

## MTA Adding Service in Preparation for Safe Return of NYC Students to System



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*Buses Add More Than 990 Weekday Trips Starting Oct. 1 to Accommodate Students Across NYC as In-Person Learning Resumes*

*In Midst of Unprecedented Financial Crisis, MTA Continues Historic Safety Measures, Including Mandatory Face Coverings and Around-the-Clock Disinfecting*

*Watch Video About Student MetroCards That Are Available from Schools for K-12 Students*

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced it is prepared for the safe return of New York City students to the transit system as in-person learning resumes, with nearly one thousand additional bus trips planned to begin on Oct. 1 to help students travel to and from school. The MTA's Mask Force will also be out across the system in October, providing free masks to students to help them stay safe and comply with the systemwide mask requirement. To date, more than 4 million free masks and tens of thousands of gallons of hand sanitizer have been made available to customers.

Students returning to public transit will notice subways and buses are being thoroughly disinfected, with subway cars having been disinfected nearly 3.3 million times, buses more than 584,976 times, LIRR cars 165,092 times and Metro-North cars 103,044 times. The measures come at a time when the MTA is facing an unprecedented fiscal crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with \$12 billion in additional federal funding necessary to avoid service cuts and layoffs in the future.

"We look forward to welcoming back students to our system and can't wait for them to see all of the measures we have put in place to keep them safe, from mandating masks to the largest disinfecting program in agency history to adding hundreds of bus trips in every part of the city," said **Patrick J. Foye, Chairman and CEO of the MTA**. "However, the absence of necessary emergency federal funding means measures like these will be at risk in the future, as we continue to ask Washington for \$12 billion through the end of 2021 to avert devastating service cuts, fare and toll hikes and layoffs."

"Our subways are running at nearly 100 percent of capacity and we've made sure to increase the amount of bus trips throughout the boroughs to ensure students have a convenient and safe way to get to class," said **Sarah Feinberg, NYC Transit Interim President**. "Students are a part of the fabric of this city and we welcome them back to a system that is cleaner than it has ever been."

"We have returned to front-door boarding on our buses and have added up to 40 percent more space allowing for increased social distancing," said **Craig Cipriano, President of MTA Bus Company and Senior Vice President of NYC Transit's Department of Buses**. "We know how important our bus system is for students and how heavily they rely upon it to get to school. We will be paying close attention to student ridership and making any adjustments necessary moving forward."

As part of a "Weekday/School Open" schedule starting Oct. 1, the MTA is adding more than 990 bus trips across the five boroughs to accommodate students who need to get to school in the morning and back home after dismissal. A total of 105 buses are being added to the routes.

Service is being added to the following routes to accommodate students:

- **Bronx:** Bx1, Bx3, Bx8, Bx9, Bx10, Bx11, Bx12, Bx16, Bx17, Bx20, Bx21, Bx23, Bx26, Bx28/38, Bx30, Bx31, Bx36, Bx39, Bx40/42 and Bx41
- **Brooklyn:** B1, B4, B6, B7, B9, B11, B12, B16, B20, B31, B36, B41, B44, B44SBS, B46, B46SBS, B47, B49, B54, B60, B63, B64, B67/69 and B100
- **Manhattan:** M11 and M116
- **Queens:** Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, Q7, Q8, Q11, Q15, Q17, Q20, Q21, Q22, Q27, Q28, Q30, Q31, Q34, Q36, Q37, Q38, Q41, Q43, Q44SBS, Q46, Q50, Q54, Q55, Q58, Q65, Q66, Q76, Q77, Q83, Q85, Q88, Q111 and Q112
- **Staten Island:** S42/52, S44/94, S46/96, S48/98, S51/81, S53, S54, S55, S56, S57, S59, S61/91, S62/92, S66, S74/84, S76/86, S78 and S79SBS

Student MetroCards issued by New York City schools allow students Kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade to travel to and from school on subways and MTA NYC Transit buses. Students may only use the MetroCards on school days and during the hours specified on the card. Most eligible students are issued Student MetroCards that are valid for a total of three trips per day plus free

transfers. Bus-to-subway, subway-to-bus, or bus-to-bus transfers are considered one trip.

Students riding Select Bus Service must remember to pay their fare before boarding the bus. Fares are paid at the bus stop where students obtain a receipt to validate their payment.

The MTA has implemented a wide variety of measures across its network since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure customers and employees are safe.

The MTA's Mask Force, comprised of volunteers from MTA leadership, employees, elected officials and advocacy groups, is traveling throughout the city and providing free masks to customers. Mask compliance is very high, above 90% across the MTA network. Customers who refuse to wear a mask while riding on public transit are now subject to a \$50 fine as MTA officials work to further increase mask compliance.

Students riding buses will find the MTA has also equipped 360 buses on 15 routes across all five boroughs with mask dispensers. This will ensure students are able to easily access a surgical mask on board if they have lost or forgotten their mask.

As students board their bus, they will also find that the white line on the bus floor, behind which riders are expected to stand, has been moved back to provide more social distance between them and the bus operator. The bus operator will be shielded by new barriers around the operator compartment, including polycarbonate sliders and vinyl curtains to fully protect operators and also allow more distance between them and customers.

Students or their parents can use the MTA's new capacity tracking feature on the MYmta app to track in real-time how many passengers are on each bus. The tool, available on 40% of buses, helps customers to plan their trips and maximize social distancing.

As ridership continues to increase on both subways and buses, the MTA continues to follow its 13-Point Action Plan for A Safe Return rolled out in June.

Students returning to school will find signage throughout the subway and bus system – with decals and signs placed in stations and on buses reminding customers to wear masks and socially distance when possible. Announcements are continuously playing throughout the system reminding customers that wearing a mask on public transit is the law.

To further ensure safety, the MTA continues to distribute personal protective equipment to its employees. Across its agencies, to date, the MTA has distributed 8.4 million masks, 10.5 million pairs of gloves, 65,000 gallons of hand sanitizer, 7.1 million individual sanitizing wipes, 177,000 gallons of cleaning solution and 13,000 face shields.