



STARK AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

1600 Gateway Blvd. SE, Canton, Ohio 44707

P: 330.477.2782 | 800.379.3661 | TTY: 800.750.0750 | F: 330.454.5476

SARTAonline.com

My name is Kirt Conrad, CEO of the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority (SARTA) in Canton, Ohio. We provide fixed route and paratransit services in Stark County and express routes to Akron and Cleveland. Transportation of students to schools and colleges is a large part of our existing ridership. We sell tickets and passes to over 30 schools and educational institutions in our community, including paratransit. Paratransit transports a person from the home to their destination if they have a disability recognized by the Americans with Disabilities Act. We provide over 600 trips per day and 30% are educationally related for individuals with a disability.

The specific proposal of restricting student to transfer at our downtown transit facility will cause difficulty and cause a logical nightmare. We have pass programs with Stark State Collage and Canton City Schools allowing their students to ride for free. These programs provide student transportation to school and after school activities as well. Before the free program, many agencies were asking for assistance and passes to help student to get to internships, sports, or band. Several hundred students used fixed route buses every day.

Students board the bus with a ticket or pass, like any other rider. We have no ability to track the exact location of where a passenger alights the bus. The only way to enforce this requirement would be with the installation of expensive facial recognition or other tracking functionality. There has been privacy and liability issues raised with this technology. As such, there is not a practical or cost-effective way to enforce this proposed law.

SARTA has been providing student transportation for several years without any issues. To ensure the safety of our riders and the general public, we provide off duty police as security at all of our transit centers in addition to our downtown location. Downtown also functions as a Canton City Police substation for officers. Security is provided at Massillon, Alliance, and Belden Village transit centers.

We take the safety and security of riders and citizens is our top priority.

