



Student Transit Pass Program: 2021-2022 School Year

Evaluation | March 2023

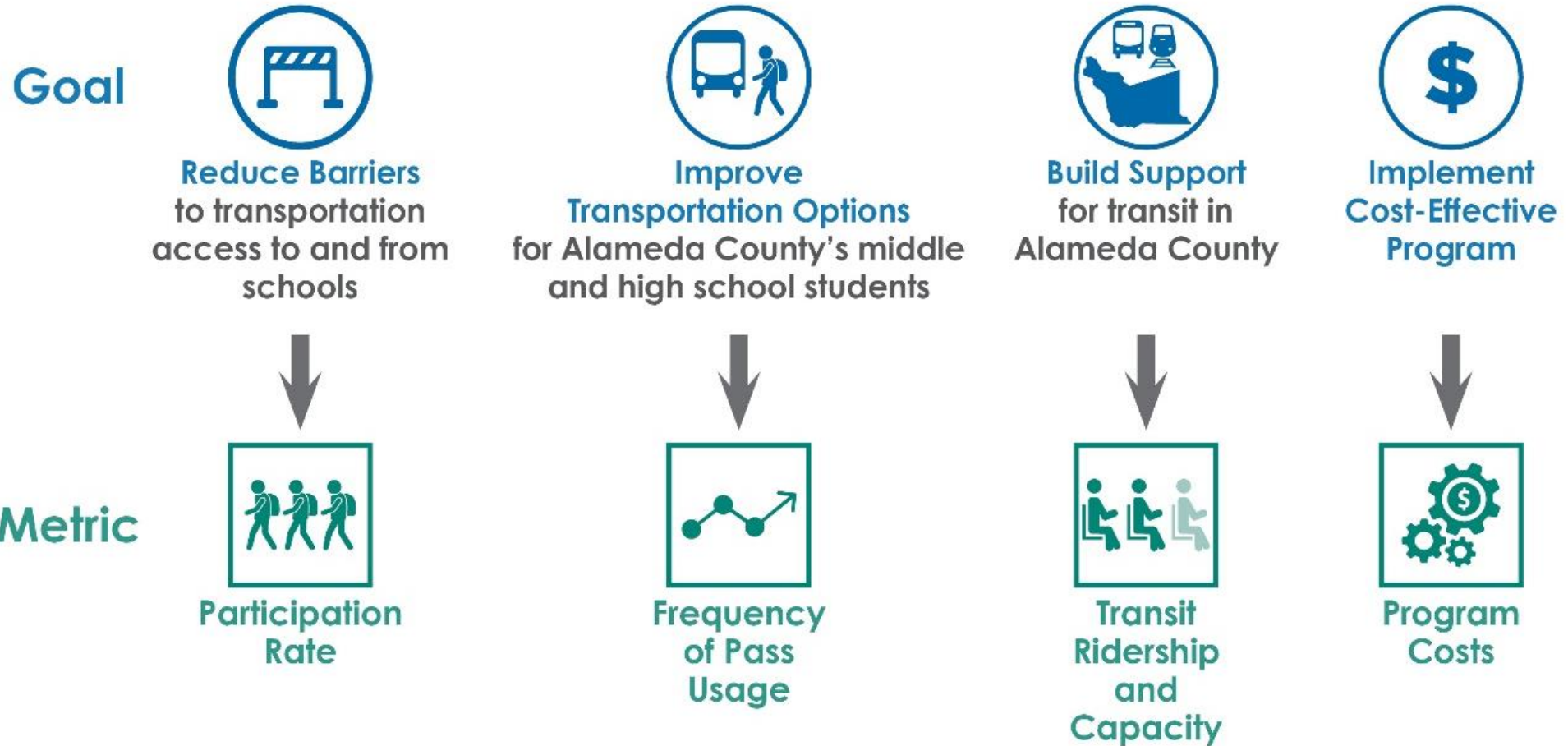


Contents

- Introduction
- Participation Rate
- Pass Usage
- Transit Ridership and Capacity
- Program Costs
- Road Ahead

Introduction

Goals and Metrics



Program Design



FREE / UNIVERSAL (34 schools)

Offered in school districts where 75% or more of students are eligible for California's Free and Reduced-Priced Meals (FRPM). All students enrolled in participating schools are eligible for the STPP.*



MEANS-BASED (56 schools)

Students who qualify for California's Free and Reduced-Priced Meals (FRPM) are eligible for the STPP.

