

The Comet and Richland Two

First, I want to thank you all again for your support of this partnership. Let me briefly remind you of the partnership and then what we have done since the agreement was signed and what are tentative plan will be.

The partnership allows for all middle and high school students, as well as all Richland Two staff to get an unlimited bus pass for a year. Beginning on July 1st once our students and staff have a pass, they will be able to ride the bus for free for a year. We have an agreement with the COMET for three years so in the summer of 2017 and 2018 students and staff will have to get a new unlimited bus pass. The beauty of this pass is that it not only allows for students and staff the opportunity to ride to R2i2 but it allows for them to use the pass anytime, anywhere. If a student has a job after school, wants to go to an art show downtown, or wants to go the \$1 days at the State Museum on Sundays they can do that as well.

Currently, there are only 2 main routes in Richland Two. The 55x runs from downtown Columbia, has a small hub at Columbia Place Mall and runs out to the Village at Sand hill. The other Route is Route 15 which runs down Percival Road, down Decker, to the mall and up Parklane to 277. While this does not cover most of Richland Two it does allow for 1508 6-12 grade students who live within 1/3 mile to ride the bus and 2376 who live within 1/2 mile. Another route is the flex route. This is a bus that comes on demand as needed in the triangle basically from I77 to 321 north to basically Westwood High. How that works is a bus will come to your house or in this case Westwood High and take you to the nearest bus stop. Once you are now on a regular route bus stop you can go anywhere in the system. So students could potentially ride this bus to get to R2i2 or another place the buses go. This bus will also take you back.

So now that we have the agreement in place, we have implementation. Our three main areas of implementation are Distribution, Communication, and Marketing.

In terms of Distribution, we plan on working with the schools during back to school nights, chrome book role out, schedule pickup, and other avenues to get

the passes to students. The pass will be in one of two ways. The first way will be through the app on your smart phone. Basically, you will download the app. The school or COMET will give you the code for your yearly unlimited pass. You enter the code. You go to a bus stop and either scan the bar code on the bus or show the driver. For the students without smart phones, the comet will provide cards that are being designed by R2i2 students. You will show or scan the card but you must have your student or staff ID to accompany the card. We do plan on having an opt out form for students to sign if parents have concerns with having a pass for the bus.

In terms of Communication and Marketing, our staff along with the COMET's staff will be working together to get the word out about the passes. The COMET can do free rider training, how to use the app, and assist with the rollout and distribution of the pass. We plan on trying to make this as easy and seamless as possible.

The last thing I wanted to share is our initial plan for our joint announcement and marketing for this partnership. At this time, we are considering board members, COMET board members, R2i2 students, staff, and the media take the bus from the District Office and ride to R2i2. Once at R2i2, make the joint announcement. We were thinking about doing this in the end of June before we begin rolling out passes in July.

Thank you and do you have any questions about the COMET.