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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

### EWSD Transportation Services 2027-2029

|                  |                                              |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>TO:</b>       | All interested parties                       |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>  | RFP for Districtwide Transportation Services |
| <b>DEADLINE:</b> | Noon on Monday, November 2, 2026             |

#### PART I - GENERAL INFORMATION

##### BACKGROUND

Our district is located in the greater Burlington area and serves the communities of Essex Town, the City of Essex Junction, and the Town of Westford. EWSD is committed to growing hearts and minds for a better today and tomorrow: every day, every way, every one. In 2017, the former Chittenden Central Supervisory Union and former Essex Town School District merged to form the Essex Westford School District with this new focus.

Essex Westford School District, (hereinafter EWSD or District) established in 2017, serves approximately 4,500 preschool through 12th grade students at nine school locations across three communities in Northwestern Vermont: City of Essex Junction, Essex Town, and Westford. Additionally, we currently offer bus routes for tuition Middle and High School students from Grand Isle County and tuition High School students from the Town of Georgia. As of August 2026, approximately 1,600 of our students were registered for generalized route transportation, with approximately 900 of these students riding the bus on any given day. Our school year begins in late August and ends mid-June.

Learn more about EWSD at: <https://youtu.be/1cE9KS5Z2J4>

## SERVICES SOLICITED

The Essex Westford School District seeks a Transportation Contractor to provide transportation services as described below.

## TIMEFRAME

A walk-through of applicable areas will be held upon request made before October 1, 2026. All proposals shall be emailed or delivered by **Monday, November 2, 2026, at noon** to the address or email listed below, at which time the bids will be publicly opened for review.

Proposals will be reviewed against the established criteria and brought for approval to the EWSD School Board in October 2026. The District will execute a signed contract immediately thereafter. Service under the new contract will begin on July 1, 2027.

A fully completed and signed copy of this RFP, along with a Proposal consisting of the elements, will constitute a proposal for services.

1. Describe Proposer's Organization:
  - a. How long has the proposer been operating contracted school bus services?
  - b. Experience operating school buses in Northern New England or other similar weather conditions.
  - c. List of vehicles, including model year, to be used in proposed services, including extra and co-curricular.
  - d. Describe the proposer's capacity to maintain vehicles: facility, # of maintenance staff, cumulative experience of maintenance staff.
  - e. Provide an organizational chart detailing the reporting structure for all staff involved in the provision of services in this contract.
  - f. Minimum of 3 business references that EWSD may contact. These must be school districts or educational institutions the proposer has provided transportation services within the last 5 years. Provide the name, title, phone #, and email of the primary contract manager at the referenced organization.
2. Proposed staff for Operations Manager and/or dispatch personnel providing service to this contract. Include names, relevant qualifications and experience, and length of service with the proposer.
3. Provide bid response for required and optional services as described in Scope.
4. State clearly if the proposer wishes to participate in the optional Bus Storage Facility Agreement.
5. State clearly if the proposer wishes to participate in the optional Fuel Agreement.

Proposals must be emailed and received before the deadline. There will be no exceptions. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

Essex Westford School District  
Transportation RFP  
Attn: Hunter Eddy, Director of Transportation  
76 Pearl Street, Suite 201  
Essex Junction, VT 05452  
Email: [heddy@ewsd.org](mailto:heddy@ewsd.org)

If there are questions about the process, please contact Hunter at (802) 857-7037 or by email at [heddy@ewsd.org](mailto:heddy@ewsd.org).

## PART II - PROPOSAL CONTENT AND PROCESS

### PURPOSE

Utilizing a Request for Proposals (RFP), EWSD is requesting proposals from companies/businesses (Respondents) for Districtwide Transportation Service.

### NOTES TO ALL VENDORS

1. Vendor must keep EWSD advised of any changes in service delivery dates or status.
2. Questions regarding this proposal must be in writing to [heddy@ewsd.org](mailto:heddy@ewsd.org)
3. All pricing and any award under this RFP shall be good for EWSD and any associated schools purchasing under the contract.
4. Project is contingent upon FY28 and FY29 budget appropriations.

### SCOPE OF SERVICES

| Service                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Bid Requirements                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Up to 23 Drivers and Type I (72-passenger) school buses for daily round-trip routes to and from school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• City of Essex Junction: 3 routes</li><li>• Town of Essex: 10 routes</li><li>• Town of Westford: 3 routes</li><li>• Islands Bus: 1 route</li><li>• Georgia Bus: 1 route</li></ul> | <b>ALL OR A PORTION OF SERVICES</b> |
| A sufficient number of the above drivers to provide field trips between morning and afternoon route times as requested by the District.                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>REQUIRED</b>                     |
| Sufficient spare vehicle, management, training, maintenance, substitute driver, and dispatch capacity to support uninterrupted operations of the above.                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>REQUIRED</b>                     |
| A Manager assigned to the Contractor's employees serving EWSD.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>REQUIRED</b>                     |
| Add-Alt up to 6 additional Drivers and buses during afternoon route times for Athletics & Extra/Cocurricular trips. EWSD may choose not to contract for this service.                                                                                                                                                            | <b>OPTIONAL ADD-ON</b>              |
| Add-Alt pricing for 2 after-school bus routes. EWSD may choose not to contract for this service.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>OPTIONAL ADD-ON</b>              |

## **District Transportation Staff**

EWSD Transportation employs three full-time administrative staff. We are dedicated to data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement of our service.

The EWSD Transportation Manager supervises the department, all EWSD transportation employees, and is the primary contact for contract management, EWSD Leadership, and coordination of service with external stakeholders.

Transportation Office Coordinator, Special Services Coordinator, and Transportation Manager oversee execution of routing software, district staff coordination, and serve as communications liaisons between district staff, contractor, and families. These staff members are able to send automated messages to EWSD families by bus route in the event of delays and/or unforeseen circumstances.

Our full-time Administrative Assistant is responsible for financial processing including accounts payable and receivable, a variety of data-related functions, and providing student information in our bus routing software.

The largest and most important part of the EWSD Transportation workgroup is our Bus Aides and Specialized Service Drivers. We employ approximately 25 Bus Aides who work across both Generalized and Specialized routes. Many of these positions are filled by EWSD staff employed in other capacities during the school day. The Department's goal is to provide behavior, health, and safety support to students inside the bus, in order to allow bus drivers to better focus on everything happening outside the bus. As staffing capacity permits, we strive to provide a Bus Aide to support any Driver who would like one.

## **Facility**

EWSD has a Transportation facility, located at 20 Founders Road in Essex Town that may be leased by the contractor, as described below.

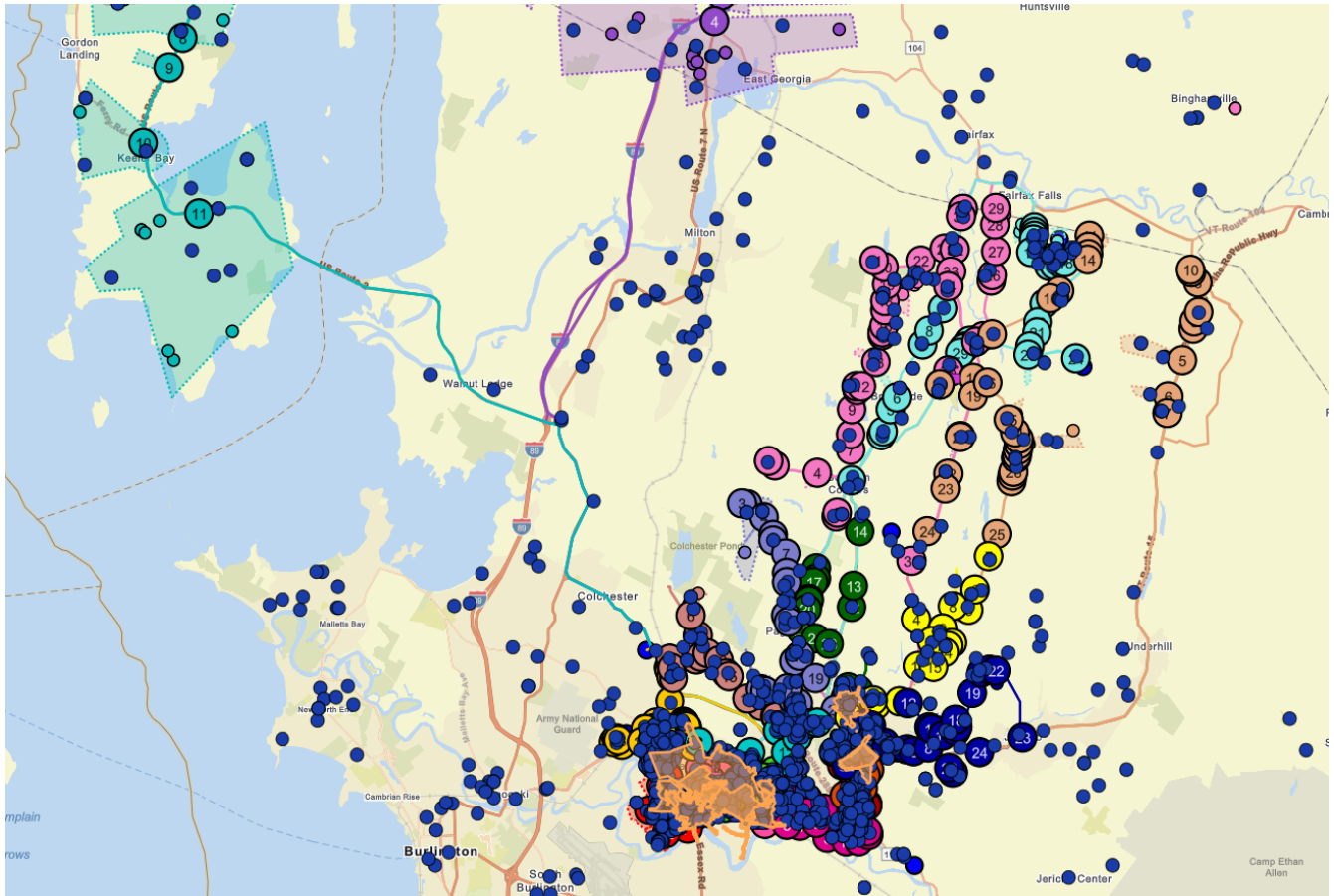
## **Technology**

Throughout this contract, EWSD will have an active interest in collaboratively pursuing emerging technologies to increase safety, quality of service, environmental responsibility, efficiency, communication and quality data to drive decision-making. We have participated in competitive grant applications for emerging technology and wish to continue doing so with the recipient of this transportation contract. The cost and labor of implementing any new technology will be negotiated between EWSD and the Contractor.

## **System Structure**

Routes, Miles, Hours

System Map



## Definitions

1. As used in this Contract, "school year" shall mean the school calendar adopted annually by the District, which shall determine the number of days and dates on which buses shall be in operation, subject to minor modifications as a result of inclement weather conditions or other unusual circumstances. The school year calendar is posted annually on the EWSD website.
2. "Emergencies" as referred to in this Contract shall mean such medical, vehicle, road, weather, traffic, or other conditions which constitute a danger, hazard, or jeopardy to the safety of the bus or its occupants.
3. "Guidelines, Procedures and Protocols" as used in this Contract shall mean such written guidelines adopted by the District governing the health, safety, and welfare of students.
4. "Bus" as used in this Contract is a general term and shall refer to a car, van, bus, or similar vehicle that is used to transport students pursuant to this Contract. Details on the capacity and features of vehicles required under this Contract are contained herein.
5. "District" shall refer to Essex Westford School District.
6. "Daily routes" for "home-to-school" transportation shall mean:
  - a. Up to 23 buses and drivers as detailed in the attached documentation. Some drivers may operate multiple trips on a "daily route".

7. The following shall be annually included with the cost of “daily route” transportation at no additional charge:

- a. Mid-day operation of a sufficient number of buses to serve Essex High School (EHS) routes during first and second semester exam weeks. Typically, this can be accomplished with 7 or fewer buses.
- b. Operation of all AM & PM Essex High School (EHS) routes for freshman orientation, which is the day before the start of the regular EWSD calendar.
- c. Up to three days of service for Center for Technology Essex (CTE) when the rest of EWSD is not in session. Service will be modified routes of not more than 5 buses, with student names and addresses provided at least 3 days in advance.
- d. Sufficient Drivers and Vehicles to conduct building-by-building bus evacuation drills as required by law.

## **Contract with Contractor**

The Contractor shall perform the services and furnish the equipment and personnel as provided in the specifications of the Agreement, and shall do all things necessary for performance and completion of the work required by the Agreement, in the manner and at the times provided herein to the satisfaction of EWSD. In addition, prior to undertaking performance, Carrier shall be registered to do business in the State of Vermont and insured appropriately, as required by Vermont Statute. All vehicles and drivers shall meet all state and federal requirements, as well as the requirements outlined in this agreement.

The District agrees to and does hereby contract with the Contractor as transporter of designated elementary, middle, and high school students along with required athletic and extra/co-curricular busing, and the Contractor agrees to transport upon such routes and on such schedules as shall be designated and approved by the District. The District reserves the right to utilize its own buses, or the services of other contractors, in the event that the Contractor cannot provide the required services.

Furthermore, the District reserves the right to utilize its own buses and personnel for specialized service transportation.

## **Term of Contract**

The term of this Contract shall be two (2) years, commencing on July 1, 2027 and concluding June 30, 2029, with the ability to extend the contract for one additional year by mutual consent. The District and Contractor may agree on contract extensions, subject to the negotiation of mutually agreed-upon terms and conditions and consistent with State statutes.

## **Contractor's Manager and Office Personnel**

The Contractor shall provide a Manager exclusively for the District, with responsibility to make decisions, supervise drivers, and work collaboratively with District personnel. The Manager shall be available in person to the District on school days, and available by cell phone at all other times in the event of emergency or unforeseen circumstances, including school cancellations. Any new Manager shall be selected and employed by the Contractor after consultation with the District regarding qualifications.

The Contractor shall provide dispatch personnel to provide radio and phone coverage while morning and afternoon routes are in operation. This may be the same, or different individual than the Contractor's Manager. In the event any route is operating more than 15 minutes behind schedule, dispatch personnel will contact District transportation staff to inform them of the route number, estimated delay, reason for delay, and any other effects on remaining bus stops. This will allow District staff to notify families via its communication application.

The District shall be notified by the Contractor with an "all clear" phone call or text message once the final student is released from the final bus in the afternoon.

A member of the Contractor's Management staff will be available via cell phone call and text message on evenings preceding weather events up until 7:30 PM and as early as 4:15 AM on days of weather events to provide input to the District's school closing and delay decision-making process.