*Livermore Valley Joint USD is designated as Free/Universal even though they do not meet the above qualifications because they are the lowest income district in East County.

Participating Schools and Program Models

Year-Four Program Model	School District	# of Participating Schools
Free/Universal	Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE)	5
	Emery Unified School District (Emery USD)	2
	Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD)	9
	Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)	18
Means-based/Free	Alameda Unified School District (AUSD)	4
	Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD)	3
	Castro Valley Unified School District (CVUSD)	4
	Dublin Unified School District (DUSD)*	5
	Fremont Unified School District (FUSD)	5
	Hayward Unified School District (HUSD)	9
	New Haven Unified School District (NHUSD)	5
	Newark Unified School District (NUSD)	4
	Pleasanton Unified School District (PUSD)	6
	San Leandro Unified School District (SLUSD)	4
	San Lorenzo Unified School District (SLZUSD)	7
Total number of schools		90

* District is new to the program this year.

Full list of all participating schools and program models listed in Appendix.



COVID-19 Pandemic

- **School-related impacts**

- Most districts returned to in-person classes for the 2021-2022 SY.

- **Transit-related impacts**

- In the AC Transit and LAVTA/Wheels service areas, ridership began to recover, and continued bus driver shortages led to creative problem solving to serve school routes.
- In the Union City Transit service area, ridership increased significantly, but remained low relative to pre-pandemic levels.

- **STPP-related impacts**

- The STPP team continued to primarily use the online application to reach students.

- **Regionwide impacts**

- Transit ridership across the region increased between 120 to 240% between December 2021 and February 2022, varying by transit agency.

Participation Rate

Overall Participation Rate

Participation rate is measured as:

Participating students in STPP in a SY

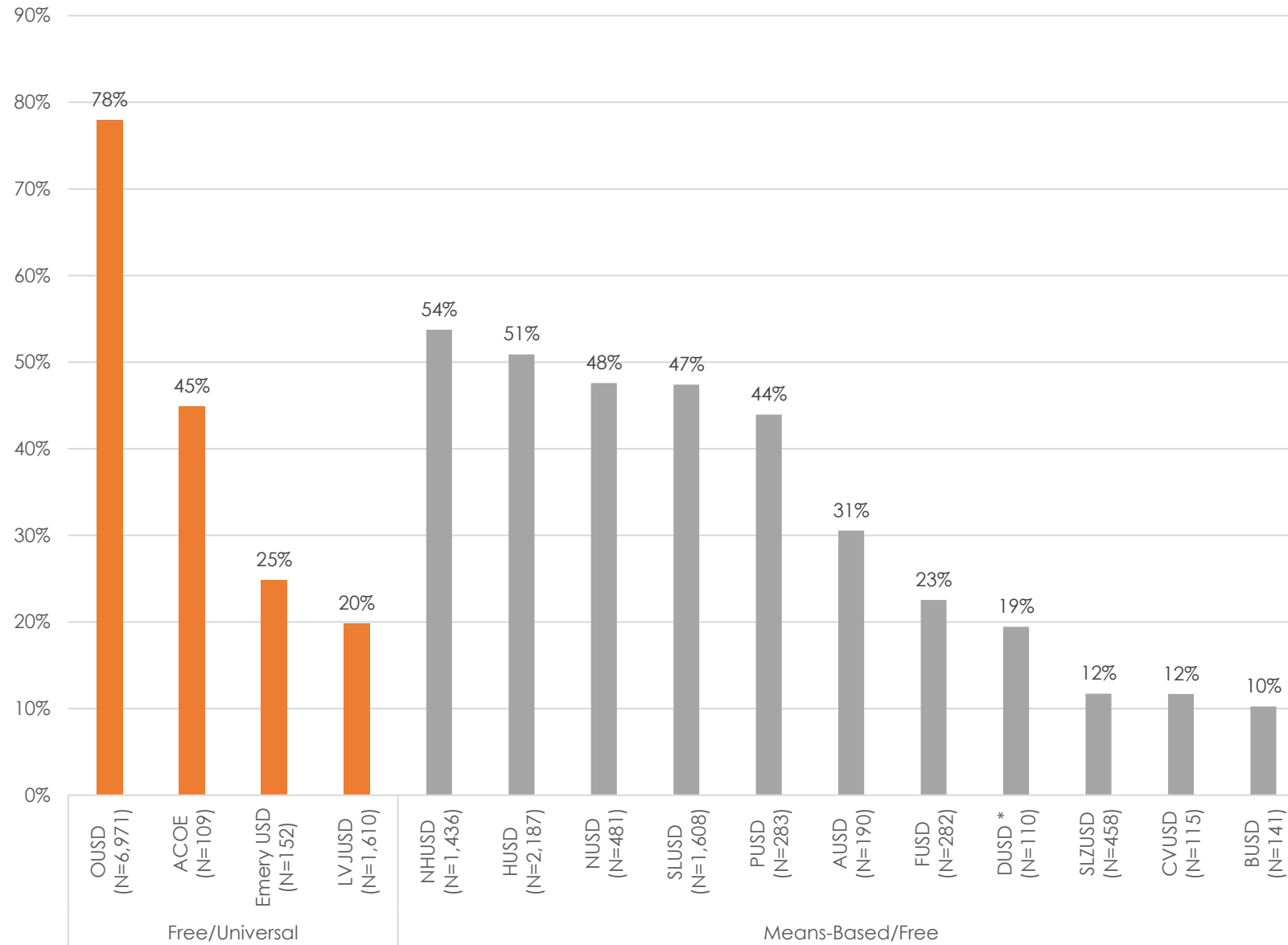
Total eligible students in a SY

- The average participation rate was 42%.
- Compared to the 2020-2021 SY, the average participation rate increased by nine percentage points.
- Oakland USD continued to have a high participation rate (78%).
- San Lorenzo USD, Castro Valley USD, and Berkeley USD had the lowest participation rates between 10% and 12%.
- Compared to the 2020-2021 SY, participation rates increased at all districts except for Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE).
 - ACOE participation rate dropped from 62% to 45%.

Comparison Across Program Model

- There is no clear pattern in the distribution of participation rates when comparing free/universal districts to means-based/free districts. There are high-participation districts and low-participation districts in each of the program types.
- Free/universal districts had participation rates that ranged from 20% (Livermore Valley Joint USD) to 78% (Oakland USD).
- Means-based/free districts had a participation rates that ranged from 10% (Berkeley USD) to 54% (New Haven USD).

