE BUS

BMORE BUS PLAN



- The MTA calls it a plan, but right now it is still an unfunded 10-year vision statement.
- Objective: it's about increasing the frequency of core bus service in Baltimore City.

- Full implementation would require a 20-25% expansion of MDOT MTA's bus fleet, the additional operators and maintenance staff to make those buses run, and construction of a new, fifth bus division to house the new infrastructure and operations.
- The capital costs for BMore Bus are a one-time spend of \$1.1B for infrastructure. The plan would also require and additional \$130M annually in operational funding.



THE BASICS OF BMORE BUS

WHY INVEST IN BUS SERVICE?

- Local bus represents 80% of MTA ridership.
- Ninety percent (90%) of MTA core bus riders are low-income, and more than 80% of riders come from households without a personal vehicle available.
- Riders depend on MTA transit, especially the bus, to connect to nearly 800,000 jobs and more than 220 schools and universities.
- Every \$1 invested in public transportation generates \$5 in long-term economic returns to the region.



FUNDING BMORE BUS

ONE WAY TO COVER COSTS



- **Capital needs:** Dedicate just 5% of the \$20.1B comprising the six-year consolidated transportation program (CTP) to the capital investments necessary to implement BMore Bus.
- **Operating costs:** A 10% increase to MTA's overall FY26 operating budget, which would mean rebalancing spending from the State's current Transportation Trust Fund to allocate more to transit.



