

September 12, 2018

Dear Waverly Families,

Thank you for all your feedback regarding the transportation issues experienced during the first week of school. Yesterday we shared your feedback with Assistant Superintendent of Business, Lisa Sanfilippo, and Waverly School Principal, Mari Doyle, in an informative meeting. We are grateful to them for taking the time to meet with us and would like to take this opportunity to update the Waverly families with what we learned prior to this evening's school board meeting.

Key Takeways:

- All details of feedback were submitted to Assistant Superintendent Sanfilippo and Principal Doyle. Our discussion focused on the common and most critical themes of concern that we received: ensuring children are on the right bus, addressing excessively long bus routes and potentially dangerous bus stop locations and ensuring there is proper training of bus drivers related to their specific routes and safety of the children.
- The overall response from Assistant Superintendent Sanfilippo was that each concern submitted is being taken into consideration. However, the beginning of the year is typically hectic and it historically takes 2 to 3 weeks to get into the regular routine, which is why we have received the communication that changes to routes/bus assignments/stop locations would be addressed after that 3 week period if conditions do not approve.
- Ripalda Arena should be contacted first if there are concerns over delayed buses. She can radio the bus depot who will contact the buses directly. Her contact information is as follows: email: rarena@eastchester.k.12.ny.us; phone: 914-793-6130, ext 4444. The ask was to limit emails and phone calls to delays of 30 minutes or more during these first few weeks of transition.
- Although general communication had been sent out to expect delays during the first weeks of school, Assistant Superintendent Sanfilippo agreed that more timely emails will go out if a bus has been significantly delayed leaving the school.
- Assistant Superintendent Sanfilippo agreed to send out a separate communication with further information around the transportation guidelines and other factors that are considered when determining the bus routes.
- How can we help: Please make sure to follow the school procedures in requesting a change in dismissal. The instructions and form were included in the summer packet email. If we are to request a change in dismissal, the form is required to be submitted via backpack mail the morning of the change. Changes will not be accepted via email. Last minute changes in dismissal requests can be disruptive and lead to further delays as a bus is being held up to take a child off.
- As an appendix to this letter we have included specific questions we raised during our discussion and the answers we received (see next page)

We will be continuing to monitor the situation and work with the school to advocate for our Waverly families if we do not see improvement in the areas of concern. Please continue to provide feedback so that we may do that effectively. If you do not see improvements in the next two weeks, please follow up with Ripalda on potential alternatives.

As a reminder, tonight's Board Meeting is in the Eastchester High School library at 8:00PM. If you have additional issues to be heard, please consider attending.

Thank you,

Waverly PTA

waverlyptapres@gmail.com

Questions from PTA:	
Question: What is protocol for communication/follow up when child is either put on wrong bus or dropped off at wrong location?	
Answer - No child should be let off the bus without an approved guardian. Child is returned to school if no guardian is at bus stop. School will contact parent to pick up. Parents should contact - Ripalda - she can radio bus, etc.	
Question: Why were 2 buses eliminated for the 2018-19 school year?	
Answer - Due to the earlier start time at Waverly, and the time adjustments at the elementary school, adjustments to the bus routes were required to ensure all buses would arrive to school at the earlier start time. In addition to that, the district had to reevaluate whether state guidelines were being met as to the number of students required to be on a bus to warrant the need for a bus. The guideline is that all buses should be filled to capacity which is 66 students, with 3 students to a seat. They found that Waverly buses were not meeting that requirement as they were generally filled to 80% capacity. that is how the decision was made to go from 8 buses to 6 buses and the routes had to then be overhauled due to the elimination of buses.	
Question: Would it be possible to add back the 2 buses if the issues experienced persist?	
Answer - Since not in 2018-19 school budget, adding back buses would not be an option until the next school year.	
Question: When were drivers given the new routes? What is the requirement to learn the route?	
Answer - All summer is spent routing buses. New students are constantly enrolling - so routes change throughout the summer. Bus routes were given to Bus Company on 8/22. 1-2 days later, the bus drivers pick their routes, then drivers are responsible for learning their assigned route 1 week prior to school starting. Bus driver is accountable for letting the school know if a route is not practical. It typically takes approximately 3 weeks before the district can determine if changes are necessary. This is about the time it usually takes for buses to get on a predictable schedule.	
Question: Can district consider other bus companies.eastchester owned bus company?	
Answer: No - no capability to store the buses or budget to do it	
Question: Why are multiple buses running routes in the same neighborhoods? Why isn't one bus picking up all children in one area?	
Answer - tried to keep one bus, per one neighborhood. Moved some stops to different route due to capacity issues. Adjustments will be considered after 3 week period.	
Question: Is there a State policy around how long a child can be on a bus?	
Answer - no regulation that states an excessive amount of time - commissioner regulations ruled under 90 minutes not considered excessive.The school district aims to keep travel length per student under 40 minutes.	
Question: Can parents have access to bus routes?	
Answer - For security purposes, bus routes are not shared in their entirety. But the school district can look into providing more information on the route to each family, such as how many stops there are in the route and which stop their child is within that number..	
Question: HS/MS bus times were adjusted earlier. What is the direct impact to Waverly students?	
Answer - Could allow buses to be more timely to Waverly students, but time will tell.	
Question: Would bus stops be moved if deemed dangerous location (i.e., crossing over busy street, etc...)	
Answer: These requests are most definitely taken into consideration. The solution is typically that the bus can drop child off later in the route when it comes back around to location	