2021-22 Year-End Participation Rate, by Program Model and School District



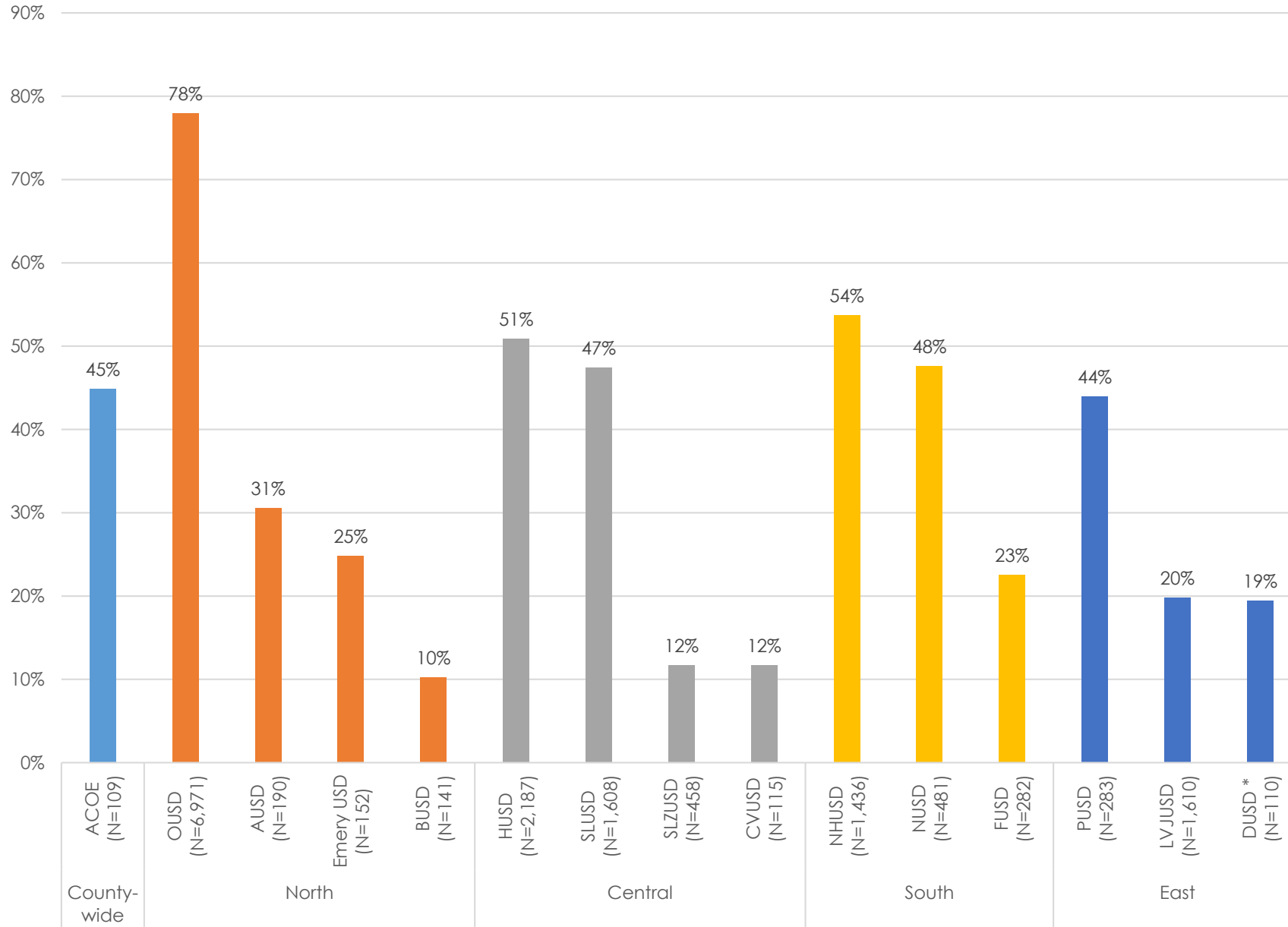
Asterisk (*) indicates school districts that are new to the program this year.



Comparison Across Planning Areas

- Participation rates vary greatly within each planning area.
- The variation in participation rates within planning areas is consistent with the trends observed during the 2020-2021 SY.

2021-22 Year-End Participation Rate, by Planning Area and School District



Asterisk (*) indicates school districts that are new to the program this year.



Pass Usage

Overall Pass Usage

Participants took nearly 710,000 bus trips between August 2021 and July 2022.

Transit Agency	STPP Bus Trips (Aug 2021 – Jul 2022)	Percent of Total STPP Bus Trips
AC Transit	615,971	87%
Union City Transit	28,496	4%
LAVTA/Wheels	64,632	9%

Tracking trips (overall and per month) determines program utilization (how many students actually use their passes)