Annually in June, Contractor Management staff shall meet with the District to plan for the next school year.

## **Communications**

The Contractor shall make an oral report of any accident, breakdown or significant occurrence that involves a vehicle engaged in transportation of school children pursuant to this Contract as soon as possible and not later than thirty (30) minutes from the time of such occurrence. The Contractor shall contact the District Office to provide concise information concerning the accident or delay and the resolution of the same, to enable the District to prepare communications to parents and schools on a timely basis.

A detailed written report in a format approved by the District shall be made within twenty-four (24) hours. The District reserves the right to be an active participant in any accident review process.

The District shall provide the Contractor with contact information for District staff. Direct phone numbers to each school are available via EWSD's website.

The Contractor shall maintain Google Workspace accounts (e.g., Gmail, Google Drive, Sheets, Forms, etc). The Contractor shall ensure its staff is trained to proficiency as these will be a primary mode of information exchange between District and Contractor.

As an example, EWSD uses Google Workspace for the following:

- Assigned seating charts
- Bus conduct (student behavior report) forms and exchange of related video
- Booking extra and co-curricular trips
- Red light violation video footage
- Bus Aide route assignments

The Contractor shall provide the District with the email address, home, and cell phone numbers for each driver and staff member in unsupervised contact with District students. The list will be provided by the end of the second full week in July at the time the number of drivers for next year is determined. It shall also include any substitute drivers and drivers operating extra- or co-curricular trips. Thereafter, the list will be updated by the Contractor upon hire or separation of any drivers. Updates shall be provided two weeks before the anticipated start of independent driving for drivers to allow time for District staff to contact drivers and conduct a criminal

record check process as required by 16 V.S.A. § 255.

The District will create a group of Contractor drivers and staff in its automated phone and email notification system to be used in the event of emergency, school delay, or cancellation. This system shall be in addition to, not a replacement for, any direct communication systems the Contractor establishes with its employees.

## School Calendar and Abnormal Service Days

The Contractor shall follow the academic calendar for the District, which can be found on the EWSD website (<https://www.ewsd.org/o/ewsd/page/calendar>) with exceptions noted in “Definitions 7.” **All drivers are expected to be available for the entire EWSD calendar.**

The District currently operates Early Release every Wednesday. All schools except Center for Technology Essex dismiss students one hour early. Bus routes shall operate dismissal an hour early on these days. The District reserves the right to change the Early Release day, and if so, the Contractor will modify provision of service accordingly, as long as the District provides a minimum of 2 weeks' advance notice.

On days when weather creates a dangerous situation for travel, the Superintendent or designee shall have the authority to determine if transportation shall be provided. The District's goal is to make delay and closing decisions as early as possible but no later than 5:00 AM in order to notify families, contractors, and staff by 5:30 AM. In the event the District is closed, no transportation shall be provided, including service to out-of-district placements where school may still be in session. On days when service is delayed, all service shall commence at the end of the announced delay period. The District reserves the right to delay or cancel service to out-of-district placements if severe weather conditions are expected at the point of destination.

In the event of early dismissal of students by the District or of any school serviced pursuant to this Contract, the Contractor shall provide the normal level of bus service for such early dismissal, provided the District informs the Contractor with notification as to any such early dismissal or other unique transportation needs.

## System Planning

A collaborative working relationship between the Contractor's Manager and District staff is essential. The District has successfully used this model with contractors for the past four years.

EWSD prefers to maintain as much continuity as possible for our community by minimizing routing changes whenever possible.

As of the publishing of this Request for Proposals, EWSD maintains and manages student and bus information in TransFinder RouteFinder Plus routing software. EWSD shall provide the Contractor access to route and student data through credentials for TransFinder's web-based ViewFinder portal. The Contractor shall become proficient in the use of ViewFinder, and use it, at a minimum, to:

- Generate turn-by-turn directions for Bus Drivers
- Generate weekly route attendance rosters - student pictures can be included
- Allow dispatch personnel to search student/family contact information
- Review routes and work collaboratively with EWSD

All documents and details generated from the District's routing software are confidential information

and shall not be left unsecured on a bus.

On or before July 30th each year, the District and the Contractor's Manager shall collaboratively modify routes based on available staffing and EWSD Transportation Procedures (C3-P). All routes, routing directions, and stop locations shall be mutually approved by the Contractor's Manager and the District Transportation Manager prior to finalization. Upon finalization, the Contractor will be able to utilize route turn-by-turn directions for Driver training.

At this time, the District shall notify families of stop times and locations and survey families in order to assign students to preferred routes. The District shall provide the Contractor with populated routes a minimum of one week before the first day of school, and this shall be on or before mandatory in-service training for all EWSD Transportation staff and Contractors. The District will notify the Contractor of any individual student additions to routes thereafter.

At the end of September, the District and Contractor will review ridership, on-time performance data, driver feedback, and any other operational feedback to fine-tune routes in a single routing adjustment to remain in place for the remainder of the school year, which shall be communicated to families to go into effect in early October.

### **Bus Identification and Route Number**

All buses in service, including spares, shall display the correct route number and/or designation on the front, passenger side, and rear of the bus. The Contractor shall be responsible for obtaining such route designators, at no cost to the District. All signage systems must be consistent with State regulations.

Each bus shall operate on its designated route unless an emergency situation arises or the District authorizes a change in route. No route changes shall be made by the District, Contractor, or any of the Contractor's employees without the prior approval of both Contractor's Manager and District Transportation Manager.

### **Responsibility for Students, Behavior and Supervision**

The Contractor shall be fully responsible for the safety, welfare, conduct, and control of students throughout the transportation period. Students shall be considered under the jurisdiction of the District from the time they board a bus until the time they exit the bus.

The District hereby delegates to the Contractor the necessary authority to supervise and maintain control of students on operating buses while en route under such rules as may be adopted by the District. Such authorization shall not include the right to administer corporal punishment nor the right to eject a child anywhere other than the child's designated stop or school of attendance.

If a student is to be dropped off at a time other than the designated stop time, regardless of age, the student must be discharged into the care of a parent, authorized caregiver, or school staff.

The Contractor will notify the District by live voice communication in the event a student is to be discharged from the bus in such a manner.

The Contractor shall not overload any bus or exceed the vehicle's capacity limit.

The District shall provide Bus Aides to meet Driver requests for support as staffing levels allow. The Contractor is required to facilitate this service as requested by the District. Bus Aides are provided to manage student behavior, assist with daily attendance, and/or attend to specialized student medical needs (beyond basic first aid and EpiPen administration). The intent and expectation is that the EWSD Bus Aide and Contractor's Driver and staff will work together and communicate to achieve the safest, most orderly ride service possible. Bus Aides will under no circumstances facilitate driving instructions, nor will they be responsible for creating or updating seating chart assignments.

The Contractor shall record any passenger incident using the District's [incident report Google Form](#) by the end of the Driver's shift if possible, but no later than the following school day. Incident reports shall be a firsthand account of events completed by the Driver, Bus Aide, or both. Once submitted, a copy of the incident report will be automatically sent via e-mail to the Contractor's Manager, District Transportation staff, and the Building Principal or behavior management staff of the school which the student attends. The report will also be automatically logged. The Contractor shall work with the District, school personnel, family, and any other appropriate party to ensure that interruption of service is a last resort.

The Contractor reserves the right to request the suspension of service to students of the District when it deems that a dangerous situation exists which may cause an accident or injury if transportation is continued. In such cases, the Contractor shall work with the District's representative and any other appropriate enforcement agency to resolve issues as quickly as possible. The Contractor shall enforce the reasonable rules and regulations of the District as they pertain to student transportation. In all cases, the final decision relative to the provision of services rests with the District.

## **School Bus Drivers**

The Contractor shall, at all times, maintain a sufficient number of available qualified drivers and substitute drivers to fulfill its obligation under this Contract. No bus driver shall transport students until he or she holds the necessary licenses and certifications, and has completed all required training.

No Contractor bus driver or office personnel shall be considered the employee of the District, and the Contractor alone shall be responsible for the acts, omissions, conduct and control of any and all personnel in its employ. Drivers shall be selected by and employed by the Contractor subject to the approval of the District and in conformity with the provisions of 23 V.S.A. § 1282. The District shall pay for a [full background check](#), including fingerprinting fees, for contracted staff who choose to use the Chittenden County Sheriff's Office. The Contractor or its staff shall be responsible for costs if Contractor staff elects to complete fingerprinting at an alternate location.

All other required background checks shall be at the Contractor's expense. All contracted staff are required to comply with State law relative to safety drills, training, and related activities.

The Contractor shall, at its sole cost, conduct annual physical examinations of all drivers in accordance with state and federal statutes.

EpiPens: Drivers are required to carry and shall be asked to administer EpiPens pursuant to training that shall be provided by the District and the stipulations listed below. The District shall provide the Contractor with health concerns lists detailing the needs of the students assigned to bus routes. The Contractor shall disseminate this information to Drivers on a route-by-route basis. The Contractor shall permit administration of any emergency medical services by a driver, including the administration of an EpiPen, provided all of the following conditions are met:

1. State law and regulations permit the administration of the specific medical services by private school bus company drivers and provide appropriate immunity to the Contractor and driver from liability and criminal prosecution resulting from the administration of medical services on the school bus;
2. This Contract specifically authorizes the administration of medical services by drivers on a voluntary basis and provides appropriate indemnification for the Contractor and driver;
3. It is evident that emergency medical personnel will not be able to reach the scene in time to adequately assist the child in need;
4. The child is unable to self-administer the medication;
5. The driver can safely administer the medication without jeopardizing the health and safety of other children on the bus
6. The driver can easily locate and identify the medication to be administered and match the medication labeling to the child;
7. The driver has been properly trained in accordance with State requirements and / or as specified by school personnel;
8. The driver is able and willing to administer the medication, has been advised of the possibility that a child on his or her bus might require medication in an emergency situation, and has agreed prior to assignment to the specific route to administer the medication in accordance with the terms of this Contract; and
9. Parental and District consent to the administration of the medical services to a student by a driver has been secured prior to the emergency, so that the driver is not subject to personal liability or criminal prosecution.
10. In all cases where emergency medical treatment is provided by the driver, the child will be transported to an emergency medical treatment facility by emergency medical transport prior to the bus resuming its normal route, such emergency medical transportation being at the parent/guardian or District expense.

Families shall provide EpiPens in marked containers. Drivers will transport EpiPens between bus and garage to ensure an EpiPen is never left in the vehicle while it is not in operation.

Bus drivers shall be neat in appearance, courteous to parents and children, and cooperative with school and District staff. No alcoholic beverages or intoxicants, or substances may be brought to or consumed upon the District's premises or buses utilized pursuant to the Contract by any employee of the Contractor, nor shall any employee be under the influence of or impaired by any alcoholic beverages, intoxicants, or prescription drugs. Additionally, smoking is not allowed on the buses or on school property by Contractor's employees prior to or during the provision of services to the District's students. The Contractor shall fully inform its employees of this provision. No alcoholic beverage or intoxicant shall be allowed at the bus terminals. The District has a "drug-free zone" policy, which includes vaping and cannabis use on school property.

All Drivers shall understand and speak English with proficiency. The drivers shall be able to effectively

communicate in English with parents, school representatives, and students. Drivers shall be proficient in writing to the degree necessary to complete documents and reports required in this contract, including but not limited to attendance forms, writing student first and last names on rosters, and completing bus conduct reports. If there is a question about driver proficiency, the District reserves the right to make a determination based upon an interview with the Contractor's employee.

The Contractor shall inquire of applicants or place a question on its job application concerning whether an applicant has ever been employed by the District, and shall notify the District in writing of any affirmative responses which it receives. If the District has any information or knows of any reason why the applicant may not be suitable for hire, it shall inform the Contractor within twenty-four (24) hours of such notice; but in any event the Contractor is not obligated to obtain the consent of the District before it hires any individual.

When possible, residents who live within the District shall be chosen as Bus Drivers under this Contract.

For the safety and security of the students, the efficiency of the student transportation system, and the development of a sense of community, it is the District's desire that Drivers be consistently assigned to routes starting on the first day of school. The Contractor shall at all times maximize the consistency of driver assignment to routes.

## **Seating and Attendance**

Drivers shall complete and submit the student assigned seating chart by the end of the first full week in September, including first and last names. The Contractor's Manager or dispatch personnel shall ensure completed seating charts for all routes are placed in the Google Drive location designated by the District at such time. Typed digital copies are preferred; however, hand-written scanned documents are acceptable if they are fully legible. Seating charts shall be updated in the Google Drive within one school day of any changes instituted by Drivers.

Drivers will write the regularly assigned seat number for each student on the far left, and check daily attendance boxes on days students are present. Drivers shall annotate the exact seat number under the daily attendance box for any day-to-day changes. Day-to-day seating changes should be avoided unless absolutely necessary for behavior management purposes. If a bus aide is available on the route, they may complete daily attendance. Daily attendance rosters will be kept in a secure location (e.g., driver mailbox, not on the bus) accessible only to Contractor/District staff when the route is not in operation.

The District may require access to attendance documents at any time for health and safety reasons. The Contractor shall provide the actual document or legible electronic scans of documents within 60 minutes of any request by the District.

Any students not present on the roster should be written in with first and last name, and their seat recorded. District staff will add students to bus rosters on a weekly basis based on these additions.

At the completion of each week, the Contractor shall collect attendance, review to ensure all documents for all routes are present and complete, scan and submit them electronically to the District for archival.

## Training

The Contractor shall train all its Drivers to proficiency on all vehicles and equipment required herein.

The Contractor must provide all drivers with training or meetings to become familiar with District policy and procedures. The cost of such training shall be borne by the Contractor. It is expected that all Drivers will have experience working with students and follow District policies and procedures.

The Contractor shall have each designated driver conduct one-day “dry runs” before each school year begins. These dry runs shall be operated at the normal times of operation, so as to reflect as closely as possible actual service to be operated at the opening of school. Written verification of said dry runs shall be provided to the District.

All Contractor Drivers, Manager, and dispatch personnel are required to attend, at the Contractor's expense, up to four hours of training in August and up to an additional four hours in January of each year. The District will design and deliver these trainings.

For Drivers who start working mid-year, training must include the equivalent of these trainings, and the Contractor and District shall work together to determine the best time and method of delivery.

During the course of their employment, regular ongoing training shall be provided to drivers with regard to behavior management, respect for cultural diversity, passenger assistance techniques, basic first aid, emergency procedures, transportation for students with disabilities, and any other training deemed necessary by the Contractor. The District reserves the right to offer specialized training as solely determined by the District.

