



ARIZONA

Transportation Modernization Grants

**AWARDEE
SNAPSHOT**

October 2023

PUBLIC DISTRICT

Avondale Elementary School District

Avondale Elementary School is a K-8 Title I Suburban district located west of Phoenix. The district comprises 9 schools in the cities of Avondale and Goodyear. AESD is a Kids at Hope district, where staff members believe that All Children Are Capable of Success.

Maricopa County
GRANT AWARD
\$346,000



PROBLEM TO SOLVE

AESD is addressing the dual challenges of cost and responsiveness inherent in third-party transportation providers. The issue of responsiveness has particularly been a point of concern in relation to these third-party vendor services. Currently, there is a consistent delay of over a week before a suitable driver is located for a given route, exacerbating the challenges faced by students who are already burdened by various obstacles while they await a transportation solution. The prevailing average wait time stands at 10 days from the initial transportation request by a family to the commencement of their first school-related ride.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Avondale Elementary School District allocates a significant budget to third-party transportation vendors to assist in the transportation of students experiencing homelessness to and from other districts. This expenditure not only presents a substantial financial challenge but also raises concerns regarding the protracted timeline for the establishment of new routes, which typically spans one to two weeks. To address these issues, this funding initiative aims to internalize the transportation services, effectively reducing costs and enhancing responsiveness. Concurrently, general improvements to the overall support system for homeless students by offering more comprehensive wrap-around services through increased dedicated staff time, new vehicles, and before/after care solutions.

370
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- 5,910 students
- Males: 3,034
- Female: 2,876
- 66% Hispanic
- 18% White
- 11% African American
- 2% 2 or more
- 1.5% Asian
- 1% Native American
- Less than 1% Pacific Islander
- 15% SPED
- 3% EL
- 1% Homeless
- 5% Gifted
- 68% Free and Reduced lunch

PUBLIC DISTRICT

Cartwright School District & Phoenix Union HS District

Together, Phoenix Union High School District and Cartwright Elementary School District include 45 schools, a student population of approximately 42,400, and about 5,000 staff members. Combined, the community population of both districts is 753,624.

Maricopa County
GRANT AWARD
\$1,712,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

Cartwright School District and Phoenix Union High School District are jointly pursuing an innovative initiative aimed at mitigating the adverse effects of greenhouse gases on air quality within their respective boundaries. Recent analysis conducted by Creative Methods has revealed that these districts fall within the region with the poorest air quality grade in the state. Both Cartwright School District and Phoenix Union High School District are fully dedicated to adopting responsible measures for transitioning to electric transportation for their students, demonstrating a firm commitment to environmental stewardship.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Cartwright School District and Phoenix Union High School District face a challenge in terms of insufficient charging infrastructure for their electric vehicles. In response, Cartwright and Phoenix Union are embarking on a collaborative effort to establish a central charging station. This initiative leverages the shared geographic location of the two districts, optimizing resource allocation. Notably, both districts have already secured bus support through the federal Clean School Bus Grant Program. Additionally, the generous support this grant opportunity will serve to maximize the investment made by the EPA in this endeavor.

9,600
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- Asian: <1%
- Black: 6%
- Hispanic: 89%
- Native American: 1%
- Pacific Islander: <1%
- Two or More Races: 1%
- White: 3%
- EL Need: 4472, 30%,
- EL Program: 4123, 28%
- Poverty Rate: 25.9%
- Unemployment Rate: 6.1%

PUBLIC DISTRICT

Chinle Unified School District

Chinle Unified School District (CUSD) is located 107 miles north of I-40 in the heart of the vast Navajo Nation. The district serves the communities of Chinle, Many Farms, Lukachukai, Wheatfields, Nazlini, Cottonwood/Tselani which are spread across 4,200 square miles.