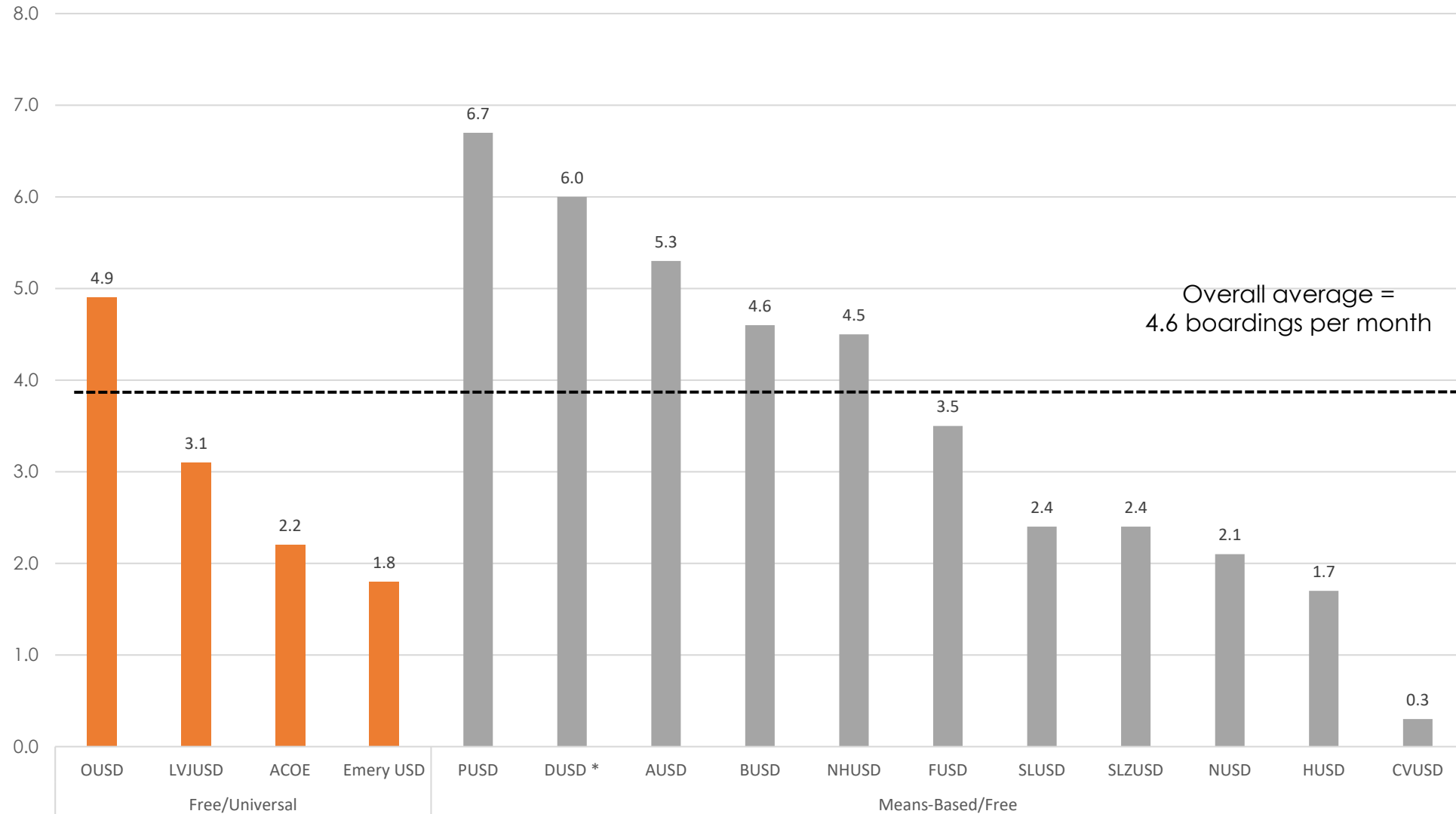
Overall Pass Usage

- The average pass usage was 4.6 monthly boardings per participant.
- Pass usage significantly increased compared to 2020-2021 SY, likely due to the return to in-person learning.
 - Overall average monthly boardings per participant increased from 0.8 boardings last year (+575%)
 - Usage rates increased for all districts in the program
- The LAVTA\Wheels service area experienced the two highest usage rates: Pleasanton USD (6.7 monthly boardings per participant), Dublin USD (6.0 monthly boardings per participant), likely due to the agency's strong coordination with school bell times in these districts.
- Castro Valley USD had the lowest usage rate, at 0.3 monthly boardings per participant.

Comparison Across Program Model

- The range and distribution of pass usage rates is similar across both the free/universal and means-based/free program models. There is no clear difference in outcomes for the two groups.
- Free/universal districts had pass usage rates that ranged from 1.8 (Emeryville USD) to 4.9 (Oakland USD).
- Means-based/free districts had pass usage rates that ranged from 0.3 (Castro Valley USD) to 6.7 (Pleasanton USD).