## Compliance

The Contractor shall comply with all provisions of State, Federal, and local laws and District school bus policies regarding school transportation motor vehicles, with all requirements issued in writing by the Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles, and with all requirements of the State Board of Education affecting the transportation of school children and safety drills, including any enacted or coming into effect during the term of this Contract.

The Contractor is responsible for conducting bus safety and evacuation procedure drills for students a minimum of two times per year, or as required by state regulations (see document attached). District Staff shall assist the Contractor in coordinating these drills with administrative staff at each school. EWSD is standardizing an all-school, building-by-building bus evacuation drill process just after morning drop-off.

The District's current Transportation Policies and Procedures for the operation of the student transportation program are also included in the attached documentation. The Contractor shall comply with the District requirements as set forth, or as modified in the future by the District.

## Right to Remove

The District or its Superintendent shall have the right to direct the Contractor to remove from school bus operations any person, pending an investigation by the Contractor and the District. Upon a conclusion by the Contractor and District, the Contractor shall permanently reassign such person or take other action as it deems necessary. In the event the Contractor and District are unable to agree, and the Contractor desires to return the person to school bus operations, the Contractor and District shall meet, confer, and seek to reach an agreement as to an assignment of the individual.

However, if the Contractor and District are unable to promptly agree, the District may require the removal of the driver and the Contractor shall immediately comply with the District's decision. The District shall make all requests regarding removal of Contractor employees in writing, stating reasons and including any supporting documentation. The District's requests may not violate local, state, or federal laws, rules or regulations.

## Vehicles

The Contractor shall utilize vehicles providing daily services to the District that do not exceed four years of age. A spare vehicle must not exceed seven years of age. Failure to maintain the stipulated age requirements during the contract life shall be considered grounds for default as defined in this document. Vehicle age is determined by subtracting the model year of the vehicle from the year of the contract, calculated on July 30th of each year. For example, a bus with a 2025 model year, at the beginning of this contract period (July 2027), would be considered two years old.

The Contractor shall work with the District throughout the term of the contract to explore future technology and vehicles that might assist the District or the residents.

If the District or any governmental agency imposes additional equipment requirements other than those set forth herein, or in place at the time of this proposal, on Contractor's vehicles during the term of this contract which are specific requirements for the operation of this contract, or immediate installation is required for continuing operation of the vehicles, the parties shall negotiate in good faith concerning price increases applicable to such equipment installation.

The bus operating the Georgia EHS route shall be equipped to transport a passenger in a wheelchair (lift and wheelchair securements), in addition to all ambulatory students, for the full term of this contract. The Island route does not currently need a lift-equipped vehicle. However, should a student need arise, the Contractor shall provide such a vehicle within 30 days of written notice by the District. Historically, this Georgia route has transported 15-20 high school students per day, and the Islands route has transported 15-27 students per day over the past four years.

All buses used for student transport within this contract shall be equipped with:

- "Child Check Mate (EP-1)", or equivalent automated passenger security system, on all buses.
- Four 5-point child restraint systems, two each in the front seat on either side of the bus, or the capacity to add four carseats / child restraint systems to any bus upon request.
- Internal public address system for Drivers to communicate with students without having to raise their voice.
- Synovia Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) systems, or approved equal. The Contractor shall give access

credentials to designated District personnel for this system. The District may implement, at its own expense, a real-time parent-facing bus tracking application. If so, the Contractor will facilitate access to GPS data for this purpose.

- Minimum of 3 video cameras. The Contractor shall provide a Seon camera system (or approved equal) with two internal cameras (Front and rear, facing students, each with audio) and one stop sign camera capable of legibly displaying the license plate of a vehicle passing bus red lights. If an alternate video system is approved, the Contractor shall provide 6 sets of video viewing hardware and software at no additional cost to the District. All digital recordings shall be the sole property of the District and held by the Contractor. Digital recordings will be maintained only until cameras begin recording over the oldest material on the hard drive. Under no circumstances shall digital recordings be duplicated, modified, enhanced, reformatted, and/or physically or electronically removed from the Contractor's premises unless otherwise required by law. Spare buses must be equipped with comparable digital cameras if they are serving in normal daily service for three consecutive days or more. The Contractor shall comply with the District's procedure regarding digital cameras on school buses, as referenced in the transportation section of the Transportation Procedures (C3-P) attached.
- Radios on all buses shall have clear connectivity with all other buses, Contractor's dispatch base, and EWSD office. Radio range shall include all routes operating in this contract, which encompasses City of Essex Junction, Essex Town, Westford, Georgia, and the US Route 2 corridor of the Champlain Islands. The Contractor will provide the District, at no additional charge, 3 handheld radios and a base radio unit.
- All vehicles that travel on dirt roads shall be equipped with On-Spot, or equivalent, drop-down chain systems, or studded snow tires.

The Contractor shall assign a minimum of four reserve seventy-two passenger Type I school buses as spares to be used as necessary to properly fulfill the terms and conditions of this Contract. All reserve buses shall conform to the same requirements as regular buses except for age. No spare bus shall be older than seven years. Spare buses shall not be used for transportation for a period exceeding three days unless approved by the District.

All vehicles shall be owned and/or leased and operated by the Contractor. The name of the Contractor is to be clearly displayed on the outside of the vehicle. The vehicles used shall, at all times during the contract period, comply with all State, Federal, and District regulations.

All vehicles operated for daily routes shall be provided to the District for the exclusive use of the District.

If needed, any adaptive equipment other than standard equipment on the vehicle is the responsibility of the parent or District and shall meet all Federal and State safety standards. Any equipment installed by the Contractor shall meet all State and/or Federal regulations.

## **Maintenance**

At the Contractor's sole expense, all buses shall be maintained in safe mechanical condition at all times in accordance with any applicable Federal laws, Vermont Statutes, Rules and Regulations. The Contractor shall develop and maintain a preventive maintenance schedule for all buses. All records based on such maintenance shall be made available to the District upon request.

Contractor staff shall disinfect all bus seats, handrails, and other high-touch surfaces at the conclusion of the vehicle's use each day.

### **District's Right to Inspect Buses**

All buses shall be available at the garage location used by the Contractor and ready for inspection by the District on or before August 10 each year, as well as at any time thereafter during the school year as deemed necessary by the District. The District has the right to request maintenance on any bus it believes to be in need of service; however, the maintenance and care of the vehicles shall be the responsibility of the Contractor. The failure on the part of the District to request maintenance shall not exempt the Contractor from its duty to maintain the vehicles.

### **EWSD Facility and Storage of Buses (Optional)**

By mutual agreement and signature below, the District shall provide the Contractor with a bus parking facility that includes staff parking, lighted parking for 30 buses, each with 20 Amp GFCI receptacles dedicated and fed from 20 Amp breakers. The Contractor is expected to utilize this function on diesel vehicles when required due to cold temperatures.

The office building contains an office space, storage/training room, shared common area, and a shared restroom. EWSD provides free guest WiFi and a Google Chromebook computer for driver use during downtime if requested.

The Contractor shall be responsible for providing an adequate facility for bus maintenance and repair.

The Contractor shall pay the District lease payments of eight hundred seventy five dollars (\$875.00) per month for twelve months per year until the expiration or termination of this Contract.

District Transportation staff offices were constructed within this facility during 2020. EWSD bases District-operated specialized service vehicles at this location, and District staff park personal vehicles on-site during working hours.

The Contractor shall provide all necessary insurance for the contents of the facility, excepting the District staff offices and their contents. The Contractor shall pay the District for two-thirds (2/3) of the utilities, and shall maintain such premises in a neat and orderly manner during the period of its use. The Contractor shall be responsible for any maintenance expense due to its negligence or abuse. The Contractor shall store and dispose of all hazardous waste in conformance with all Federal, State, Local, and District regulations. The Contractor shall be responsible for any vandalism to their buses or equipment.

The Contractor shall maintain a security camera system and allow EWSD access to footage as needed to investigate criminal or malicious acts.

The District shall be responsible for maintenance associated with normal wear and tear of the premises as well as building insurance. If improvements are required due to the Contractor's operation, the cost of such upgrades shall be negotiated between the District and the Contractor.

The Contractor shall be responsible for snow plowing and snow removal.

EWSD maintains a 2000 gallon capacity diesel fuel pump on the property, which allows an option for EWSD to supply fuel for the operation of this contract as outlined in the fuel section below

## **Fuel**

By mutual agreement and signature below, the District shall provide the Contractor with fuel under the following parameters:

The District will furnish the Contractor, without charge, with the fuel necessary for vehicles based at the District bus storage facility and transportation offices. The amount of fuel furnished will be limited to the amount actually used in the performance of the Contract, or to:

One gallon of diesel for each seven route miles for Type I buses (72 passenger), or one gallon of diesel for each twelve route miles for 16 to 36 passenger vehicles.

For the purposes of the calculation of allowable miles for the allocation of fuel, daily route miles shall be determined by the District's routing software, and trip miles shall be based on actual mileage included on individual trip invoices. The District will not pay for the fuel for any trips where specific mileage is not provided.

The District shall not supply the Contractor with any fuel outside of the legitimate usage for the services provided by the Contractor to the District under the Contract. Should the Contractor be required to supplement the fuel allocation due to its own vehicle usage, the Contractor shall be required to purchase said fuel from its own supplier.

Should the District determine the Contractor has utilized fuel above the allowable levels herein, it shall invoice the Contractor for said fuel at the VT Agency of Transportation's Average Posted Prices for Fuel for the applicable month. The Vermont Agency of Transportation Fuel Price Adjustment Report listed the average posted price for diesel fuel at \$5.99 per gallon for September 2026.

The Contractor shall provide drivers with specific training on fuel economy techniques including, but not limited to, non-idling programs.

## **Athletic, Extra- and Co-Curricular Trips**

The District has multiple individuals in each school scheduling trips at any given time. Because of this, the Contractor will provide a method of trip scheduling that is both transparent and efficient to the District being able to self-regulate, avoiding demand peaks as much as possible, while maximizing available Contractor resources over time. The District will provide annual training to employees on how to book trips with the Contractor.

The District shall give the Contractor at least five days of notice in requesting trips. All trips will be scheduled using a method acceptable to both the District and Contractor. The District's preference is a Google Form. If the Contractor chooses a different trip scheduling method, it shall allow notification of the Contractor and Transportation Department at the time of submission, and allow simultaneous entry in a Districtwide

spreadsheet viewable by both Contractor and District. School day field trips (co-curricular) shall pick up and drop off at schools between 8:30 AM and 1:30 PM in order to allow utilization of daily route drivers for these services.

## **Billing**

### Daily Route Billing

Daily service routes shall be paid in ten installments equal to 1/10 the annual rate per route as described in this section. The Contractor shall bill the District's Transportation Department on a monthly basis August through May.

### Athletic, Extra- and Co-Curricular Trip Billing

Special billing to the individual school, with the Transportation Department CC'd, is required on a weekly basis for athletic, extra- and co-curricular transportation, and shall be paid within thirty days of receipt of billing. Unified Sports invoices will be submitted directly to the Transportation Department in the same format as extra/co-curricular transportation. Rates shall be as described in this section.

Invoices must include:

- Date services provided
- Name of EWSD staff who requested trip
- Pickup and destination addresses
- Rate per mile
- Number of miles
- Hourly rate
- Number of hours
- Number of vehicles
- Total charges for trip

A minimum fee will be charged for each trip if the mileage and driver rates total to an amount lower than the minimum described in the Rates for Services section of this contract.

In the event a trip requires the bus driver to stay overnight, the hourly rate will not apply. The school districts will be responsible for securing and paying for a hotel room. Additionally, the school districts will pay the GSA per diem for the driver's meals. During such overnight trips, mileage and time are calculated to/from the site of overnight accommodations. However, the school districts will be billed a maximum of eight hours per day.

Vehicles will be available for use for all activity trips from July 1st of each year until June 30th of the contract year, including Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. Said vehicles are in addition to those required for daily transportation.

**Completion of this section is a required element for all responses to the RFP.**

| School Year | Annual Rate per "Daily Route" | Field Trip Hourly Rate | Field Trip Charge Athletic/ Extra/Co Curricular | Trip Hourly Rate Athletic/ Extra/Co | Trip Mileage Rate Athletic/ Extra/Co | Curricular Trip Mileage Rate Minimum Athletic | Extra/Co curricular trip charge |
|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2027-2028   |                               |                        |                                                 |                                     |                                      |                                               |                                 |
| 2028-2029   |                               |                        |                                                 |                                     |                                      |                                               |                                 |

### **System Modifications and Additional Services**

The District reserves the right to increase or decrease the number of buses used in transportation of school children in order to conform to changes in student population, District appropriations, or changes in District procedural guidelines. Such decreases shall become effective when agreed to by both parties, or no later than two weeks from the date when the Contractor is notified in writing that such a change is necessary.

Any additional buses required, or any buses eliminated from the fleet, shall be charged or credited at the per unit price. However, where such changes materially impact (defined as twenty-five percent (25%) or greater) the service levels or equipment levels required of the Contractor under the assumed routes, schedules, and vehicle requirements contained in this Contract, the Contractor and the District shall negotiate in good faith to adjust rates at which services are provided to cover increases or decreases in cost structure associated with such changes by the District. If the Parties are unable to reach an agreement regarding the adjustment, either Party may terminate this Contract upon ninety (90) days' written notice.

If the District requests additional time frames or schools that the transportation system cannot accommodate, the Contractor and the District shall evaluate and work together to implement the most cost-effective solution to meet the desired transportation needs, including outsourcing to other vendors. The District reserves the right to modify the length of day for any buses, including changing bell times at one or more of the school buildings.

In the event that the District requests services that were not envisioned in the pricing structure included in this Contract, the Contractor and the District shall negotiate an appropriate rate prior to the implementation of the service. It is the Contractor's responsibility to bring to the attention of the District any situation where services are requested but where pricing procedures are not in place. Failure to notify the District shall result in the District solely determining the price to be paid.

## Insurance and Bonding

The Contractor shall, at its sole expense, purchase and provide Comprehensive General Liability, automobile liability and excess or umbrella policies to protect it and the District from any and all claims, demands, actions and causes of actions, damages, costs, loss of service, expenses and compensation, including, but not limited to, any and all claims of personal injury, death and property damage, which may, in any way, arise from or out of the acts or omissions or operations of the Contractor pursuant to the terms of this Contract, whether such acts or omissions or operations be performed by the Contractor itself, or anyone directly or indirectly employed by it or any other person or company retained in any way by it to carry on all or a portion of the operations necessary to abide by the terms of this Contract.

