

I cannot be in person but I want to offer this testimonial regarding the adverse effects that the lack of funding for transportation and school buses has had on my family.

As a dedicated parent and advocate for my children's education, I have witnessed firsthand the significant impact that inadequate transportation resources have had on my family. Columbus City Schools has struggled to allocate sufficient funding to maintain a reliable and efficient transportation system which includes hiring enough bus drivers so they can cover all routes without adding too much time in the bus.

At the beginning of the current school year, my 7th grader's bus schedule changed from 8:05 am to 7:25 am which made the amount of time spent in the bus by almost 1 hr and 45 minutes instead of the usual 1 hour. And yet, he was still arriving late every morning, missing important class work in social studies; his favorite class. The evening bus also went from arriving at 4:15 pm to 5:15 pm, almost 2 hrs after school ended. He would be rushing to finish homework and eating dinner before going to bed.

After the first couple of weeks of classes he was falling behind in his first class so we decided to take him to school ourselves. This impacted our whole morning schedule as we only have 1 car and some days it is inevitable to be late at work but at least our son can attend school on time. Next year, we will have two children in CCS in two different schools with both of us working, and we are very concerned about how the bus situation is going to impact our daily schedules and ability to be at work on time. I understand that the situation for hiring and retaining bus drivers, along with all of the other budget challenges that CCS faces, continues to be quite difficulty. However, I implore you to prioritize funding for transportation in order to support working families.

Sincerely,

Gaby Santiago, CCS Parent