Navajo County

GRANT AWARD

\$1,255,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

The Chinle Unified School District faces student transportation challenges due to bus driver shortages, unimproved roads, long routes, high maintenance and operating costs, and relay transportation needs. Unimproved roads and long bus routes cause high fuel and maintenance costs that disproportionately impact the district, straining its financial resources. Students endure lengthy travel times on diesel buses with pollutants, impacting student attendance, health and the district's finances.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Building off Chinle's success in the Cycle 1 of Transportation Modernization grant dollars, the district will be able to purchase a micro fleet of trucks and electric vehicles to address the unique needs of the highly rural community. The use of 14 passenger vehicles (micro birds) represents an innovative solution to driver shortages within the school transportation program and will improve efficiency and accessibility of student transportation services. These vehicles require only a regular driving permit to operate; increasing the pool of potential drivers, and a single driver will be able to cover multiple nearby, short routes. Additionally, Chinle will be transitioning to a mainly electric fleet in order to provide students with a cleaner, quieter ride to school, and to protect the natural environment in the area. Chinle will further diversify their fleet and improve efficiency of relay transportation for students by adding four hybrid AWD SUV's and three 4x4/AWD EV trucks.

987

STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- 3,291 PreK-12th grade students
- 99% American Indian
- 98% Free & Reduced Lunch
- 14% ESS
- 7% English Language Learners
- Chinle Unified School District covers 4,200 square miles
- 81% of children schools arrive via school buses
- 6,000 daily miles for bus routes
- 60% of bus routes are on unimproved roads



PUBLIC DISTRICT

Colorado River Union HS District #2

The Colorado River Union High School District #2 (CRUHSD) has 1872 students in three schools: Mohave High School located in Bullhead City. River Valley High School located in Mohave Valley; and CRUHSD Academy located also, in Mohave Valley.

Mohave County

GRANT AWARD

\$389,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

CRUHSD is grappling with a significant bus driver shortage, which stands as one of its most pressing challenges. Currently, there are only 17 bus drivers on staff, leaving a shortfall of 8 drivers needed to achieve full staffing. This shortage results in drivers often having to undertake double routes, which often means students are required to be picked up earlier, either to accommodate the driver's subsequent route or to prevent students on the second route from arriving late to school. Additionally, many parents are employed at local casinos or in Laughlin across the river, making it challenging for them to transport their children to school. As a consequence, this situation has a direct impact on student attendance.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

To address the challenges posed by the shortage of CDL-prepared fleet drivers, CRUHSD has taken a proactive approach by surveying teachers to gauge their willingness to assist in transporting students to school. Capitalizing on available grant funding opportunities, the district plans to establish a fleet of small vans designed to aid teachers in this endeavor. Furthermore, teachers who take on the role of drivers will be provided with a stipend. This initiative holds particular significance for the remote and rural areas within the district, where smaller vehicles are better equipped to navigate challenging terrain and reach areas that are otherwise difficult to access.

250

STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- 48% White
- 40% Hispanic
- 1% Asian
- 2% Black
- 2% American Indian/Alaskan
- 12% Special Education
- 61% low income
- 37 ESL students

PUBLIC CHARTER

Empower College Prep

Empower College Prep serves an extraordinarily high-crime, high-poverty area of Phoenix. The school's zip code and neighboring area have the highest rates of violent crime in Phoenix, making the commute to and from school of critical importance for families. The students affected by limited access to transportation are also those in greatest need of the educational services the school provides.

Maricopa County
GRANT AWARD
\$1,038,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

The majority of students at Empower College Prep come from single-parent households where work commitments and limited access to vehicles and fuel pose significant challenges for transporting their children to and from school. The school has encountered numerous difficulties with contracted transportation service providers, characterized by high costs and subpar quality of service. On occasions, the school has received notices that students would not be picked up, compelling them to turn to community partners for assistance in ensuring students' arrival at school. In addition to these challenges, several buses have lacked air conditioning, which can be particularly concerning during scorching summer commutes. These issues collectively underscore the pressing need for improved transportation solutions for the school's students and their families.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Empower College Prep is establishing a non-profit organization called Abundant Transportation. This initiative aims to address the transportation needs not only within its own community but also in similar urban and rural areas where poverty, crime, and various barriers hinder children's safe commute to their preferred schools. The nonprofit will employ a rideshare program that will offset the cost of student rides while students are in school 9am-2pm. They will also build a transportation fleet with 2 new buses, 10 used transit vans, transit mapping/route reduction software and bus cameras.