The Contractor shall name the District as an "additional insured" in any and all such insurance policies required by virtue of this Contract, and the District shall be entitled to written notice a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the cancellation of any such policy. Said insurance must be issued by an insurance company authorized to transact business in Vermont.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Contractor shall protect, indemnify, save, defend and hold harmless the District, including its officers, officials, employees and agents, from and against any and all liabilities, obligations, claims, damages, penalties, causes of action, costs and expenses, including reasonable attorney and paralegal fees, which the District and/or its officers, officials, employees and agents may become obligated by reason of any accident, bodily injury, personal injury, death of person, or loss of or damage to property, arising in connection with or under, or as a result of the Contractor's performance under this agreement, but only to the extent caused in whole or in part by any negligent or wrongful act or omission of the Contractor and/or its officers, members, directors, employees, subcontractors and/or agents. D. Certificates of any and all insurance shall be filed with the District prior to August 20 each school year and the adequacy of such insurance shall be subject to approval by the District. Any and all such insurance shall have minimum liability coverage as follows:

### General Liability

Each occurrence: \$5,000,000

Damage to rented premises (each occurrence): \$100,000

Personal and Advertising Injury: \$1,000,000

General Aggregate: \$10,000,000

Products - Completed Operations Aggregate: \$10,000,000

### Automobile Liability

Combined Single Limit (each accident): \$5,000,000

Medical Expenses (any one person): \$50,000

Workers' Compensation  
WC Statutory Limits

Sexual Misconduct and Molestation Insurance

Shall be provided with limits of at least \$1,000,000 and must include an additional insured endorsement naming the District and any of its public officials, agents, or employees. This shall be either a separate policy or as an endorsement to both the General Liability and the Automobile Liability policies.

Limits may be provided as direct/per occurrence limits or as a combination of per occurrence and umbrella. The Contractor shall be responsible to ensure that all insurance limits at all times must meet or exceed those required by the State of Vermont Department of Transportation.

The Contractor shall not be required to submit a performance bond.

### **Complaint, Incident, and Operational Irregularity - Continuous Improvement**

This Contract envisions a quality transportation program where the Contractor promptly acknowledges communication from the District and proposes solutions to operating problems in a timely fashion. When an operating problem, or a complaint from family, community, or staff is communicated by the District to the Contractor, the Contractor shall promptly acknowledge receipt. The District will maintain a log of all such items. The Contractor and District will cooperatively engage in an investigation, freely sharing any information and evidence to determine if the operating problem or complaint is “founded”, meaning it results from an error, negligence, or failure to follow procedure on the part of the Contractor's personnel. The District will ultimately have sole authority to determine if a complaint or operating problem is founded.

For any founded item, the Contractor shall promptly inform the District of the proposed solution and take any necessary corrective action.

The District and Contractor shall review the following data a minimum of twice a year, prior to contractor/staff in-service trainings, and use data to guide decision-making, operational strategy, and training topics:

- Complaint/Incident Log
- Bus Conduct report data
- Accident data
- Changes in governmental statute or guidance

In the event of the failure of the Contractor to provide the transportation services under this Contract, the District shall have the right to secure other transportation as may be necessary, and charge the cost of the same to the accounts due to the Contractor. Deductions shall be made from payments to the Contractor for each day of service not rendered due to such interruption. The Contractor shall be entitled to written verification of such costs and payments.

The District may cancel the Contract if the Contractor becomes insolvent, bankrupt, or makes an assignment for the benefit of creditors.

In the event the Contractor is unable to provide the transportation services herein specified because of any act of God, civil disturbance, fire, flood, riot, war, oil or fuel shortage or embargo, governmental action or any condition or cause beyond the Contractor's control, the District shall excuse the Contractor from performance under this agreement, and the District shall have no further payment obligation under this Contract.

The failure of either party to take action with respect to any breach of any term, covenant, or condition herein by the other party shall not be deemed a waiver of such term, covenant, or condition, or any other term, covenant, or condition herein contained.

### **Contract Assignment**

It is mutually understood and agreed that the Contractor shall not assign, transfer, convey, sublet, or otherwise dispose of the Contract or its right, title, or interest herein, or its power to execute such Contract, or any part thereof to any person, company, or corporation, without the prior written consent of the District. A sale of stock in a corporation, a change in partners in a partnership, or a change in membership in an LLC, which results in a change in the controlling interest of the Contractor, shall be an action that will be considered a contract assignment under this provision. However, the Contractor may assign the Contract to a parent, subsidiary, or related entity.

### **Advertising**

Vehicles used in performance of this Contract to transport pupils of the District shall not be used to display, either inside or outside of the vehicle, any advertisement (commercial, political, or other) without the prior written authorization of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

### **Public Relations**

The Contractor shall cooperate with the District in maintaining a quality public relations program with the parents, community, and news media so that any pertinent items affecting the transportation program, or the patrons of the District, can be brought to the attention of the public.

### **Books and Records**

The Contractor shall consent and agree to audits of any and all financial records relating to the proposed Contract by the District. It is also understood that any records maintained by the Contractor in connection with the performance of obligations arising out of the Contract, including but not limited to payroll records for drivers and monitors, may be examined at a mutually agreeable time by duly authorized representatives of the District, and all records shall be kept for a minimum of three (3) years following expiration of the Contract.

## Default

If the Contractor fails to furnish service on the date of commencement of the Contract, or should it default in meeting any obligation under said Contract during the duration of the Contract, or should the Contractor fail, or be delinquent (as determined by the District) in its preparation of the procedures required in meeting the terms, conditions and provisions of the specifications in a timely fashion, the Contractor will be notified in writing by the District. If, within ten (10) days after written notification by the District, the Contractor has not taken such measures as will, in the sole and reasonable opinion of the District, ensure the satisfactory progress and performance of the service, then the District shall have the right to declare the Contractor in default and, in addition to any other legal or equitable remedies available to it, the District, upon declaring the Contractor in default, may, upon written notice to the Contractor, take the following action:

Withhold any funds due the Contractor under this Contract and have the right of set-off and/or recoupment and/or counterclaim against said funds for any claims for which the District might have against the Contractor,

Commence providing the services contracted for with the Contractor, either directly or through another contractor. The District may negotiate a new contract for transportation with one or more alternative bus company(ies), and the Contractor shall indemnify and be responsible to the District for increased costs incurred in obtaining a substitute contractor for and during the term of this Contract.

The Contractor shall be responsible and obligated for all damages caused by said default and for all costs and damages suffered by the District. Said damages are to include reasonable attorney's fees incurred in enforcing said claim against the Contractor, as well as attorney's fees incurred in contracting with another party.

Should the Contractor fail to remedy any violation of this paragraph, or otherwise be in default of its obligations under the Contract, within 30 days of the written notice of default, the District shall be entitled, in its sole discretion, to terminate this Contract or rescind the award of the Proposal, whichever is applicable. In such an event, termination shall be in addition to any and all of the legal remedies available to the District as set forth in this section.

If the District fails to fulfill any of its obligations under this Contract, including but not limited to timely payments, the Contractor shall have the right to terminate this Contract upon forty-five (45) days' written notice to the District. Such termination shall take effect immediately upon the expiration of such notice unless the failure or default has been fully cured and/or corrected prior to the expiration of such notice. In such a case, the District shall be responsible and obligated for all damages caused by said default and for all costs and damages suffered by the Contractor. Said damages are to include reasonable attorney's fees incurred in enforcing said claim against the District.

## **Amendment of Contract**

This Contract may be amended by mutual consent of the parties hereto, but no amendment of this Contract shall be valid unless made in writing and signed by the parties. The parties to this Contract agree that over the term of the Contract there may be circumstances that exist that require certain terms and conditions to be modified, added, or eliminated. The parties mutually agree that should such events occur, either party has the right to promptly notify the other party requesting discussions relative to changing the Contract. The aggrieved party must demonstrate a clear and present, materially adverse financial consequence in order to request reopening this Contract.

## **Entire Understanding**

This agreement sets forth the entire agreement between the District and the Contractor concerning the subject matter herein. There are no representations, either oral or written, between the District and the Contractor other than those contained in this agreement.

## **Governing Law**

This Contract is made pursuant to the laws of the State of Vermont and shall in all respects be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Vermont. All actions brought by either party under this Contract shall be instituted and maintained in courts having jurisdiction within the State of Vermont.

## **Severability**

If any of the provisions of this Contract are or become invalid or illegal in any respect, the validity or legality of the remaining provisions contained herein shall not be in any way affected.

## **Joint Venture**

Nothing contained herein shall be deemed to create a joint venture or partnership between the parties hereto.

## **Supporting Documentation Attached**

Bus Evacuation Drill Sheet

Transportation Policy (C3) and Procedure (C3-P)

Contract Data Example Driver Route

EWSD Bus Conduct Report 2026-27

EWSD Transportation Behavior Protocol

EWSD Handbook 2026-27

Georgia Route AM  
Georgia Route PM  
Islands Route AM  
Islands Route PM  
AM Route (Sheet)  
PM Routes (Sheet)  
Rates for Services Required in Bid (Sheet)  
Schools (Sheet)

## REFERENCES

Vendors must submit three (3) recent references from previous projects similar in scope and complexity to that described in this RFP that the vendor has performed in the last three years. Include also the customer's information as below. Vendors do not need to supply references if they have performed work in EWSD in the past three (3) years.

Organization Name  
Contact Person Name and  
Title Contact Phone Number  
Contact Address

## COST

Cost information being proposed is to be comprehensive and must include all components and services necessary to meet the requirements of this RFP. Costs not identified cannot be added or considered at a later time and will not be accepted in the final contract. The Vendor is to provide detailed pricing for each item or service necessary to comply with the requirements of this RFP.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RESPOND

Respondents who can meet the technical specifications for quality and other terms of this proposal package and who are not debarred and/or suspended from conducting business with district, federal, and state-funded agencies are invited to respond. By submitting a proposal, the respondent represents to EWSD that it meets the following requirements:

- ☐ Can comply with the required services or proposed RFP
- ☐ Has a satisfactory record of integrity and ethics

- ☐ Be otherwise qualified and eligible to receive an award
- ☐ Be in good standing with the applicable national or state associations

## GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Procurement of these items shall be in accordance with the EWSD's business practice terms as follows:

- 1) EWSD reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received or to cancel or extend in part or in its entirety by this Request for Proposal, or make multiple or partial awards.
- 2) Offers provided to EWSD shall be analyzed for what is in the best interest of the Organization, and a selection of products shall be made that can include the RFP response offer in its entirety or just a partial acceptance of any package or offer by the awarded vendor/vendors at the District's discretion.
- 3) Award of contract shall be made only to a responsible respondent(s), i.e., a respondent who has demonstrated competence to deliver the specified services, a proven record of business integrity and ethics, and the ability to meet the requirements of this RFP.
- 4) When submitting proposals, it is required that the respondent have the necessary professional experience, prior training, and applicable professional judgment to perform the activities or deliver the goods stated in this RFP.
- 5) Proposals may be withdrawn only by delivery of a written request to EWSD prior to the specified deadline time/date stated in the RFP. The authorized signatory must sign such requests.
- 6) Proposals received will become a part of EWSD's official files without further obligation to the respondents.
- 7) The contents of a successful Proposal may become a contractual obligation if selected for funding. Failure of the Respondent to accept these obligations can result in cancellation of an award or purchase agreement. EWSD reserves the right to withdraw or reduce the amount of an award or to cancel any contract resulting from this procurement if there is misrepresentation or errors in the specifications, pricing, terms, or Respondent's ability to meet the terms and conditions of this RFP or if adequate funding is not received.
- 8) A response does not commit EWSD to award a purchase agreement or a contract. The District does not commit to reimbursement of any costs incurred in the preparation of response nor commits to pay for any costs incurred prior to the execution of a formal agreement or contract unless such costs are specifically authorized in writing by EWSD.

- 9) EWSD reserves the right to contact any individual, agency, or employer listed in the RFP, to contact others who may have experience and/or knowledge of the respondent's relevant performance, qualifications, etc., and to request additional information from any and all respondents.
- 10) Respondents shall not, under penalty of law, offer any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any officer or employee of the District, or any consultant, employee, or member of EWSD for the purpose of, or having the effect of, influencing favorable disposition toward their own proposal or any other bid submitted hereunder.
- 11) No employee, officer, or member of the District shall participate in the selection, development of a response to this RFP, award, or administration of a contract supported by the RFP if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, may be involved.
- 12) The District is exempt from Federal, state, and local sales tax. Do not include sales tax in the cost figure. If it is determined that tax was included in the cost figures, it will not be included in the tabulation of any awards.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

In evaluating proposals, the following considerations will be taken into account for the award recommendations:

- ☐ Service
- ☐ Capacity to Perform Services
- ☐ References/Reputation
- ☐ Experience
- ☐ Cost/Value

Essex Westford School District Operations staff will review the proposals received to determine if they qualify under the RFP specifications. For proposals to be considered and evaluated for selection, the following requirements must be met:

1. The Proposal must be submitted by the due date and time.
2. The Proposal must be complete with original signatures.
3. The Proposal must be for the specific services requested and described in the RFP packet.
4. The Proposal must be submitted in the format described in the RFP Packet.

All proposals will be screened for the inclusion of all required information prior to release to the evaluation team. EWSD Operations staff may exclude from further consideration for contract award

any non-qualified proposal or portion of a proposal.

## EVALUATION

The evaluation team will consider proposals using a comprehensive criteria and evaluation process. **Cost is not the only criteria that will be used in the evaluation process.** After evaluation, an award may be made based on the best choice to meet the selection criteria. EWSD may enter into negotiations with multiple respondents who can fulfill the services described in this RFP. EWSD reserves the right to request Best and Final Offers from all qualified respondents.

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND FORMAT

### SUBMISSION ADDRESS

All proposals must be clearly marked with the vendor's name and address. Proposal packages must be sent or emailed and received prior to the deadline.

Hunter Eddy  
EWSD Director of  
Transportation  
Essex Westford School District  
76 Pearl Street, Suite 201  
Essex Junction, VT 05452  
Tel: (802) 857-7037  
Email: [heddy@ewsd.org](mailto:heddy@ewsd.org)

### FORMAT

Respondents must complete and include the cover sheet for proposals submitted in response to this RFP. See coversheet on next page.

A Proposal Submitted in Response to

**ESSEX WESTFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Request for Proposals for Districtwide Transportation Services Submitted by:**

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**Company Name**

---

**Company Address**

---

**Signature of Authorized Person**

---

**Federal Employer ID Number**

**on**

---

**(date of proposal submission)**

# EWSD BUS EVACUATION DRILL

Standard Operating Procedure (updated 9/2026)

## 1. Purpose and Scope

Every driver runs an evacuation drill with their riders so students know how to leave the bus quickly, calmly, and safely in an emergency. This SOP sets the minimum steps the contractor's drivers must follow for each drill and how each drill is recorded.

