

## RTD and local leaders announce launch of Zero Fare for Youth at event today

*Youth ages 19 and under can ride all services at no cost from September 2023 through August 2024*

DENVER (Aug. 8, 2023) – The [Regional Transportation District \(RTD\)](#) today announced the launch of the yearlong Zero Fare for Youth program at an event alongside local leaders. The initiative, a key recommendation resulting from the agency's most recent fare study and equity analysis, was approved last month by the RTD Board of Directors.

The one-year pilot program will allow youth ages 19 and younger to ride all RTD services at no cost from Sept. 1 through Aug. 31, 2024, by presenting a valid student or government-issued ID. A full list of acceptable ID can be found on the [Zero Fare for Youth](#) web page.

Joining RTD General Manager and CEO Debra A. Johnson for the program launch were Denver Councilwoman Amanda Sawyer, District 5, and Denver Public Schools Board of Education Director Member Scott Baldermann, District 1, community supporters who both championed the initiative. RTD Board Chair Lynn Guissinger, District O, and RTD Board Director Kate Williams, District A, also delivered comments in support of Zero Fare for Youth.

Johnson noted that when RTD conducted community engagement for the [fare study and equity analysis](#), the agency heard overwhelming enthusiasm for a Zero Fare for Youth program concept from throughout the community, regardless of age – and even from those who do not have school-age children. She spoke to her first experience using public transit as a child in Fresno, California, when she rode the bus to get to school in another neighborhood.

"I see Zero Fare for Youth as an investment in future generations of customers," Johnson said. "This pilot program inspires youth to be environmentally minded citizens at a young age – and it builds good transit habits that can be sustained for life."

"RTD's Zero Fare for Youth program underscores Denver and Colorado's unwavering dedication to our youth, supported by a collaborative multi-jurisdictional initiative," Sawyer said. "It is a transformative endeavor revolutionizing youth mobility, aligning with our vision of an inclusive and vibrant city and region that places resident well-being and opportunity at its core."

Baldermann said that the cumbersome logistics of distributing paper tickets to students led RTD and DPS leadership to have conversations as to whether there could be better options.

"The Zero Fare for Youth pilot program will provide all students with equitable transportation to be able to attend the school of their choice while helping us achieve our Climate Action Ends Policy as a school district anchored in our sustainable efforts," he said.

### ABOUT RTD

The Regional Transportation District develops, operates and maintains a public transportation system that meets the transit needs of close to 3 million people within an eight-county service area in the Denver Metro region. For more information, visit [rtd-denver.com](http://rtd-denver.com), call 303-299-6000 and follow along on social media: [www.facebook.com/RideRTD](https://www.facebook.com/RideRTD), [@RideRTD](https://twitter.com/RideRTD) on Twitter, [@ridertd](https://www.instagram.com/ridertd) on Instagram and [rideRTDco](https://www.youtube.com/rideRTDco) on YouTube. For the most current RTD news, visit the News Stop, at [rtd-denver.com/news-stop](http://rtd-denver.com/news-stop).

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Zero Fare for Youth provides many benefits for youth and their families, including cost and time savings. Taking the bus and train saves on car expenses including maintenance, parking and tolls. According to the American Public Transportation Association, a household can save nearly \$10,000 annually by taking public transportation and living with one less car. Using transit increases independence by reducing dependence on others for transportation, and it provides young people with the freedom and flexibility to travel where they need to go.

To learn more about Zero Fare for Youth, visit [rtd-denver.com/zerofare/youth](https://rtd-denver.com/zerofare/youth).