4,000
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- 90% qualify for free/reduced lunch
- 80% are Hispanic
- 10% are Native American and from rural communities
- 30% are English Learners, including refugees from Central America/Africa
- 12% have special needs
- Dozens are McKinney Vento students

PUBLIC CHARTER

Espiritu Schools

Espiritu was started nearly 30 years ago with the primary focus of serving its community and providing a high quality education for its families in an effort to form individuals who would serve and lead within, and even beyond, their community. There are 3 charter schools in the Espiritu Schools Network.

Maricopa County
GRANT AWARD
\$119,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

Espiritu, with its student population exceeding 800, is actively dedicated to enhancing its transportation program. The primary goals include reducing congestion, improving efficiency, achieving cost-effectiveness, and promoting health. Notably, Espiritu is situated in an area designated by the city of Phoenix as having high traffic and pollution levels. In response, the school has made a firm commitment to pursue a non-vehicle solution to address its transportation challenges. This reflects their proactive stance toward environmental responsibility and the overall well-being of their students and the community.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Espiritu's innovative solution involves introducing electric scooters and bicycles specifically tailored for school kids, providing them with a sustainable, cost-effective, and convenient alternative for their daily commute. These vehicles offer numerous benefits, including environmental sustainability, improved traffic flow, and enhanced physical activity. Students will be able to check out a scooter or bike and use it to get back and forth to school. This non-vehicle solution allows Espiritu to address student needs without crowding the urban roadways surrounding their schools.

809
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- Total of 809 students
- 49.6% Boys
- 50.4% Girls
- 1% Asian
- 3.5% Black
- 85.9% Hispanic
- 0.4% Unclassified
- 10.1% White
- 86% Low Income
- 22% LEP
- 13% SPED

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Foundation for Blind Children

The Foundation for Blind Children (FBC) is located in Central Phoenix and has the largest Preschool for Visually Impaired students in the country. Serving students at all levels of need, they teach students how to learn using adaptive methods, so they can be ready for the transition to kindergarten. FBC also has a small K-4th Grade school for students who are either not quite ready to move to public school or whose local districts lack the resources to help them.

Maricopa County
GRANT AWARD
\$618,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

The Foundation for Blind Children operates a renowned preschool and elementary school, drawing blind students from various regions, including 27 different school districts and the Arizona Schools for the Deaf and Blind. To cater to these students, numerous school districts throughout the Valley dispatch large regular school buses, each equipped with wheelchair lifts, a driver, and an aide. Often, these buses transport only one student each, resulting in dozens of buses congregating before and after school—a situation that is neither efficient nor cost-effective.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

The Foundation for Blind Children is taking proactive steps to rectify the inefficiencies and service gaps experienced by school districts when transporting students to their school. Recognizing the challenges associated with identifying transportation needs and addressing them promptly to prevent missed school days, FBC is proposing a comprehensive solution. Their approach involves close coordination with school districts, third-party transportation providers, and parents to establish transportation lines that operate on a spoke system. In this system, FBC serves as the central transportation hub, facilitating the pickup of multiple students, thereby streamlining the transportation process for all involved parties.

110
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- Male and female ages 3-10
- 45% very low-income household
- 25% low-income household
- 1% African American
- 1% American Indian
- 1% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 17% Caucasian
- 50% Hispanic
- 30% Undefined
- 100% are blind or visually impaired

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation: ElevateEdAZ

An innovative program of the Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation, ElevateEdAZ is taking high school education in Arizona to the next level by providing students pathways to high-wage, high-demand careers. The program bridges the gap between education and workforce development by cultivating a highly skilled and motivated pipeline of talent.