**Applies to:** all contracted school bus drivers and routes.

**Drill frequency:** Vermont State Law Title 23 V.S.A. § 1285 requires school authorities to conduct school bus evacuation drills twice a year for any student who is transported in a school bus.

## 2. Key Principles

- **People first, belongings stay.** Students leave all bags and personal items on the bus. Belongings can be replaced; students cannot.
- **Stay calm and listen.** Students follow the driver's directions, stay quiet, and do not joke or fool around.
- **Red means danger.** Emergency exit handles are red. Students touch them only when the driver says so.
- **Count every student.** Count riders as each seat is released, then recount once everyone is off the bus.

### DRIVER-ONLY INFORMATION

The bus has 9 emergency exits. Show students only the 8 standard exits (see Section 3). The windshield is designed to be kicked out, but **do not share this with students.**

## 3. Emergency Exits to Show Students

Demonstrate or point out each of these 8 exits during every drill.

| Exit                   | Qty | When it is used                                | Drill action                                                                                       |
|------------------------|-----|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Service (front) door   | 1   | Main exit in most emergencies                  | Demonstrate the emergency release: flip the switch, then push on the left side of the door to open |
| Rear emergency door    | 1   | When the front is blocked or the rear is safer | Demonstrate how it opens; used for the drill                                                       |
| Emergency window exits | 4   | When time is critical                          | Demonstrate how they open; students exit feet first, facing the bus                                |
| Roof hatches           | 2   | Bus is in water or on its side                 | Point out and explain how to open. <b>Do not open.</b>                                             |

## 4. Drill Procedure

### Step 1 — Secure the Bus

1. Park in a safe location and set the parking brake.
2. Shut off the engine.
3. Deactivate the child check system.
4. Leave the key in the "on" position so the 2-way radio stays powered.

### Step 2 — Brief the Students

1. Get all students quiet and seated.
2. Tell them this is an evacuation drill, just like a fire drill at school.
3. Warn them an alarm will sound when the emergency door opens. It is similar to a school alarm, but not as loud.
4. Instruct them to leave all belongings on the bus.
5. Explain that everyone will exit through the rear door for this drill.

### Step 3 — Demonstrate Driver Controls

Show students how to use these in case the driver is unable to.

1. **2-way radio:** Call dispatch to show how it works. Hold down the bar to talk, release it to listen.
  - Say: "Bus [#] to Essex Base."
  - Wait for Essex Base to answer, then say: "This is a drill. Thank you."
2. **Parking brake:** Show how to apply it.
3. **Gear selector:** Show how to take the bus out of gear.

### Step 4 — Demonstrate the Exits

Work through each exit in Section 3, in this order:

1. Service door emergency release
2. Emergency window exits
3. Roof hatches (point out and explain only; do not open)
4. Rear emergency door

### Step 5 — Assign Student Helpers

Choose 2 older, mature students and explain their role:

1. Open the rear emergency door.
2. Sit on the edge of the floor and scoot out. **No jumping.**

3. Help younger students down from the bus.
4. Direct students to the designated safe area and have them stand together.

These helpers should also know how to use the radio, parking brake, and gear selector (Step 3) in case the driver is incapacitated.

## Step 6 — Run the Evacuation

### Rear door evacuation (standard drill)

1. Walk to the back of the bus and stop at the second-to-last row, facing the rear.
2. Release one side of the row at a time.
3. Move forward one row and repeat until all rows are clear.
4. Count each student as their seat is released.

### Front door evacuation (same method, reverse order)

1. Stand at the first row of seats, facing the windshield.
2. Release one side of the row at a time.
3. Move back one row and repeat until all rows are clear.
4. Count each student as their seat is released.

## Step 7 — Account for Everyone and Record the Drill

1. Recount all students at the safe area and confirm the total matches.
2. Walk the bus to confirm no one remains on board.
3. Complete the Drill Record (Section 6).

## 5. Talking Points for Students

Use plain, age-appropriate language. Suggested wording:

| Topic        | What to say                                                                                                 |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Belongings   | "Leave everything on the bus. Your things can be replaced. You can't."                                      |
| Red handles  | "Red means danger. We only touch the red handles if I tell you to because we need to get off the bus fast." |
| Windows      | "If we use a window, go out feet first, facing the bus."                                                    |
| Roof hatches | "We use the roof if the bus is in water or on its side."                                                    |
| Behavior     | "Stay calm, stay quiet, and listen to me. This is not a time to joke around."                               |

# C3: Transportation

## Policy Code: C3

First Reading: November 6, 2018

Second Reading: November 27, 2018

Adopted: December 18, 2018

This policy will go into effect on July 1, 2019.

**Related:** See [C3-Procedure: Transportation](#)

### I. Introduction

#### A. Resident Students

Where it is reasonable and necessary to enable a student entitled or required to attend an elementary or a secondary school within the Essex Westford Educational Community Unified Union School District (EWSD), the School District will furnish transportation to and from school on public roads to students, particularly our youngest and most vulnerable, who do not reside within the designated walking zones. Except where mandated by federal and state law, the provision of transportation is a privilege and it is not required or mandated for most students.

Transportation to and from school will be provided for students receiving services under an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan for the student when such transportation is necessary to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

#### B. Non-resident Students

The administration will develop tuitioned student transportation procedures establishing the circumstances in which non-residents may be transported.

The Center for Technology, Essex (CTE) may provide transportation to its students. The Superintendent or their designee will develop procedures for CTE transportation in consultation with the CTE Director.

#### C. Extracurricular Activities Transportation

The EWSD is also committed to providing full or partial transportation for approved field trips and for approved extracurricular activities, such as athletic events, as availability and budget constraints allow.

#### D. Supporting School Access and the Wellbeing of Our Community

The EWSD is committed to access to education for its students. Safe travel to and from school is an integral part of that access. Where possible, the district wishes to encourage wellness for students, staff, and the community by supporting safe pedestrian and bicycle travel and public transit utilization.

The District will advocate for improved safety of travel conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the district.

Standards of conduct and disciplinary consequences for students are the same during travel to and from school via the district's transportation system as they are during the school day, as detailed in Policy C15: Student Conduct and Discipline and the student handbook. Violation of these rules may result in the student's loss of transportation privileges.

## **II. Administrative Responsibilities**

The Superintendent or their designee will:

1. Establish walking zones to school for each grade level, designating a distance that students will be expected to walk, subject to safe travel conditions.
2. Provide crossing guards as deemed necessary.
3. Determine projected bus ridership for portions of the district outside the walking zones for each school on an annual basis.
4. Identify stops and routes after considering both the safety of children and the efficiency of operation. Upon establishing which riders can be served safely with public transportation and with congregated bus stops, they will establish maximum walking distances to the public transit routes and to the district congregated stops.

Following consultation with any district vendors and service providers involved in the district's transportation system, the Superintendent or designee will consider the following factors (non-exclusive list, in no particular order) when establishing routes and stops:

- Age and maturity of students transported.
- Presence or absence of sidewalks or paths off the highway.
- Width, condition, and class of highways, including curves, hills, intersections, turnarounds, and seasonal road conditions.
- Density and speed of traffic.  
Proximity of dwellings, factories, or industrial areas.
- Ability of any congregated stop location to safely accommodate the assigned students.
- Health or physical impairment of students being transported.
- Distance traveled on a single route, and the length of time spent on a bus by any given student going to or returning from school.

The Superintendent or designee may consider other factors they deem appropriate when establishing routes and designated stops.

1. Prepare bus schedules indicating time and designated bus routes for the entire district annually and provide them to families in August. The Board empowers the Superintendent or her/his designee to make changes to any bus route at any time in order to meet current needs. Such changes, however, require notification to the parents/guardians of affected students. Every effort will be made to notify at least three days before any change takes effect.
2. Develop procedures identifying and prioritizing how services may be modified and/or reduced if resources (e.g., drivers or buses) are insufficient to provide the intended level of transportation services.
3. Submit to the School Board for approval any contracts, leases, or purchases over \$15,000 necessary to maintain and operate transportation equipment.
4. Include in his or her annual report to the board information as to all pupils transported by the school district and the expense thereof.
5. Provide an annual report to the board as to the performance of the transportation system.

**Legal References:**

- 16 V.S.A. §§1222, 1224 (Student transportation)
- 16 V.S.A. § 11 (a)(32)(C)
- 16 V.S.A. § 1162 (a)
- 16 V.S.A. §1551.



# District Transportation Procedures & Standard Operating Practices (C3-P)

# EWSD Transportation Procedures Table of Contents

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## **Related Documents:**

[Transportation Policy Code C3](#)

[Drug & Alcohol Testing: Transportation Employees Code B4](#)

[Drug & Alcohol Testing: Transportation Employees Administrative Procedure](#)

[Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace Policy Code B3](#)

[Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Procurement Code F24](#)

[Transportation Employee Handbook](#)

# Section I: Students and Families

## Eligibility

Eligible Riders are:

- A. Resident students in grades K-12 enrolled in Essex Westford School District schools or enrolled by EWSD in other designated area schools.
- B. Persons authorized by the administration for specific reasons (e.g., chaperons, coaches, aides, monitors, etc.).

Students who live within the geographic area of Essex Town will be eligible for transport to the following schools: Essex Elementary, Founders Memorial, Essex Middle, Essex High School, Center for Technology, Essex.

Students who live within the geographic area of the City of Essex Junction (historically known as the "Village" will be eligible for transport to the following schools: Hiawatha, Thomas Fleming, Albert D. Lawton, Essex High School, Center for Technology, Essex.

Students who live within the geographic area of Westford Town will be eligible for transport to the following schools: Westford School, Essex Middle School, Essex High School, Center for Technology, Essex.

Families may request transportation to an EWSD school outside of their geographic area from the Superintendent. Approval of requests will be at the sole discretion of the Superintendent, and may be based on factors such as proximity to an existing route serving the school and available seating. If transportation is granted to an EWSD school outside the geographic area, it will be granted for one year only. Families must annually request this exception.

The Superintendent may explore providing transportation arrangements for families with unique circumstances who are approved under Policy E10 Voluntary Transfer to have their Hiawatha-zoned student attend Essex Elementary School. Such arrangements will be considered on a case-by-case basis and would require families to transport their child to a set congregated bus stop along the route, contingent upon there being capacity on the bus.

## Tuition Student Transportation

To maximize available resources by increasing local (tuition) revenues and help maintain sufficient enrollment to ensure the breadth and depth of curricular and extra-curricular offerings, EWSD may provide transportation to/from the towns of sending Districts.

- A. Transportation may only be provided if the following circumstances exist: The bus route must service at least 25 non-resident students and average a minimum of 20% ridership (using the previous three measurement periods).
- B. If, based on paragraph A, transportation must be discontinued, it will not take effect until the following school year.

## **Extra Co-Curricular Transportation**

EWSD staff should request field, activity, and athletic trips from the applicable contractor. For best results, requests should be made at least 2 weeks in advance. The contractor may not be able to accommodate all requests based on trip volume and driver availability. For assistance, including estimating trip costs or alternatives if a contractor does not have availability, contact the Transportation Manager.

School must provide an authorized coach, chaperone, or staff to ride on all trips to assist in regulating student behavior norms, including keeping the bus free of trash. Exceptions may only be made by mutual agreement, in advance, of the coach/activity adviser and contractor for intra-district trips.

Students are required to ride the bus to/from all events for which the school provides transportation. Exceptions for alternative transportation must be requested in writing by the student's parent/guardian and must be approved by the athletics/activities director or coach/advisor in advance. Only a responsible adult may provide transportation. Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to ride with another student or drive him/herself to an event. While on the bus, students are expected to adhere to the rules of the bus driver and bus company, and to pick up all trash before exiting the bus. School rules are in effect during all transportation times.

## **Specialized Transportation**

The Transportation Department will provide service for non-typical routes in a manner that promotes efficiency and effectiveness while ensuring services are consistent with the least restrictive environment considerations for students who have transportation listed as a related service in their IEP or other need.

### **Pickup and Dropoff locations:**

- Generally, special needs students riding regular route buses will not have transportation listed as a related service and, therefore, will be provided stop-to-school and school-to-stop service.
- Drivers and assistants will not escort students between their front door, bus, and classroom unless specifically outlined in the IEP.
- District buses and contractors will not travel into private driveways.
- In circumstances where the nature or condition of a street makes it inaccessible to a bus, arranging an alternate pick-up/drop-off point may be necessary, and will be coordinated with the family by the dispatcher or Transportation Manager.

### **Pickup and Dropoff Times:**

- The District will create bus schedules and communicate with families regarding pickup and drop-off times before the start of the school year.
- If modifications are necessary throughout the year, the dispatcher will notify the family via the primary phone # and up to one alternate number no later than 2:30 pm the school day before the change.

### **Securements**

- The safest place for any student on a bus is in a seat. If it is possible for a student to transfer to the seat, it is recommended that they do so. Seatbelts, 5-point harnesses, and other safety restraint systems can be used here.
- WC-19 is a voluntary industry standard for designing, testing, and labeling a wheelchair used as a seat in a motor vehicle certified as "transit-ready". It is highly recommended that if it is

necessary for a student to ride in a mobility device on the bus, that device be WC19 compliant.

- EWSD Aides will perform all wheelchair securements utilizing a minimum of four points secured to the floor of the vehicle, and the lap belt and shoulder restraint securing to the vehicle.
- The lap belt or harness of a mobility device shall not be considered to be sufficient unless specified in the student's IEP.

## **Rule 4500**

EWSD Staff, Bus Aides, and Drivers will not impose the use of Mechanical restraint on Specialized buses to a student over the age of 5 (PreK) for the purpose of addressing behavioral issues on the bus unless otherwise stated in the student's IEP.

### Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices Series 4500 - Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools.

Mechanical Restraint means the use of any device or object that restricts a student's movement or limits a student's sensory or motor functions unless under the direction of a healthcare professional for medical or therapeutic purposes.

The term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student for the specific and approved therapeutic and safety purposes for which such devices were designed, including:

- a. Restraints for medical immobilization,
- b. Adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance or alignment;
- c. Vehicle safety restraints, including a seat belt or harness used for balance or safety on a car or bus;  
or
- d. Seat belts in wheelchairs or on toilets.

## **4501 Prohibitions:**

4501.1 School personnel and contract service providers are prohibited from imposing on a student any of the following, as defined in rule 4500.3:

- a. Mechanical restraint, seat belt.
- b. Chemical restraint,
- c. Any physical restraint, escort or seclusion that restricts or limits breathing or communication, causes pain or is imposed without maintaining direct visual contact.