NOT IN SERVICE: FOUR YEARS ON

REPORT OVERVIEW

NOT IN SERVICE

Why Public Transit Must
Aim to Serve Students



Corrie Schoenberg
Kwane Wyatt
Ruth Farfel
June 2021

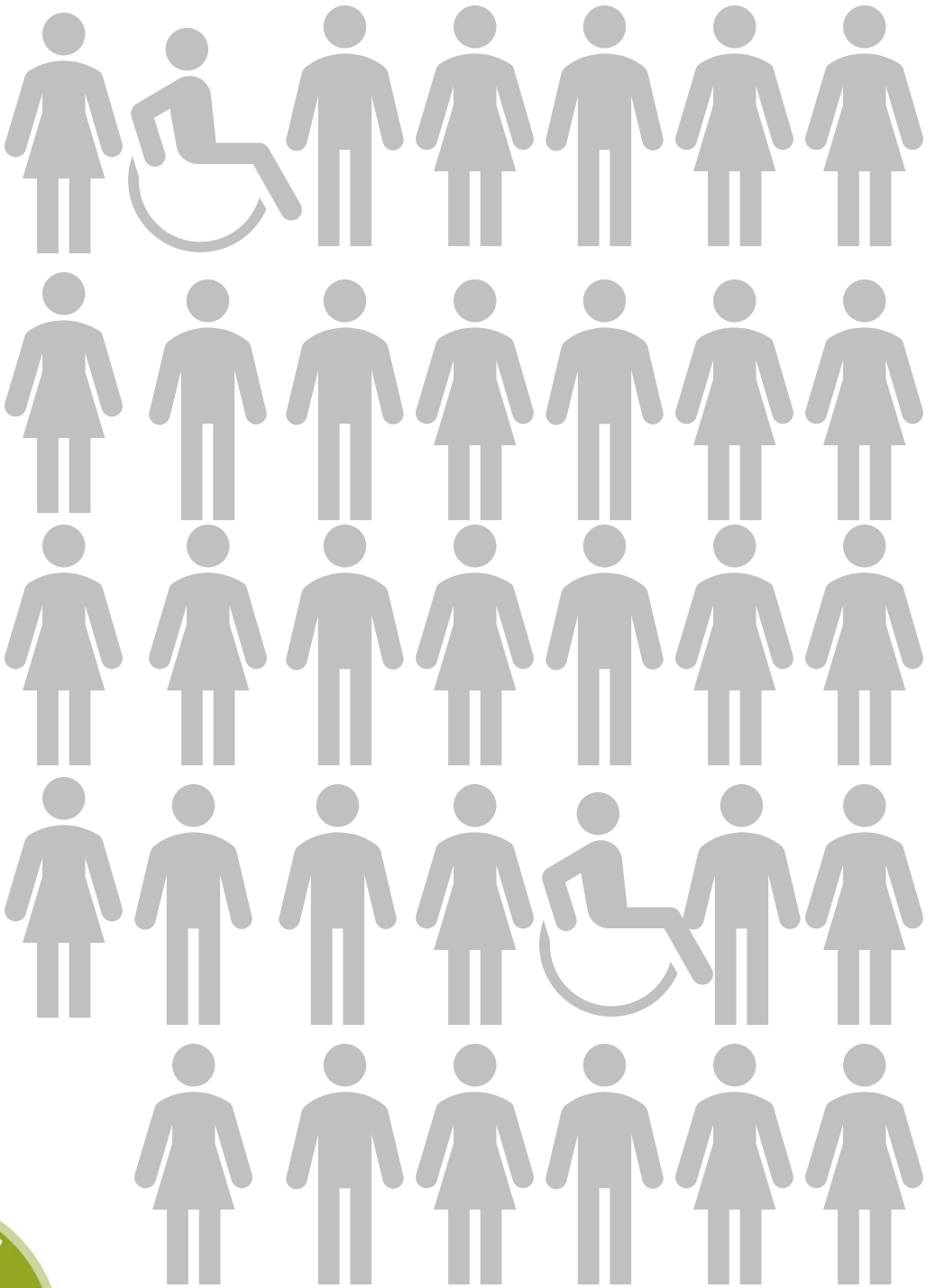


- At least 25,000 Baltimore City Public Schools students (possibly as many as 29,000) rely on MDOT MTA public transit – primarily buses – to travel to and from school, jobs, internships, and other extracurriculars.
- City Schools students are an estimated 18% of annual ridership on core service in Baltimore.

NOT IN SERVICE: FOUR YEARS ON

HOW WE DID IT

30-minute interviews with 274 high school students



Race/Ethnicity	City Schools HS students	Students in our sample
Black/AfAm	83%	83%
Latinx	9%	6%
White	6%	2%
AAPI	1%	3%
Household income		Students in our sample
< \$55K*		72%
>\$55K		18%
Car ownership		Students in our sample
Family does not have a car		23%
Family does have a car		73%

* Less than living wage for household of one adult and one child in Baltimore City



NOT IN SERVICE: FOUR YEARS ON

THEMES & FINDINGS

Student safety while traveling to and from school

How students get to and from school

High school choice decision-making

Employment and extracurriculars

Lost learning time

Commute time

Observing and interacting with transit operators

Transit reliability

Negative experiences with adults on transit

Measures students take to ensure their safety while traveling to and from school



NOT IN SERVICE: FOUR YEARS ON

LOST LEARNING TIME

- Many students are late to school at least once, and sometimes multiple times, a week. Public transportation is the primary reason they cite for being late to school.
- **The BMore Bus plan itself acknowledges that “students...want more buses so that missing a transfer doesn’t mean missing first period.”**
- Students say that missing even 10 minutes of their first period has a negative impact on their grades.
- Students report that long commutes take time away from their homework and, in some cases, limit their ability to take a job to earn money for themselves.



*City Schools 20,653 high school students were collectively **tardy to their first period classes 335,470 times** during the 2018-19 school year with **79% of high school students arriving late for first period at least once.***

Source: Data supplied by Baltimore City Public Schools Office of Achievement and Accountability, May 28, 2021.



NOT IN SERVICE: FOUR YEARS ON

RECOMMENDATIONS



Improved Service

- **Student recommendation: The MTA should run more buses more frequently.**
- Student recommendation: The MTA should improve reliability.
- The MTA should take City Schools student riders into account when developing regular bus service, not just supplemental service.
- The next governor and administration, including the Maryland Department of Transportation and the MTA, should re-start Red Line development and implementation.
- Our 2021 report recommended increased operational funding to boost the frequency of bus service in Baltimore.



BENEFITS OF BMORE BUS TO STUDENTS

BMORE BUS PLAN

- Increased frequency on weekdays, including outside of peak hours. Buses would arrive every 30 minutes or less on all routes and 10 minutes or less on seven CityLink routes
 - **The routes running every 10 minutes include service to 21 schools.**
- This additional service would help students who participate in extracurricular activities or work after school as well.
- More one-seat trips and fewer transfers.
- Students often encounter safety issues, including harassment, robberies or violence, at certain transfer points; avoiding unnecessary transfers would increase student safety.



LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR

FUND AND IMPLEMENT BMORE BUS PLAN NOW

- Our letter to the governor last month asked him to fund and implement BMore Bus **on an accelerated six-year timeline**, rather than pushing completion off until ten years have passed.
- MTA's core transit service has been neglected for too long. MDOT makes billions of dollars in capital investments every year in road and highway expansion but has not made any comparable capital investments in improving MTA since building the light rail in the 1990s.
- We asked that the governor not hesitate to allocate the funding necessary to begin implementation of BMore Bus now, because....
- Students need and deserve frequent, reliable transportation to school, and they needed it years ago. Investing in public transit to help students get to school both safely and on time promotes their future academic and career success, which in turn contributes to the long-term welfare of Baltimore and the economy of the State of Maryland.



ANALYSIS & ENGAGEMENT

Next Steps: Student Transit Advocacy Cohort (STAC)

(September 2025-June 2026)

Youth as external disruptors

With the support of a grant from the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance, the Fund's A&E team and SOMOS will run a year-long fellowship, training a cohort of 14 City Schools students to organize around transportation justice for themselves and their peers, building power from outside the system when internal levers aren't enough.

Informed by the research in our *Not In Service* report, this fellowship will:

- Educate students about how MDOT MTA works and how it is situated within the State's larger transportation system and
- Build students' organizing capacity to advocate boldly for the change they deserve.

