

# Metro buses to transport Baxter Academy students

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News

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Some students of the charter school in Portland will get transit passes and Metro will add a trip to its express bus route covering Yarmouth and Freeport.



The Metro bus service has reached an agreement to provide transportation for students of Baxter Academy for Technology and Science and will add trips to towns north of Portland to accommodate the charter school's passengers.

Metro's Board of Directors approved a three-year agreement last week with the school in Portland to issue transit passes to students who live within its service area. Metro General Manager Greg Jordan said about 60 students will be given passes and 28 of those students live in towns served by or near the Metro Breez bus covering Portland, Yarmouth and Freeport.

The Breez service, launched in June, provides an express bus with nine round-trips a day and seven stops in Freeport and Yarmouth.

Because Baxter Academy's release times do not match the Breez schedule, Metro will add a round trip to serve the students, Jordan said in a memo to the directors. The company does not want to adjust the schedule so soon after starting the Breez service, but the schedule could change in January depending on ridership trends and public input, Jordan said.

Baxter Academy has about 340 high school students from dozens of southern Maine communities.

Metro estimates the Baxter Academy pass will add 5,400 to 7,200 boardings a year.

The year-long passes will give students access to the Metro service for trips to and from school, Baxter Academy officials said. Metro reached a similar agreement last year to give transit [passes to Portland high school students](#).

Using Metro is consistent with Baxter Academy's mission to involve its students as active members of their community, said Head of School Michele LaForge. The school tries to use public options for student services whenever possible, such as using local restaurants and vendors for its lunch program.

Baxter uses three chartered school buses to transport some students, LaForge said. Other students use public transportation like the Biddeford-Saco-Old Orchard Beach shuttle bus and the Lakes Region Explorer to get to school, LaForge said.

"The thing that will never change is, we try very hard to allow our kids to be part of our world," LaForge said.

"Taking advantage of public options whenever possible is something we always want to do."

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