4501.2 Physical restraint or seclusion shall not be used:

- a. For convenience of staff;
- b. As a substitute for an educational program;
- c. As a form of discipline or punishment;
- d. As a substitute for inadequate staffing or training;
- e. In response to a student's use of profanity or other verbal or gestural display of disrespect, or
- f. In response to a verbal threat unaccompanied by demonstrated means of or intent to carry out the threat.

## **Bus Aides for Specialized Buses**

Will be assigned to bus routes as defined by IEPs as follows:

- When specifically required by the student's IEP.
- As a guideline, when five students requiring equipment are riding the bus at one time. This may be adjusted at the Supervisor's discretion based on safety and student needs.
- It is preferred that Bus Aides be assigned to all buses transporting students in wheelchairs. However, this is not a requirement, and assignments may or may not be made at the Supervisor's discretion based on safety, student need, and budget limitations.
- Any student whose IEP requires a bus aide for transportation or whose disability requires a higher level of care than can be provided by a volunteer bus aide the school of attendance for the student must provide (or help provide) a bus aide for the student's transportation to and from school.

## **Student Information**

- The Transportation Department will develop an information sheet to collect critical information from Case Managers to support administrators, bus drivers, and bus aides in the provision of services to special needs students. This information will be kept confidential.

## **Cameras and Video Recordings**

Buses equipped with video cameras are to ensure that EWSD has access to objective and real-time evidence related to student behavior and/or motorists violating the school bus red light system. Parents will not be allowed to view video recordings based on federal student privacy laws. EWSD will not share video recordings with any outside parties not directly involved in the transport or care of students, excepting law enforcement. EWSD reserves the right to request parent permission in order to use specific videos for training purposes.

## **EWSD Transportation Behavior Support Protocol**

The Essex Westford School District (EWSD) is committed to ensuring that every student riding an EWSD bus or vehicle experiences a safe and supportive environment.

EWSD's goal is for students and staff to maintain a safe, civil, and positive learning environment through a system of support and management practices. These practices are supported by consistent, transparent, and equitable benefits and consequences that students know and understand. Furthermore, EWSD recognizes that a school bus or district vehicle is an extension of the school and requires support and interventions for some of our students who have not yet shown the independent skills needed to meet expectations.

This protocol intends to create an environment where expectations for student behavior on buses are clear to students, staff, and families to support successful experiences on the EWSD buses and transportation services.

This document is intended as a teaching and expectation-setting tool to support a collective understanding of how we address bus-related challenging behaviors and what behaviors we seek from students to help build success. During the implementation of this protocol, it is important to know that the district may use its discretion and judgment, where such flexibility is permitted, to determine the consequences and range of appropriate support and consequences to apply in each circumstance as warranted. Students' individual circumstances are considered in analyzing the best supports and application of consequences, which can, in some circumstances, include a loss of access to transportation to school. In addition to the

consequences outlined here—which relate directly to transportation—additional school disciplinary action may occur for breaking district policy (e.g., vaping, threats, weapons, etc.).

[Bus behavior posters](#) will be published in each bus to remind students of the expectations.

| Positive Behaviors Expected For All Riders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Board the bus on time</li> <li>● Kind and respectful engagement with peers and adults</li> <li>● Stay seated for the entire bus ride</li> <li>● Keep body parts out of the aisle</li> <li>● Use of voice at expected volume (level 1 or 2)</li> <li>● Save snacks for later</li> <li>● Never use phone camera, video, or audio to record or photograph others</li> <li>● Ask for help from adults when needed</li> <li>● Use expected language</li> <li>● Walk in the aisle when boarding or departing from the bus</li> <li>● Keep hands and body to self</li> </ul>                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Level 1 Behaviors and Intervention Examples<br>Other minor infractions may also exist.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Delaying bus through refusal to board or exit</li> <li>● Disruptive use of electronic devices (recording, taking video/audio/photos, etc.)</li> <li>● Drinking/Eating</li> <li>● Swearing, yelling, or shouting</li> <li>● Not following directions provided by adults</li> <li>● Failure to remain seated in an assigned seat at all times / blocking the bus aisle</li> <li>● Getting on or off the bus/vehicle at undesignated stops</li> <li>● Low-level physical contact (pushing, poking, touching)</li> <li>● Placing any body part out of windows</li> <li>● Failure to walk safely in front of the bus when loading or disembarking</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Level 1 Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Examples of Intervention and Consequence Action to be Taken by School-based Administration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1st Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (email or call)</li> <li>● Student Management/Assistant Principal Contact</li> <li>● Special Educator notified (if appropriate)</li> <li>● Friendly reminder of bus expectations (driver)</li> <li>● Check &amp; Connect (Student Management/Assistant Principal with student &amp; driver)</li> </ul> |
| 2nd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (in-person meeting)</li> <li>● Principal notification</li> <li>● Student Management/Assistant Principal Contact</li> <li>● Temporary Seat Reassignment</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                      |
| 3rd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Parent Communication (in-person meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Transportation Support / Behavior plan</li> <li>● Permanent seat reassignment</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restorative process</li> </ul> <p><b>Persistent level 1 referrals (three to five) could result in suspension of bus privileges for a period of time</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Elementary 1-3 days</b></li> <li><b>Middle School 2-4 days</b></li> <li><b>High School 2-4 days</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                          |
| Returning to transportation after suspension:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Parent, Student, Transportation Director, and Student Management Specialist/Assistant Principal required to resume ridership</li> <li>Transportation Support/Behavior Plan</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <p><b>Level 2 Behaviors and Intervention Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permanent seat assignment for the year</li> <li>Review of Transportation Behavior Expectations</li> </ul> <p>Other infractions may be deemed Level II, depending on severity.</p>                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Threatening behavior towards others</li> <li>Possession of violent and profane materials</li> <li>Possession of dangerous chemicals</li> <li>Watching any material that violates the EWSD technology policy</li> <li>Tobacco or nicotine use</li> <li>Throwing objects</li> <li>Vandalism</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Level 2 Referral</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Examples of Intervention and Consequence Action to be Taken by School-based Administration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1st Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent Communication (email or call)</li> <li>Student Management/Assistant Principal Contact</li> <li>Special Educator notified (if appropriate)</li> <li>Implementation of learning opportunities to avoid future behavior</li> <li>Opportunity for restorative process</li> <li>Check &amp; Connect (Student Management with student &amp; driver)</li> </ul>                                                               |
| 2nd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent Communication (in-person meeting)</li> <li>Principal notification</li> <li>Student Management/Assistant Principal Contact</li> <li>Special Educator notified (if appropriate)</li> <li>Temporary Seat Reassignment</li> <li>Behavior support plan implementation</li> <li>Opportunity for restorative process</li> </ul>                                                                                               |
| 3rd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent Communication (in-person meeting with the full team)</li> <li>Transportation Support/Behavior Plan</li> <li>Restorative process implementation</li> <li>Relationship-building with the adult on the bus supported by school staff</li> <li>Permanent Seat Assignment</li> <li><b>Suspension of Transportation Privileges:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Elementary 2-4 days</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

|                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Middle School 3-5 days</b></li> <li>○ <b>High School 3-5 days</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Returning to transportation after suspension: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contact with parent</li> <li>● Transportation Support/Behavior Plan Development with a team of people who know the student's needs</li> <li>● Analysis of skill deficit with intervention/instructional plan at the school</li> <li>● Meeting with Parent, Student, Transportation Director, and Student Management Specialist/Assistant Principal required to resume ridership</li> <li>● Restorative process planning</li> </ul> |

| <b>Level 3 Behaviors and Intervention Examples</b><br>Other infractions may be deemed Level III, depending on severity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Physical or verbal aggression or fighting</li> <li>● Alcohol</li> <li>● Possession of weapons</li> <li>● Consensual Sexual Activity</li> <li>● Offensive touching</li> <li>● Possession, distribution, or under the influence of illegal substances, illegal drugs, or another person's prescription drug</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Level 3 Referral</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Examples of Intervention and Consequence Action to be Taken by School-based Administration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1st Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (in-person meeting)</li> <li>● Principal or Assistant Principal notification and discussion about consequence decisions</li> <li>● Director of Facilities &amp; District Safety notification</li> <li>● Special Educator notified (if appropriate)</li> <li>● Consideration of school-based interventions and other referrals (Counseling and assessment needs, Title IX referral, HHB referral, Threat Assessment need)</li> <li>● <b>5-day Suspension of Transportation Privileges</b></li> </ul>                                                                                |
| 2nd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Full team meeting of those closest to the student (and to include the school assistant principal) to determine extensive intervention plan given severity of behavior.</li> <li>● Consideration of school-based interventions and other referrals or assessments needed to understand the function of the behavior</li> <li>● Director of Facilities &amp; District Safety notification</li> <li>● Director of Special Education notification where appropriate</li> <li>● Student Management/Assistant Principal Contact</li> <li>● <b>5-10 day Suspension of Transportation Privileges</b></li> </ul> |

|                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3rd Referral                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (in-person meeting with full team, including LEA where appropriate)</li> <li>● <b>Suspension of Transportation Privileges for Remainder of School-Year</b></li> </ul>                                                                  |
| Returning to transportation after suspension at the start of the following school year: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting with Parent, Student, Transportation Director, and Student Management Specialist required to resume ridership</li> <li>● Behavior plan implementation</li> <li>● Educational intervention</li> <li>● Restorative practice implementation</li> </ul> |

| <b>Level 4 Behaviors and Disciplinary Action</b><br>Other infractions may be deemed Level IV, depending on severity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The behaviors listed below will lead to police contact and involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sexual assault</li> <li>● Bomb threats</li> <li>● Arson / terrorist threats</li> <li>● Firearm and destructive devices, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code and 13 V.S.A. §4016</li> <li>● Use of weapon as defined in 13 V.S.A. §4016</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Level 4 Infraction</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Disciplinary Action to be Taken by School-based and District Administration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 1st Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (in-person meeting)</li> <li>● Superintendent notification</li> <li>● Principal Contact</li> <li>● Director of Facilities &amp; District Safety Investigation</li> <li>● Special Education Director notification, if appropriate</li> <li>● Appropriate service and investigative referrals as required by EWSD Policy</li> <li>● Student Management Contact</li> <li>● Special Educator notified (if appropriate)</li> <li>● <b>Suspension of Transportation Privileges for Remainder of School-Year</b></li> </ul> |
| Returning to transportation after suspension at the start of the following school year:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting with Parent, Student, Transportation Director, and Student Management Specialist required before ridership</li> <li>● Strong behavioral support plan for success</li> <li>● Safety Plan</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| <b>Disability-Based Considerations</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| All students eligible for Special Education and 504 plans may experience consequences that are the same as other students, including up to ten (10) cumulative days of suspension a year from the bus. If regular suspensions occur for a student eligible for an IEP or 504 plan, a referral for a team meeting should be made, and a meeting should be convened to determine unmet needs to support the student's |

successful access to school transportation. Teams will hold manifestation and transportation-specific placement meetings as required under IDEA and 504 regulations, should a student be suspended for more than ten (10) days in a school year.

Source:  EWSD Transportation Behavior Protocol 05.20.25

The Transportation Department will collect and facilitate the timely exchange of bus conduct reports and follow-up communication between drivers, contractors, and school behavior management staff to ensure safety of all riders and bus drivers. The Transportation Department will maintain archives of bus conduct reports.

### **Student Seating Assignments**

All students Kindergarten-grade 5 will be assigned a seat by the bus driver. These assignments will be posted by the driver in the bus within the first 2 weeks of school. Students, families, and school staff may provide input on seating assignments for driver consideration.

Seat assignments for grades 6-12 are used on an as-needed basis, determined by school administrators and drivers.

School administrators may request specific seating arrangements in response to disciplinary issues. Drivers will work within these requests to determine seating plans, keeping in mind there may be requests from multiple schools to manage.

### **Ridership Guidelines**

- Students should be at their bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled arrival time. The bus is not required to wait for students.
- The first days of school, traffic, weather, or other circumstances could cause delays.
- When it appears that the bus will be delayed by more than 15 minutes, the District will send an automated call to the designated parent and emergency phone numbers for students by bus route, notifying them of the delay and a reason if it's known.
- Students should dress for the weather.
- Select a spot to wait for the bus where your child can see the bus coming and be seen by the Driver.
- In low light, it's helpful for students to have reflective clothing or signal the driver with a lighted device like a flashlight, blinker, or illuminated handheld electronic device.
- Students are accountable for their behavior while going to and from bus stops and while they are waiting for the bus. Parents are expected to handle any behavior difficulties that may be encountered at bus stops. Thank you to the parents, neighbors, and older siblings who wait at bus stops and help keep students safe at bus stops.

### **Alternate Stops**

Permission slips from parents and approval from the school are required for any changes to normal drop-off/pick-up points. Please send a written notice to the school main office at your school.

To arrange routine alternative transportation (for example, parents wish to provide transportation, or there is an alternate caregiver a student takes the bus to on M-W-F), families may complete the Alternate pickup /

dropoff survey distributed in June. A link to this survey will also be placed on the District's transportation webpage. The District can accommodate no more than three alternate locations per student.

Permanent address changes should be coordinated through the front office staff at your school. These staff will update the student information database, and coordinate with the Transportation Department on any busing needs.

### **Pickup and Dropoff for Kindergarten and First Grade**

Kindergartners & First Graders must be accompanied to and picked up from the bus stop by a parent or guardian, or another individual authorized in writing. **If an authorized individual is NOT present for a drop-off, Kindergartners and First Graders will remain on the bus and be returned to EWSD staff at the school to be picked up by parents.** Families will be notified via phone call. Drivers will not leave the student at the school unattended. Older siblings will remain with the Kindergartener or First Grader.

### **Specialized Bus Protocols**

Students should be ready to board the bus within a "window" 10 minutes before their scheduled pickup time, and be prepared to wait as much as 15 minutes after the scheduled time. When it appears that the bus will be delayed by more than 15 minutes, the district will send an automated call to the designated parent and emergency phone numbers for students by bus route, notifying them of the delay and a reason if it's known.

If a bus arrives within the "window" of 10 minutes before or fifteen minutes after the scheduled time and the student does not board immediately, the driver will contact dispatch via radio. The Dispatcher will call the primary contact number listed for the student and leave a message if possible, stating the date and time. The vehicle may depart for its next stop after waiting a minimum of three minutes. For students who require a family member to be home at drop-off, these same procedures will be followed. If an approved caregiver is not home to receive the student, they will remain on the bus and be returned to EWSD staff at the school to be picked up by parents. Drivers will not leave the student at the school unattended. The dispatcher will contact school staff and family to notify them.