Average Monthly Boardings per Participant, by Program Model and School District (Oct-2021 through May-2022)



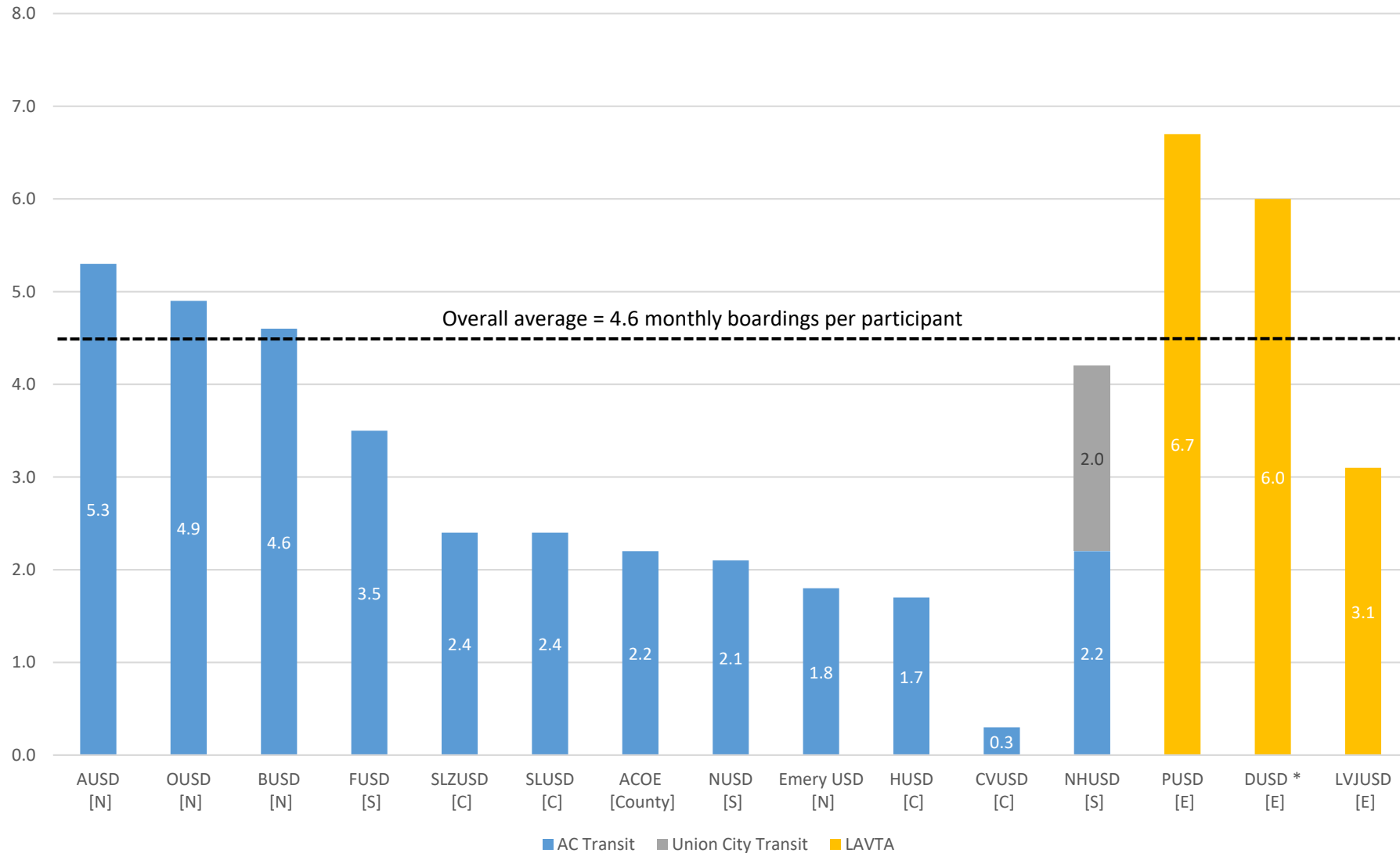
Asterisk (*) indicates school districts that are new to the program this year.



Comparison Across Transit Service Areas

- School districts in the East planning area (in the LAVTA/Wheels service area) experienced the highest average pass usage rates, between 6.7 (Pleasanton USD) and 6.0 (Dublin USD) monthly boardings per participant. This is likely due to LAVTA/Wheel's strong coordination with schools on their bell times.
- School districts in the North planning area (in the AC Transit service area) experienced above average pass usage rates, between 1.8 (Emery USD) and 5.3 (Alameda USD) monthly boardings per participant.
- School districts in the Central planning area (in the AC Transit service area) experienced lower than average pass usage rates, between 0.3 (Castro Valley USD) and 2.4 (San Lorenzo USD) monthly boardings per participant.
- School districts in the South planning area (in the AC Transit and Union City Transit service areas) also experienced lower than average pass usage rates, between 2.1 (Newark USD) and 4.2 (New Haven USD) monthly boardings per participant.

