

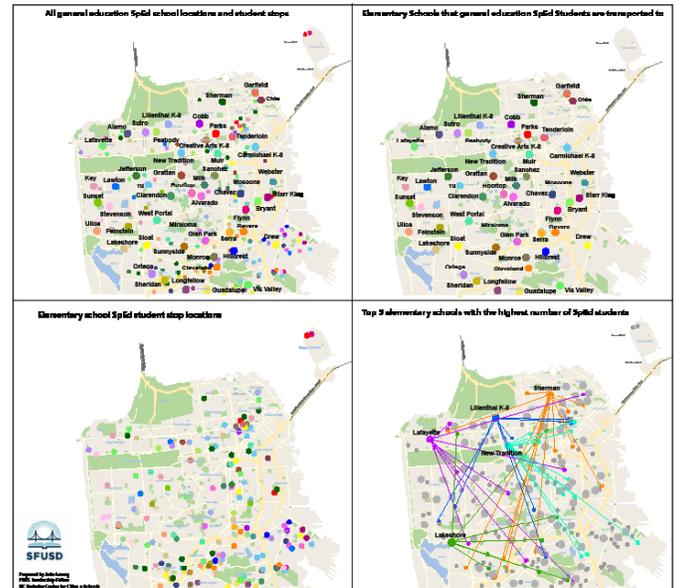
# Access + Equity: Mapping SFUSD's Transportation Infrastructure for Students with Disabilities

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## ISSUE

San Francisco Unified School District's (SFUSD) special education (SpEd) transportation budget is large and comprises 82% of their overall transportation budget. Since 2010, the budget has increased substantially and currently is at \$19.9 million for the 2013-2014 school year.

Providing safe transportation to school meets SFUSD's strategic goal of providing equity and access to educational opportunities to ensure that every student has access to high quality teaching and learning. It is important to analyze the current transportation infrastructure and develop a deeper understanding of the current state so that we strategically explore ways to maximize use of and access to resources for students with disabilities.



Project visualization maps

## METHODS

We coordinated with SFUSD's transportation department, special education services, and enrollment placement center to gather transportation and enrollment data on SpEd students. We analyzed these data looking for patterns and processes that inform and comprised the SpEd transportation infrastructure. Project visualization maps were created using a geographic information system (ArcGIS) to understand the location of students and services in the district. Maps were created for moderate/severe, mild/moderate, general education, and CAT programs. The maps were also separated by Pre-K, elementary, middle school, high schools and non-public schools.

## FINDINGS

### Transportation Infrastructure

- For the 2013-2014 school year, there are 1,455 SpEd students utilizing the current SpEd transportation system. A total of 177 buses, with 1,138 distinct routes transport these students to 114 different locations.
- Each student is picked up and dropped at a specific address. Typically, a student has two routes assigned, a morning pickup, and an afternoon drop-off. However, 259 students have a varying number of routes assigned to them.
- The differing number of routes is due to students who need therapy sessions that require mid-day and after school service where the student is picked up from school and taken to therapy and returned to school or home.
- Early release and bell schedules of middle schools and high schools also influence the pickup times and the drop off times of the students.

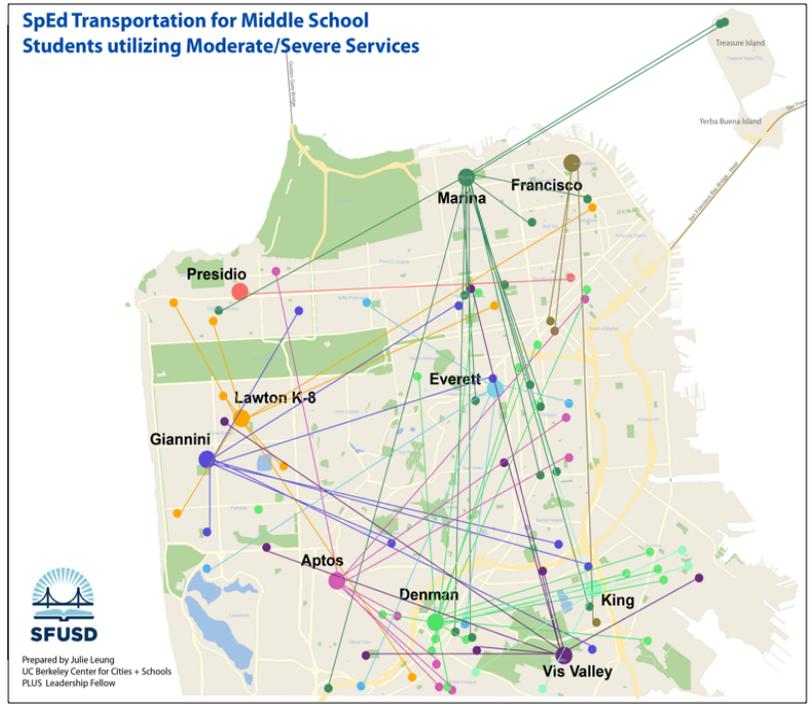


**Profile of Riders**

Approximately 31% of SpEd students are Hispanic/Latino, 19% Black, 18% Chinese, 10% White, 8% Pacific Islander, 6% Southeast Asian, 0.7%, 3% Asian Indian, 1.3% East Asian, 0.4% American Indian/Alaskan and 0.4% Middle Eastern/Arabic. The largest number of SpEd students (30%) are living in Census Tract Integration Preference (CTIP) 1 quintiles. The majority of the student homes spoke English (60%), Spanish (17%) and Chinese Cantonese (10%). Students receiving transportation are 11% Pre-K, 41% Elementary, 22% Middle School and 25% High School.

**Profile of Services**

SFUSD offers transportation to SpEd services that range from Pre-K to post-high school, as well as to non-public schools. The top 3 programs that SpEd students are being transported to are moderate/severe, mild/moderate and general education (RSP) SpEd services and we prioritized creating maps for these services that illustrated where the students were located and which school they were being transported to.



Example of a map created using SFUSD transportation and enrollment data

**LESSONS** SFUSD SpEd transportation policies and processes are complex and dynamic, requiring strategic coordination from multiple departments. Student information is transferred through different data management systems which poses a challenge in data accuracy and collaboration between district offices. The analysis found that student health needs, school choice, assessment process, SpEd program availability and capacity influenced how far a student was being transported. These are focus areas that SFUSD should explore further as the SpEd transportation landscape is still evolving.

**AREAS FOR STRATEGIC EXPLORATION**

**Student Assignment:**

- Exploring the program capacity of the current SpEd program services in schools.
- How important is proximity to school a factor in SpEd student assignment?

**Other Modes of Transportation:**

- What is the feasibility of collaborating with San Francisco Metropolitan Transportation Authority to provide youth and other student transit passes that are cost effective and safe for SpEd students?
- What is the feasibility of utilizing non-motorized transportation alternatives to school, such as Safe Routes to School and bike sharing programs?

**Data Set Management:**

- Consolidating the transportation and enrollment information into one database system to reduce error and improve inter-department collaboration.