### **Safety tips for parents from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:**

- **Safety Starts at the Bus Stop.** Visit the bus stop and show your child where to wait for the bus: at least three giant steps (6 feet) away from the curb. Remind your child that the bus stop is not a place to run or play.
- **Get On and Off Safely.** When the school bus arrives, your child should wait until the bus comes to a complete stop, the door opens, and the driver says it's okay before approaching the bus door. Your child should use the handrails to avoid falling.
- **Use Caution Around the Bus.** Your child should never walk behind a school bus. If your child must cross the street in front of the bus, tell him/her to walk on a sidewalk or along the side of the street to a place at least 5 big steps (10 feet) in front of the bus before crossing. Your child should also make eye contact with the bus driver before crossing to make sure the driver can see him/her. If your child drops something near the school bus, like a ball or book, the safest thing is for your child to tell the bus driver right away. Your child should not try to pick up the item, because the driver might not be able to see him/her.

# Section II: System Design

## Establishment of Walking Zones, Routes, and Stops

In July, the District will survey families regarding transportation for the next school year. This survey will allow parents to designate up to three (3) alternate locations for pickup or dropoff on regularly scheduled weekdays, and allow families to opt a student out of transportation entirely. If a student has been opted out and needs transportation later in the year, they can request transportation by contacting the Transportation Department. Please note that it may take up to 2 weeks to add student transportation.

The District will modify and develop bus routes with Contractors through the summer. Draft routes will be shared ahead of time with school Principals and Municipal partners as part of this process. Walking zone and bus route information will be published on the District and school websites each year. Parents will also be notified via email and phone call when bus routes are available. A notice and link to route information will be placed on the District website.

The District’s preference is that bus routes will utilize publicly maintained roadways.

Because students in grades K-5 are still developing the motor, cognitive, and behavioral skills to make consistent, safe traveling decisions, the District’s preference is same-side drop-off and pick-up for these students. If the design of a route also allows an opposite-side stop option, Parents or Guardians who desire their students to cross the road (e.g., for timing or other reasons) must request it in writing. It is highly recommended to families that these stops be supervised by a responsible adult.

Route adjustments may be necessary during the school year. In recognition that changing busing schedules has a ripple effect across our entire community, the District will strive to make a single adjustment, only if necessary, in October.

Notification of route of stop changes after the initial August posting will be emailed to affected families and posted as an update on the District and school website.

## Resource Planning

Per Administrative Responsibility #6 of the EWSD Transportation Policy, procedures identifying and prioritizing how services may be modified and/or reduced if resources (e.g., drivers or buses) are insufficient to provide the intended level of transportation services:

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Tier 1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Pursue additional transportation resources through agreements with municipal partners and public transportation.</li><li>● Operate system as K-12 routes, prioritizing the lowest grade level bell time drop-offs/pickups.</li><li>● Expand/Adjust walk-to-school zones (with necessary crossing guard additions)</li><li>● Increase the length and duration of routes</li></ul> |
| <b>Tier 2</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Increase the walking distance to stops,</li><li>● Increase zones to be served by public transportation</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Tier 3</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the transportation provided for tuition students, which can be reallocated to serve resident students</li> <li>• Reduce non-home-to-school transportation to free up assets (i.e. driver, buses)</li> <li>• Require opt-in for transportation, thresholds based on grade level &amp; distance from schools</li> </ul> |
| <b>Tier 4</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the transportation provided to resident high school students</li> <li>• Reduce transportation provided to other resident students at other schools and grade levels</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                        |

### Crossing Guards

On an annual basis, the District will evaluate and adjust crossing guard placement. The following is a non-exhaustive list of factors, in no particular order:

- Number of crossing guards available
- School walking zones
- Number of students
- Volume of traffic
- Presence and type of crossing signal, or lack thereof (e.g. traffic light, pedestrian signal, audible crossing signal, high-intensity flashing crosswalk warning)
- Alternate paths
- Location of bus routes & stops

### Time and Distance Guidelines

In accordance with Transportation Policy C3, the administration establishes the following time and distance guidelines for travel to and from school. Resources permitting, the District will strive to meet these guidelines for every student. Efficiency and safety are both considerations, and this does mean students may have to walk to a designated intersection to help all students arrive at school on time. This procedure establishes guidelines only. This procedure should not be interpreted as an absolute maximum by District staff or any other stakeholder.

| Grade Level | Walk to School Maximum +/- * | Walk to Stop Maximum +/- ** | Earliest AM arrival       | Maximum wait for PM bus     | Maximum ride time |
|-------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>K-5</b>  | 0.5 mile path                | 0.5 mile path               | 30 minutes prior to start | 15 minutes after end of day | 50 minutes        |
| <b>6-8</b>  | 1.0 mile path                | 0.5 mile path               | 45 minutes prior to start | 20 minutes after end of day | 50 minutes        |
| <b>9-12</b> | 1.5 mile path                | 0.75 mile path              | 60 minutes prior to start | 60 minutes after end of day | 90 minutes        |

*\*Each school will have an established walking zone. If safe pedestrian travel is possible, students living within the walking zone will NOT be eligible for transportation.*

*\*\*Outside of the walking zones, door-to-door transport will only be available where pedestrian travel is too dangerous; otherwise designated stops will be used.*

## **School Bell Time Management**

School times are a critical consideration in the safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Transportation Department. The department appreciates that school times have implications well beyond just transportation services and any change can be highly disruptive to parents, staff, and the public. Therefore, it is in the intent of the department to support a process that defines a timeline for consideration of any school time changes that will allow for sufficient time to analyze any potential changes and communicate any changes to all internal and external stakeholders.

Annual review of school times to support efficiency and effectiveness will be performed by the department to ensure EWSD is supporting the district's instructional mission fully and managing its resources effectively. Any consideration of a time frame will be developed in consideration of the school calendar. This will include:

- The Transportation Department will provide recommendations to the Superintendent on school bell time changes in February.
- If the administration determines further review of a change in bell times is warranted:
  - The Transportation Department will model proposed routing and cost changes by March 31 of the year prior to implementation.
  - The administration will review, including any public comment, the proposed changes along with any cost impacts during April of the year prior to implementation.
  - A final determination of any change to school times will be made, to the extent feasible, by May 31 of the school year prior to implementation. This will support the ability of the school district and Transportation Department to communicate potential changes to internal and external stakeholders. This will also allow the department to ensure that any revisions necessary to reflect changes to enrollment or physical infrastructure prior to school start.

## Section III: Records, Contracts, & Reporting

### Student Privacy & Confidentiality

EWSD staff shall be responsible for communicating route and schedule information to families in accordance with the EWSD Student Privacy Policy and in compliance with legal requirements.

School bus contractors shall have procedures in place to ensure that personally identifiable and sensitive student information are not improperly released. The contractor shall submit these procedures to the District for review and assessment by August 1st of each year. In the absence of established and validated procedures, the contractor shall adopt procedures developed by EWSD.

### Required Records

The Transportation Manager will maintain the following for all EWSD and CTE drivers, vehicles, and routes:

#### Drivers:

- Drug and Alcohol program records
- Copies of DOT physicals
- Copy of current driver's license, front and back
- Initial 3-year driving record, all subsequent re-checks
- Records of vehicle pre-trip inspections
- Commendations and complaints
- Accident Records

#### Vehicles:

- Records of vehicle pre-trip inspections
- Accident Records

#### Routes:

- Documentation indicating all students are participating in emergency evacuations twice a year

The Transportation Department will coordinate with District Human Resources and Technology staff to establish a secure mechanism to acquire, access, and store the necessary information.

### Contracts and Purchasing

The Transportation Department will follow all EWSD purchasing and procurement policies and procedures. Whenever the Transportation Department enters into a new school bus service contract of any type, a record of that contract and all subsequent addenda shall be centrally maintained within the Transportation Department administration office. Each record will be updated based on the following timeline; such records will minimally include, but will not be limited to the following documents:

1. A digital copy of the original RFP Notice, RFP, Addendums, and Notices pertaining to RFP related events, meetings, consultations, and other, on an annual basis.
2. A print copy of the original RFP, addenda, RFP related notices, RFP evaluation documents (score sheets, notes, etc.), a scoring matrix with final tally results, and documents relating to contract award and notice of contract award: when the RFP is awarded.
3. A digital copy of the fully executed contract agreement(s): when the contract begins.

4. A print copy of the fully executed contract agreement(s): when the contract begins.
5. Printed copies of contract modifications: when a modification occurs.
6. Printed copies of supplemental agreements: when the agreement occurs.
7. Printed copies of Contract Terminations and/or Extensions: when termination/extension occurs.
8. Printed copies of other important contract related correspondences: when action occurs.

EWSD contract files shall be maintained by the Transportation Manager. Such local records will include all of the above documents plus:

1. Printed copies of executed Notifications of District Transportation Requirements
2. Printed copies of the annual approved School Year calendars
3. Important contract-related local correspondences
4. Route plan files
5. Letters of commendation

The Transportation Department shall maintain complete hard copy files of expired and terminated school bus contracts (with all enclosures) for a period of seven fiscal years following the end of the contract period in a manner that is consistent with VT Agency of Education policy requirements.

Once the seven-year or longer archive period is over, the Transportation Department shall dispense the archived contract file in a manner consistent with other EWSD policies.

### **Vehicle Acquisition and Inspection Management**

Vehicles are required to be inspected once a year. All District vehicles should go through inspection during June-July to give Districts enough time to make any necessary updates or fixes before school starts.

Upon successful inspection, the inspection certificate will be stored on the vehicle. EWSD will also store scanned copies of certificates or vehicle folders for easy reference.

Vermont school buses are subject to random inspections throughout the school year to ensure vehicles remain safe. This reinforces the need for EWSD to properly store certifications/licenses and keep all documents up to date.

As part of the documentation process for each vehicle in EWSD's fleet, the following will be included:

- Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin (if purchased out-of-state)
- Bill of Sale and Odometer Disclosure Statement
- Purchase and use tax

### **Performance Reporting**

The Transportation Department will maintain a log detailing complaints received and completed follow-up with complainants.

The Transportation Department will maintain an accident log and files comprised of reporting information from contractors and self-performed transportation.

The Transportation Department will maintain a log detailing compliments received.

The Transportation Department will maintain records of behavior referrals by school and route.

### **Annual Report**

In accordance with Policy C3, the Transportation Manager shall supply the following information annually to the Superintendent by August 1:

- Average number of daily students transported based on available ridership surveys for the current year
- Cost of transportation for the year

In accordance with Policy C3, the Transportation Manager shall prepare an annual report as to the performance of the transportation system, including:

- Number of routes operated
- Average number of daily students transported based on available ridership surveys for the current year
- Cost of transportation for the year
- Cost per pupil transported
- Number of accidents, number with injury
- Number of accidents broken down by:
  - Contracted
  - Self-performed
  - Preventable
  - Non-preventable
- Number of founded and unfounded complaints received, broken into the following categories:
  - Late
  - Early
  - Driving
  - Customer Service
  - Missed Stop
  - System
- Number of Compliments
- Number of behavior reports (bus conduct reports), broken down by school and route
- Vehicle breakdowns/road calls (resulting in 15-minute+ delay)
- Routes delayed 15+ minutes, broken down by: Weather, mechanical, Other (Traffic, accident, oversleeping driver)
- Cancellations/Modifications due to weather (Snow Days, Delays, Mud Season)

### **Ridership Data**

The Transportation Department will conduct ridership surveys a minimum of 3 times per year (fall, winter, and spring) to identify:

- number of passengers by school on each route
- percentage of eligible students who ride
- On-time performance of routes

Each survey will be for a minimum of 10 school days.

## Section IV: Safety & Training

### Transportation Staff Training

Mandatory training for all EWSD and contracted employees will be conducted a minimum of twice per year, once before the start of the school year in August, and again in January.

EWSD Employees are subject to EWSD mandatory employee training, including, but not limited to: Bullying, Confidentiality, Harassment, Mandatory Reporting, and Bloodborne Pathogens.

### Driver Training

All EWSD drivers will receive the following training before entering service.

- Defensive Driving training
- Inclement Weather driving
- Idling

EWSD will provide refresher training every two years for returning drivers.

### Safety Program

EWSD recognizes a robust safety program is essential to preventing and responding to emergencies, and providing quality transportation services to our families.

#### Safe Routes to School

Over time, it is the Transportation Department's goal to achieve Platinum Status in the [Vermont Safe Routes to School Partner Program](#), which is a member of the National SRTS programs.

The Transportation Department will make efforts to engage and partner with our federal, state, and local governments, PTO, contractors, law enforcement, walk / bike advocacy groups, local business, and media on initiatives and infrastructure that promote safe walking, biking, busing, and private vehicle driving to and from school.

It is important that the EWSD community to recognize Safe Routes to School aren't just about teaching our students safe practices, or training bus drivers. *The most important element is people in passenger cars being aware and driving with caution.*

#### Employee-Based Measures

Each bus route, and school not served by regular school bus routes shall conduct bus evacuation drills twice per year: once in September and once in April. Drills will be scheduled and documented by the Transportation Department. Drills will be conducted by Drivers.

Drivers will report red light violations immediately to dispatch via radio, providing as much information as possible: Location, plate #, Make, model and color of vehicle, and description of driver. Video recordings, when available, will be shared with law enforcement.

#### EWSD Self-Performed Accident Procedures

The District will follow internal accident procedures. Families will be notified in the event their student is involved in an accident.

### Vehicle-Based Measures

EWSD shall require all new school buses serving EWSD (self-performed and contracted) to be equipped with stop-arm camera systems capable of providing video and still images at high enough resolution to determine license plate numbers. These buses will also be equipped with a bumper sticker notifying motorists of video system and the penalties (5 points, \$1197 fine) for running red lights. Videos of red-light violations will be forwarded to law enforcement. EWSD will work proactively with our community partners to raise awareness, hold violators accountable, and reduce school bus stop light violations.

### Family-Based Measures

Parents who are visiting the school or dropping off or picking up children should park in designated areas and drive safely at all times, especially in the parking lot where there is considerable pedestrian traffic.

Drivers should obey Vermont's Idling law at all times which states that engines must be turned off when a vehicle is waiting or parked on school grounds.

Tips for safe walking, biking, and driving:

- [NHTSA School Bus & Bus Stop Safety](#)
- [Local Motion Safe Streets Handout](#)

Families are encouraged to review these tips prior to the start of school, and whenever transportation routines change e.g. due to weather, sports, or work schedules.

Vermont Walk and Bike Laws: [Walk & Bike Laws Link](#)

### District/School-Based Measures

Many schools already have some of the following elements in place, led by Principals. Arriving at full "safe routes to school" implementation will be a multi-year process of expanding and further developing current initiatives into a cohesive "transportation experience" for students as they move through all grade levels and schools.