Average Monthly Boardings Per Participant, by School District and Operator (Oct-2021 to May-2022)



[] indicates the Planning Area of the school district.
N= North, E = East,
S= South, C = Central

Asterisk (*) indicates school districts that are new to the program this year.



Transit Ridership and Capacity

AC Transit

- Service was restored to all school tripper routes, but **service levels** remained reduced (compared to pre-pandemic levels) throughout the school year due to bus driver shortages.
- **Bus driver shortages** led to the development of creative, incremental solutions to continue to serve schools with fewer resources than previous years.
- **Changes in service** increased agency awareness about which routes students rely on, including both school tripper and local routes.

Union City Transit (UCT)

- **Service levels** were reduced because UCT service coordinates transfers with other regional services (BART, AC Transit), which were operating with reduced service.
- **System ridership** remained low, likely due to trends towards remote/hybrid work flexibility, and perceptions of health risks taking transit during the pandemic.
- **Bus service reliability** was inconsistent during school pickup/drop-off due to high levels of vehicle congestion from many caretakers who opted to drive students to school.
- **Student ridership** accounted for 15% of the system's total ridership.

LAVTA/Wheels

- **Service levels** returned to match pre-pandemic levels.
- **Bus driver shortage** led to the development of creative operational solutions to continue to provide school trips at 30-minute headways.
- As a smaller agency, LAVTA/Wheels **remained nimble and coordinated with school bell times**, which likely drove increased student ridership.
- **Student ridership** accounted for 7.5% of the system's total ridership.

Lessons Learned

- Transit agencies should cross-train multiple staff on card production & other processes to avoid disruptions during launch period
- Coordination with bell times is a major driver of student ridership
- Travel training could be helpful for students who are new to the program, particularly after pandemic disruptions

Program Costs

Transit Pass Costs

- For the ongoing program, Alameda CTC uses a pay-per-ride payment structure with each transit agency – AC Transit, Union City Transit and LAVTA.
- Total cost for all rides and the cost per trip values for the 2021-2022 program year (August 2021 – July 2022) are shown below.

Transit Agency	Total Boardings (Aug – Jul)	Program Cost Per Trip	Total Program Rides Cost
AC Transit	615,971	\$1.12	\$689,890
Union City Transit	28,496	\$1.25	\$35,620
LAVTA/Wheels	64,632	\$1.60	\$103,306
All Agencies	709,099	\$1.17	\$828,815

Cost Per Participant*

School District	2021-2022 Total Boardings	Annual Cost Per Participant
AC TRANSIT ONLY		
Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE)	2,155	\$48.82
Alameda Unified School District	8,533	
Berkeley Unified School District	6,220	
Castro Valley Unified School District	304	
Emery Unified School District	2,632	
Fremont Unified School District	8,693	
Hayward Unified School District	36,592	
Newark Unified School District	9,961	
Oakland Unified School District	328,011	
San Leandro Unified School District	37,205	
San Lorenzo Unified School District	10,267	

School District	2021-2022 Total Boardings	Annual Cost Per Participant
AC TRANSIT + UNION CITY TRANSIT		
New Haven Unified School District	61,469	\$73.63
LAVTA		
Dublin Unified School District	5,260	\$51.58
Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District	44,728	
Pleasanton Unified School District	14,644	
TOTAL, All Districts	576,674	
<i>Boardings from unknown USDs [1]</i>	132,425	Unknown
TOTAL BOARDINGS	709,099	Unknown
<p>[1] During the 2021-2022 school year, some students who lost their pass were issued a replacement that was not correctly coded to their school district. Although the trips on these cards were logged in the Clipper system as program boardings, the trips cannot be associated to a particular school district and therefore annual cost per participant cannot be determined.</p>		

*Accounts only for transit ride cost



Administrative Costs

Cost Type	Cost
Labor (incl. Alameda CTC, consultant team, and AC Transit)	\$421,000
Direct Costs (incl. online application platform, translations, shipping, and printing)	\$13,600

Labor costs were higher than the threshold adopted by the Commission (5-8% of transit pass costs) due to boardings remaining below pre-pandemic levels and the continued hands-on approach to administering the program.