Maricopa County
GRANT AWARD
\$308,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

The majority of students engaged in ElevateEdAZ internships and job shadows come from low-income families lacking access to personal vehicles or the financial means to utilize rideshare services. Consequently, many students are forced to decline valuable internship opportunities due to the absence of a reliable transportation solution for commuting to and from their work sites.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

ElevateEdAZ will provide eligible students with rideshare services and stipends to eliminate transportation barriers to internships and educational opportunities across the valley. Through the allocation of crucial resources to this program, students will have the opportunity to access valuable extracurricular and vocational learning experiences.

3,600
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

PXU students:

- Hispanic: 81.7%
- African American: 8.3%
- Caucasian: 4.4%
- Native American: 2.4%
- Asian: 1.6%
- Other: 1.6%
- English Language Learners: 5%
- Low-Income: 77.4%

MPS students:

- Minority students: 58%
- Hispanic: 44%
- Low-Income: 55%

PV Schools

- Low-Income: 33%

DVUSD

- Low-Income: 27%

PUBLIC DISTRICT

Laveen Elementary School District #59

The Laveen School District is a high-performing school district in southwest Phoenix that does not have school boundaries, meaning students can maximize on school choice based on their needs and goals. Almost two-thirds of students are eligible for free and reduced lunch and students can choose to attend a school based on the unique signature programs offered, which include accelerated learning, dual language immersion, STEM, computer coding and performing arts.

Maricopa County
GRANT AWARD
\$1,255,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

Due to the Laveen Elementary School District's commitment to providing educational choice for students, families often opt to enroll their children in Laveen schools from considerable distances. However, this choice poses a transportation challenge for many families, compounded by the current limitations of the school bus system. Consequently, students who might otherwise choose a different school within the district are often unable to do so due to these transportation constraints.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

The Laveen Elementary School District currently offers transportation services from select areas to various schools, within a limited scope. Recognizing the community's expressed need, the district is actively working to expand its transportation program. This expansion of charging stations and busses, will enable a broader spectrum of families to access these valuable programs, aligning with the community's requests. Furthermore, the district's commitment to environmental responsibility is recognized by its plans to introduce electric-powered vehicles within its expanded services.

168
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- Hispanic 47.6%
- White 25.9%
- African American 17.5%
- Asian 5.4%
- Native American 1.0%
- Other 2.6%
- Free & Reduced 65.9%



PUBLIC DISTRICT

Mobile Elementary School District

Mobile Elementary School District is a rural and remote district that serves large homeless, foster, English Language Learners. The district is extremely racially diverse and serves under housed students and a large special education population.

Mohave County
GRANT AWARD
\$180,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

Many parents are forced to select a school primarily based on transportation availability due to limited access to personal vehicles, rides, or financial constraints related to fuel expenses. The rural and remote nature of the area restrains options like ride-sharing or public transportation. Additionally, the absence of fuel stations or resources within a 30-minute radius further complicates transportation matters, even for those with vehicles. Moreover, a substantial number of students reside along challenging dirt desert roads, which are hindered by challenging terrain, exacerbating transportation difficulties.

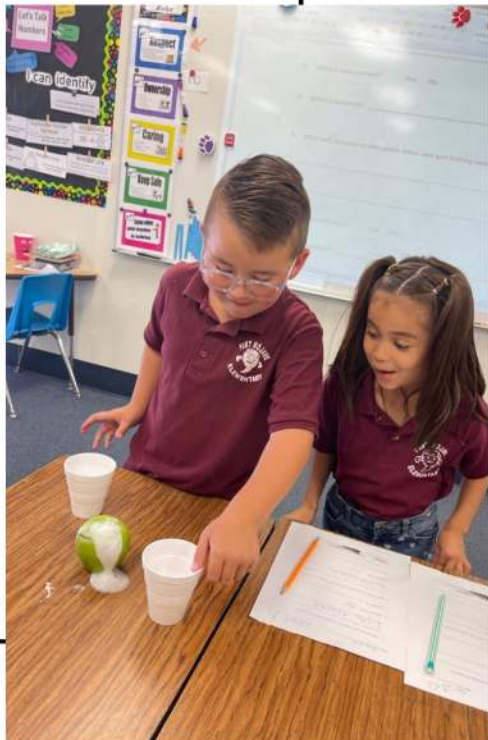
WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Mobile is taking proactive steps to enhance open enrollment and transportation access for financially disadvantaged rural and remote students by investing in a high-capacity bus. This initiative aims to address the transportation challenges faced by students residing in remote, often risky terrain. Acquiring state-of-the-art equipment capable of navigating these rugged routes holds the potential to significantly impact the most vulnerable student populations. The funding allocated for this purpose will enable Mobile to safely transport students from diverse rural and remote communities, expanding their access to educational choices and opportunities, thereby promoting inclusivity and equity in education.

