
BUDGET UNIT BRIEF – FY 2026

Fiscal Services Division

July 1, 2025



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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Nonpublic School Transportation

Program Overview

School districts are required to provide transportation services to nonpublic school students, and the school districts are reimbursed for the costs of these services based on the standing General Fund appropriation made to the Department of Education (DE).

Reimbursements to School Districts

The Program, as mandated in Iowa Code section [285.1\(14\)](#), entitles resident pupils attending a nonpublic school (either within or outside of the public school district boundaries) to transportation on the same basis as provided to resident public school students. Districts submit claims to the DE based on the costs of transporting resident nonpublic students. Additionally, parents who transport their nonpublic students to school may file a claim with the school district of residence, which then files the claim with the DE. After all claims are processed, a lump sum payment accounting for all processed claims and the level of appropriation (if there is a cap on the appropriation amount) is provided to the school district. If needed, the district makes individual payments to parents who file a claim with the district.

Funding

Iowa Code section [285.1\(3\)](#) specifies the formula for reimbursed services for public and nonpublic school transportation services. Iowa Code section [285.2\(1\)\(b\)](#) provides a standing unlimited General Fund appropriation; however, since FY 2003, the amount appropriated has been less than the claim amounts as shown in **Figure 1**. The annual Standing Appropriations Act specifies the appropriation and requires the appropriation to be prorated if the total school district claims exceeds the appropriation.

Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Code sections [285.1](#), [285.2](#), and [285.3](#)

Budget Unit Number

28209160001

More Information

Iowa Department of Education, Nonpublic Transportation Reimbursement: educate.iowa.gov/pk-12/operation-support/transportation/reimbursement

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Figure 1**Nonpublic School Transportation**

Fiscal Year	Appropriation Amount	Payment	
		Reimbursement Factor	Estimated Claim Amount
FY 1995	\$ 6,747,143	N/A	\$ 6,747,143
FY 1996	6,900,732	N/A	6,900,732
FY 1997	7,415,523	N/A	7,415,523
FY 1998	7,469,184	N/A	7,469,184
FY 1999	7,598,000	N/A	7,598,000
FY 2000	8,010,644	N/A	8,010,644
FY 2001	8,315,505	N/A	8,315,505
FY 2002	7,798,144	N/A	7,798,144
FY 2003	7,799,550	92.5%	8,435,594
FY 2004	7,624,060	91.8%	8,309,602
FY 2005	7,955,541	95.0%	8,375,135
FY 2006	8,273,763	91.4%	9,051,465
FY 2007	8,604,714	93.5%	9,206,664
FY 2008	8,604,714	88.7%	9,702,832
FY 2009	8,475,643	86.7%	9,780,759
FY 2010	7,060,931	72.9%	9,685,589
FY 2011	7,060,931	82.5%	8,555,322
FY 2012	7,060,931	68.5%	10,303,142
FY 2013	7,060,931	70.7%	9,993,182
FY 2014	8,560,931	83.7%	10,226,171
FY 2015	8,560,931	82.2%	10,412,535
FY 2016	8,560,931	80.8%	10,596,536
FY 2017	8,282,701	79.5%	10,501,775
FY 2018	8,197,091	80.8%	10,146,780
FY 2019	8,197,091	76.0%	10,779,688
FY 2020	8,197,091	75.0%	10,941,074
FY 2021	8,197,091	84.2%	9,738,755
FY 2022	8,997,091	67.8%	13,274,505
FY 2023	8,997,091	66.9%	13,451,022
FY 2024	8,997,091	64.2%	14,005,269
Est. FY 2025	8,997,091	57.6%	15,618,644
Est. FY 2026	8,997,091	Unavailable	Unavailable

Since FY 2003, the appropriation for nonpublic transportation has been capped, resulting in claims being prorated.