Alameda CTC will continue to seek efficiencies in program administration, including transitioning the Program Management role to the consultant team and prioritizing process improvements.

Road Ahead

Road Ahead

- The 2022-2023 SY includes 131 schools across 15 districts.
- At the start of the 2023-2024 SY, the STPP will expand to another ~30 eligible middle and high schools in Alameda County.
- By the 2024-2025 SY, the STPP will expand to all remaining eligible middle and high schools (another ~20 schools).

Appendix

2021-2022 Participating Schools by Program Model and District – Free / Universal

School District	Participating Schools
Alameda County of Education (ACOE)	Burke Academy
	Fruitvale Academy
	Hayward Community School
	Opportunity Academy
	Quest Academy Community School
Emery Unified School District (EUSD)	Anna-Yates TK-8
	Emery Secondary
Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD)	Andrew N. Christensen Middle
	Del Valle Continuation High
	East Avenue Middle
	Granada High
	Joe Mitchel

School District	Participating Schools
LVJUSD continued	Junction K-8
	Livermore High
	Vineyard Alternative
	William Mendenhall Middle



2021-2022 Participating Schools by Program Model and District – Free / Universal

School District	Participating Schools
Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)	Aspire Golden State College Preparatory Academy
	Aspire Lionel Wilson College Preparatory Academy
	Bret Harte Middle (OUSD)
	Castlemont High
	Coliseum College Prep Academy
	Elmhurst Community Prep
	Fremont High
	Frick Middle
	McClymonds High
	Oakland Charter Academy
	Oakland High

School District	Participating Schools
OUSD continued	Oakland International High
	Ralph J. Bunche Academy
	Roosevelt Middle
	Urban Promise Academy
	West Oakland Middle
	Westlake Middle

2021-2022 Participating Schools by Program Model and District – Means-based / Free

School District	Participating Schools
Alameda Unified School District (AUSD)	Encinal Junior/Senior High
	Island High
	Will C. Wood Middle
Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD)	Berkeley High
	Longfellow Arts and Technology Middle
	Willard Middle
Castro Valley Unified School District (CVUSD)	Canyon Middle
	Castro Valley High
	Creekside Middle
	Redwood High
Dublin Unified School District (DUSD)*	Cottonwood Creek
	Dublin High

School District	Participating Schools
DUSD continued	Eleanor Murray Fallon
	Valley High
	Wells Middle
Fremont Unified School District (FUSD)	American High
	Centerville Junior High
	John F. Kennedy High
	Robertson High
	William Hopkins Junior High

* = District is new to the program this year.

2021-2022 Participating Schools by Program Model and District – Means-based / Free

School District	Participating Schools
Hayward Unified School District (HUSD)	Anthony W. Ochoa Middle
	Brenkwitz High
	Bret Harte Middle
	Cesar Chavez Middle
	Hayward High
	Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle
	Mt. Eden High
	Tennyson High
	Winton Middle
New Haven Unified School District (NHUSD)	Cesar Chavez Middle
	Conley-Caraballo High
	Decoto School for Independent Study

School District	Participating Schools
NHUSD continued	Itliong-Vera Cruz
	James Logan High
Newark Unified School District (NUSD)	Bridgepoint High
	Crossroads High
	Newark Junior High
	Newark Memorial High
Pleasanton Unified School District (PUSD)	Amador Valley High
	Foothill High
	Harvest Park Middle
	Pleasanton Middle
	Thomas S. Hart Middle
	Village High

2021-2022 Participating Schools by Program Model and District – Means-based / Free

School District	Participating Schools
San Leandro Unified School District (SLUSD)	Bancroft Middle
	John Muir Middle
	Lincoln High
	San Leandro High
San Lorenzo Unified School District (SLZUSD)	Arroyo High
	Bohannon Middle
	East Bay Arts High
	Edendale Middle
	Royal Sunset
	San Lorenzo High
	Washington Manor Middle