180
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- Free and Reduced Lunch Percentage 100%
- Rural and Remote 50%
- White 30%
- African American 10%
- Hispanic Latino 30%
- Native American 30%



PUBLIC DISTRICT

Mohave Valley Elementary School District

Mohave Valley School District (MVESD) serves the students of Fort Mohave, Mohave Valley, Oatman, and Topock, as well as any areas between. The community experiences a large socio-economic gap inclusive of affluent river homes spanning to youth with dirt floors and no utilities - and many in between.

Mohave County
GRANT AWARD
\$959,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

MVESD currently operates an aging fleet, which endures extensive mileage and wear primarily due to the extended routes and the challenging conditions of rural roads. The prolonged routes also result in extended ride durations, with many exceeding an hour. Consequently, the extended routes bear a direct connection to potential disruptions in bus punctuality, causing concerns among families. Moreover, the high demand for Commercial Driver's Licenses within the rural region exacerbates the supply and demand disparity. Overall budgetary limitations place the district in a less competitive position for the recruitment of qualified personnel.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

MVESD is dedicated to optimizing transportation for students, both within and outside district boundaries, with a strong emphasis on efficiency and environmental responsibility. To achieve this goal, the district will implement innovative transportation methods, including the use of white fleet vehicles for distant, remote, and open-enrollment students, electric buses for students in close proximity, and diesel buses for moderately distant students. This multifaceted approach ensures the most efficient and environmentally friendly transportation solutions for the students.

1,320
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- Hispanic 36%
- Black 6%
- American Indian 7%
- White 86%
- Native Hawaiian .5%
- Asian 2%
- SPED 13%
- Homeless* 1%
- Free and Reduced Lunch 65%

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Mountain Institute CTED - CTEC Campus

Mountain Institute CTED is a public high school district providing career and technical education training to the seven public high school districts in western Yavapai County and students who are homeschooled, attending charter and private schools.

Yavapi County
GRANT AWARD
\$189,000



PROBLEM TO SOLVE

Transportation continues to pose a significant obstacle for numerous students in rural communities. The expansion of transportation options aim to provide increased access to career training opportunities, benefiting both the local economy and fulfilling workforce development requirements. Mountain Institute CTED - CTEC Campus shares a commitment to fostering collaboration with industry partners, local government, and educational institutions throughout the county to achieve these vital objectives.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

The district's strategy involves establishing a central drop-off point, eliminating the need for individual entities to provide transportation to each district campus. Additionally, they intend to leverage grant funding to acquire a bus and offer bus driver training services in collaboration with Yavapai College, benefiting districts across Northern Arizona. This bus will also serve dual purposes, being utilized for training and certification of individuals seeking employment within local school districts. This collaborative effort involves partnerships with Yavapai College and member school districts, fostering a comprehensive approach to addressing transportation and workforce development needs.

400
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- White - 62%
- Hispanic - 26%
- American Indian/Native American 8%
- 17.5 % of the population have severe housing problems
- 16.7 % living in poverty
- 52% Free and Reduced lunch



PUBLIC CHARTER

Paul Revere Academy & Heritage Academy

Paul Revere Academy (Revere) will serve students 9th through 12th-grade on the East Valley Institute of Technology Main Campus. In addition to a strong academic and Career and Technical Education program, Paul Revere Academy will have programs and services that are targeted toward students who benefit from extra support in the classroom, small class size, credit recovery programs, youth experiencing foster care and students who desire to complete a career and trade program.

Maricopa County
GRANT AWARD
\$297,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

Paul Revere Academy aspires to maximize its accessibility to students; however, certain students face constraints due to transportation limitations. Opting for enrollment at Paul Revere Academy entails the forfeiture of the privilege to utilize district buses for commuting to and from EVIT. Consequently, these students are compelled to arrange and manage their own transportation, despite the collaborative nature of EVIT as a joint technical education district.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Transportation poses a significant hurdle for young individuals navigating the foster care system as they pursue their educational pathways. Paul Revere Academy is committed to alleviating this challenge by implementing a carpooling system. This system will leverage various platforms equipped with user-friendly features for parents, enabling them to voluntarily coordinate transportation arrangements. Additionally, these platforms seamlessly integrate with calendars, streamlining scheduling. These carpooling platforms possess the capability to enforce compliance standards and facilitate the submission of necessary documentation.

80
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- Serve students at risk of not graduating and drop out
- 33% of foster students graduate on time in Arizona.
- 31% have a learning disability and are 4 times more likely to be classified with an emotional disturbance.
- 44% are Hispanic/Latino
- Only 13% passed math and 20% in reading.

PUBLIC DISTRICT

Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District No. 35

Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District No. 35 (SCV35) is a growing, dynamic school district covering approximately 267 square miles in Santa Cruz County. SCV35 is located 10 miles from the Nogales, Sonora border with Mexico and serves more than 3,600 students from Tubac, Tumacacori-Carmen, Rio Rico, and Amado.

Santa Cruz County
GRANT AWARD
\$812,000



PROBLEM TO SOLVE

Santa Cruz County currently lacks the necessary infrastructure to accommodate diverse workforce housing and establish public transportation services. Over the course of three years, SCV35 has engaged in discussions with the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, Santa Cruz County Public Works, and Mariposa Community Health Center. The objective of these discussions has been to explore the development of micro-transit routes and foster collaboration for the establishment and maintenance of a public transportation system. This system aims to facilitate access to critical services, medical care, and employment opportunities within the community. The initial steps toward building this sustainable system will commence with SCV35.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

SCV35's plan is to add two eco-friendly buses to their current fleet. In addition, SCV35 will provide transportation for students who need last mile transit from the bus stop to their homes with the deployment of 15 microfleet vehicles.

1,800
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- SCV35 encompasses 267 square miles in Santa Cruz County
- Nationally recognized
- 5 Schools
- Total Enrollment 3,732
- Graduation Rate 95%
- Ethnicity 97% Hispanic
- Special Education 11%
- ELL 22%
- Free and reduced 97% PROVISION 2 Status

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

West-MEC

Western Maricopa Education Center (West-MEC) is a public school district dedicated to providing innovative career and technical education (CTE) programs that prepare students to enter the workforce and/or pursue continuing education. West-MEC CTE programs provide students opportunities to earn college credit and industry credentials. The Career and Technical Education District spans nearly 3700 square miles, with an enrollment reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve.

Maricopa County
GRANT AWARD
\$1,587,000

PROBLEM TO SOLVE

Currently, CTEDs face the challenge of not receiving state funding for student transportation. This issue results in many students missing out on the opportunities offered by West-MEC due to transportation barriers. Notably, a significant portion of families in Title I schools are unable to access West-MEC's central programs because of the lack of available transportation. These students, who would likely benefit the most from the programs, are thus unable to access the valuable opportunities.

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

This grant opportunity will allow West-MEC to pilot a variety of transportation options for families including rideshare stipends, micro transit, Valley Metro stipends, and provide transit through member districts including Agua Fria, Dysart, Nadaburg, Buckeye, Tolleson, and Wickenburg.

1,851
STUDENTS SERVED

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- White 42%
- Hispanic 45%
- African American 3%
- Asian 3%
- American Indian 1%
- Pacific Islander 0%
- 2 or More Races 7%
- 56% Female
- 44% Male
- IEP 9%
- 504 5%
- ELL 4%