- Participate in National Safe Routes To School Program, pursue federal funding for program and infrastructure improvements
- Participate in National Walk to School day in October and Bike to School Day in May
- Educational events prior to start of school, "how-to" and safety tips for each specific mode of travel (Walk, Bike, Bus, Driving) including:
  - Review established routes, dressing for the elements, making yourself visible, interacting with all types of traffic, giveaways for all students or students in free/reduced programs.
  - Biking: Bike helmet fitting / handout, blinker handout
  - Walking: yaktrax handout, blinker handout
  - Bus: Yaktrax handout, Blinker handout, mobile app training (if app is available), bus rules review, meet your bus driver, evacuation procedures review
  - Public transportation: mobile app familiarization (if app is available), passenger code of conduct, facts about public transit safety (cameras, police response, incident stats in last 5 years, inclement weather stop instructions)
- Family information sessions and tabling at start of school and community events (e.g. open houses, parent-teacher conference days, etc)

- Student awareness and education events as travel patterns change due to sports and weather (e.g. winter travel, spring walk and bike sessions).
- Establishment of “walking bus route” and “biking bus routes” led by adult volunteers and/or grade 8-12 student “Transportation Captains” who have completed a training including:
  - Route training
  - Safe walking and biking practices
  - Helmet use
  - Identification of hazards
  - Hazard reporting
  - Ridership reporting

Spring rite of passage initiating new “Captains” who get their safety vest/flag and take over under the mentorship of outgoing captains - carry the flag into the next school year.

- Walking and Biking “bus” routes participate in ridership surveys
- Funding partnerships for improved infrastructure (e.g. high-intensity flashing crosswalk warnings, bike racks, bus shelters)

# Section V: Transportation Policies

## Policy Code C3: Transportation

First Reading: November 6, 2018

Second Reading: November 27, 2018

Adopted: December 18, 2018

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*This policy will go into effect on July 1, 2019*

### Introduction

#### Resident Students

Where it is reasonable and necessary to enable a student entitled or required to attend an elementary or a secondary school within the Essex Westford Educational Community Unified Union School District (EWSD), the School District will furnish transportation to and from school on public roads to students, particularly our youngest and most vulnerable, who do not reside within the designated walking zones. Except where mandated by federal and state law, the provision of transportation is a privilege and it is not required or mandated for most students.

Transportation to and from school will be provided for students receiving services under an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 plan for the student when such transportation is necessary to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

#### Non-resident Students

The administration will develop tuitioned student transportation procedures, establishing the circumstances in which non-residents may be transported.

The Center for Technology, Essex (CTE) may provide transportation to its students. The Superintendent or their designee will develop procedures for CTE transportation in consultation with the CTE Director.

#### Extracurricular Activities Transportation

The EWSD is also committed to providing full or partial transportation for approved field trips and for approved extracurricular activities, such as athletic events, as availability and budget constraints allow.

#### Supporting School Access and the Wellbeing of Our Community

The EWSD is committed to access to education for its students. Safe travel to and from school is an integral part of that access. Where possible, the district wishes to encourage wellness for students, staff, and the community by supporting safe pedestrian and bicycle travel and public transit utilization.

The district will advocate for improved safety of travel conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the district.

Standards of conduct and disciplinary consequences for students are the same during travel to and from school via the district's transportation system as they are during the school day, as detailed in Policy C20: Student Conduct and Discipline and the student handbook. Violation of these rules may result in the student's loss of transportation privileges.

## **Administrative Responsibilities**

The Superintendent or their designee will:

1. Establish walking zones to school for each grade level, designating a distance that students will be expected to walk, subject to safe travel conditions.
2. Provide crossing guards as deemed necessary.
3. Determine projected bus ridership for portions of the district outside the walking zones for each school on an annual basis.
4. Identify stops and routes after considering both the safety of children and the efficiency of operation. Upon establishing which riders can be served safely with public transportation and with congregated bus stops, they will establish maximum walking distances to the public transit routes and to the district congregated stops.

Following consultation with any district vendors and service providers involved in the district's transportation system, the Superintendent or designee will consider the following factors (non-exclusive list, in no particular order) when establishing routes and stops:

- Age and maturity of students transported.
- Presence or absence of sidewalks or paths off the highway.
- Width, condition, and class of highways, including curves, hills, intersections, turnarounds, and seasonal road conditions.
- Density and speed of traffic.
- Proximity of dwellings, factories, or industrial areas.
- Ability of any congregated stop location to safely accommodate the assigned students.
- Health or physical impairment of students being transported.
- Distance traveled on a single route, and the length of time spent on a bus by any given student going to or returning from school.

The Superintendent or designee may consider other factors they deem appropriate when establishing routes and designated stops.

5. Prepare bus schedules indicating time and designated bus routes for the entire district annually and provide them to families in August. The Board empowers the Superintendent or her/his designee to make changes to any bus route at any time in order to meet current needs. Such changes, however, require notification to the parents/guardians of affected students. Every effort will be made to notify at least three days before any change takes effect.
6. Develop procedures identifying and prioritizing how services may be modified and/or reduced if resources (e.g., drivers or buses) are insufficient to provide the intended level of transportation services.
7. Submit to the School Board for approval of any contracts, leases, or purchases over \$15,000 necessary to maintain and operate transportation equipment.
8. Include in his or her annual report to the board information as to all pupils transported by the school district and the expense thereof.
9. Provide an annual report to the board as to the performance of the transportation system.

Legal References:

- 16 V.S.A. §§1222, 1224 (Student transportation)
- 16 V.S.A. § 11 (a)(32)(C)
- 16 V.S.A. § 1162 (a)
- 16 V.S.A. §1551

## **Policy Code B4: Drug & Alcohol Testing of Transportation Employees**

First Reading: November 1, 2016,

Adopted: November 15, 2016

Revised:

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### **Policy**

The Essex Westford School District will comply with state and federal law and regulations requiring a drug and alcohol testing program for school bus and commercial vehicle drivers. The superintendent or designee will implement procedures to conduct alcohol and drug tests for all safety-sensitive transportation employees as required by the federal Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991.

The Essex Westford School District (referred to hereafter as EWSD or the District) Drug & Alcohol Testing Program for Transportation Employees (hereafter referred to as the Program) consists of Policy B4 and its related procedures and attachments.

The program complies with 49 CFR Part 382, as amended, and 49 CFR Part 40, as amended.

#### **Legal Reference(s):**

- 49 U.S.C. § 5331, 31306 (Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991)
- 49 C.F.R. Parts 40, 382, 391, 392, 395
- 21 V.S.A. 511 et seq.

[illegible]

# EWSD Bus Conduct Report 2026-27

- **Please complete the form to make a report at the end of your shift.**
- Describe just the facts: specific actions, behavior, or speech that violated EWSD expectations.
- Complete a separate form for each student and incident you are reporting.

*Thank you for the important role you have in supporting education in EWSD!*

\* Indicates required question

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*Skip to question 1* *Skip to question 1*

## **Behavior Information**

## Review Summary of Behavior Levels for Reference

### EWSD Transportation Behavior Support Protocol

#### POSITIVE BEHAVIORS EXPECTED FOR ALL RIDERS

- Boarding the bus on time
- Kind and respectful engagement with peers and adults
- Staying seated for the entire bus ride
- Keeping body parts out of the aisle
- Use of voice at expected volume (level 1 or 2)
- Save snacks for later
- Never use phone camera, video, or audio to record or photograph others
- Asking for help from adults when needed
- Use expected language
- Walk in the aisle when boarding or departing from the bus
- Keeping hands and body to self

| LEVEL 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | LEVEL 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | LEVEL 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | LEVEL 4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delaying bus through refusal to board or exit</li> <li>• Disruptive use of electronic devices (recording, taking video/audio/photos, etc)</li> <li>• Drinking/Eating</li> <li>• Swearing, yelling, or shouting</li> <li>• Not following directions provided by adults</li> <li>• Failure to remain seated in an assigned seat at all times / blocking the bus aisle</li> <li>• Getting on or off the bus/vehicle at undesignated stops</li> <li>• Low-level physical contact (pushing, poking, touching)</li> <li>• Placing any body part out of windows</li> <li>• Failure to walk safely in front of the bus when loading or disembarking</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatening behavior towards others</li> <li>• Possession of violent and profane materials</li> <li>• Possession of dangerous chemicals</li> <li>• Watching any material that violates the EWSD technology policy</li> <li>• Tobacco or nicotine use</li> <li>• Throwing objects</li> <li>• Vandalism</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical or verbal aggression or fighting</li> <li>• Alcohol</li> <li>• Possession of weapons</li> <li>• Consensual Sexual Activity</li> <li>• Offensive touching</li> <li>• Possession, distribution, or under the influence of illegal substances, illegal drugs, or another person's prescription drug</li> </ul> | <p>The behaviors listed below will lead to police contact and involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual assault</li> <li>• Bomb threats</li> <li>• Arson / terrorist threats</li> <li>• Firearm and destructive devices, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code and 13 V.S.A. §4016</li> <li>• Use of weapon as defined in 13 V.S.A. §4016</li> </ul> |

#### 1. Driver/Aide Name (person making report) \*

---

2. **Incident Type \***

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Level 1

☐ Level 2

☐ Level 3

☐ Level 4

3. **Date of Incident \***

---

*Example: January 7, 2019*

4. **Time \***

---

*Example: 8:30 AM*

5. **Bus Route \***

*Check all that apply.*

- ☐ AM BLUE ADL-EHS
- ☐ AM BLUE HIA-FLE
- ☐ AM GREEN HIA-FLE
- ☐ AM GREEN ADL-EHS
- ☐ AM EHS Georgia
- ☐ AM EHS-EMS-ADL Islands
- ☐ AM RED ADL-EHS
- ☐ AM RED HIA-FLE
- ☐ AM\_02\_EES/FMS
- ☐ AM\_02\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ AM\_03\_EES/FMS
- ☐ AM\_03\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ AM\_04\_EES/FMS
- ☐ AM\_04\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ AM\_05\_EES/FMS
- ☐ AM\_05\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ AM\_06\_EES/FMS
- ☐ AM\_06\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ AM\_08\_EES/FMS
- ☐ AM\_08\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ AM\_09\_EES/FMS
- ☐ AM\_09\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ AM\_10\_EES/FMS
- ☐ AM\_10\_EHS/EMS
- ☐ AM\_12\_EES/FMS
- ☐ AM\_12\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ AM\_16\_EES/FMS
- ☐ AM\_16\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ AM\_K-12\_Westford\_1
- ☐ AM\_K-12\_Westford\_2
- ☐ AM\_K-12\_Westford\_3
- ☐ PM BLUE ADL-EHS
- ☐ PM BLUE HIA-FLE
- ☐ PM GREEN HIA-FLE

- ☐ PM GREEN ADL-EHS
- ☐ PM EHS Georgia
- ☐ PM EHS-EMS-ADL Islands
- ☐ PM RED ADL-EHS
- ☐ PM RED HIA-SUM-FLE
- ☐ PM\_02\_EES/FMS
- ☐ PM\_02\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ PM\_03\_EES/FMS
- ☐ PM\_03\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ PM\_04\_EES/FMS
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- ☐ PM\_12\_EES/FMS
- ☐ PM\_12\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ PM\_16\_EES/FMS
- ☐ PM\_16\_EMS/EHS
- ☐ PM\_K-12\_Westford\_1
- ☐ PM\_K-12\_Westford\_2
- ☐ PM\_K-12\_Westford\_3
- ☐ Specialized

6. **Location in bus \***

---

7. **Street Location \***

---

8. **Student Name (First and Last): \***

---

9. **Grade Level \***

*Check all that apply.*

☐ K

☐ 1

☐ 2

☐ 3

☐ 4

☐ 5

☐ 6

☐ 7

☐ 8

☐ 9

☐ 10

☐ 11

☐ 12

10. **School \***

*Check all that apply.*

- ☐ EES
- ☐ FMS
- ☐ EMS
- ☐ HIA
- ☐ FLE
- ☐ ADL
- ☐ Westford
- ☐ EHS
- ☐ CTE
- ☐ ARC
- ☐ Baird
- ☐ Garvin
- ☐ Two Roads
- ☐ Specialized Other

11. **Describe the Incident \***

---

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12. **Suggested Resolution**

---

---

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---

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*Skip to question 13*

**SCHOOL STAFF must return to this form to document follow-up actions once completed.**

Only fill out this section after follow-up has taken place.

**13. Follow-Up Actions Taken:**

---

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---

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**Reference:**

[Link to Sheet](#) (view follow up responses in Column O)

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Google Forms



# EWSD Transportation Behavior Support Protocol

The Essex Westford School District (EWSD) is committed to ensuring that every student riding an EWSD bus or vehicle experiences a safe and supportive environment.

EWSD's goal is for students and staff to maintain a safe, civil, and positive learning environment through a system of support and management practices. These practices are supported by consistent, transparent, and equitable benefits and consequences that students know and understand. Furthermore, EWSD recognizes that a school bus or district vehicle is an extension of the school and requires support and interventions for some of our students who have not yet shown the independent skills needed to meet expectations.

This protocol intends to create an environment where expectations for student behavior on buses are clear to students, staff, and families to support successful experiences on the EWSD buses and transportation services.

This document is intended as a teaching and expectation-setting tool to support a collective understanding of how we address bus-related challenging behaviors and what behaviors we seek from students to help build success. During the implementation of this protocol, it is important to know that the district may use its discretion and judgment, where such flexibility is permitted, to determine the consequences and range of appropriate support and consequences to apply in each circumstance as warranted. Students' individual circumstances are considered in analyzing the best supports and application of consequences, which can, in some circumstances, include a loss of access to transportation to school. In addition to the consequences outlined here—which relate directly to transportation—additional school disciplinary action may occur for breaking district policy (e.g., vaping, threats, weapons, etc.).

## Positive Behaviors Expected For All Riders

- Board the bus on time
- Kind and respectful engagement with peers and adults
- Stay seated for the entire bus ride
- Keep body parts out of the aisle
- Use of voice at expected volume (level 1 or 2)
- Save snacks for later
- Never use phone camera, video, or audio to record or photograph others
- Ask for help from adults when needed
- Use expected language
- Walk in the aisle when boarding or departing from the bus
- Keep hands and body to self

## Level 1 Behaviors and Intervention Examples

Other minor infractions may also exist.

- Delaying bus through refusal to board or exit
- Disruptive use of electronic devices (recording, taking video/audio/photos, etc.)

| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Drinking/Eating</li> <li>● Swearing, yelling, or shouting</li> <li>● Not following directions provided by adults</li> <li>● Failure to remain seated in an assigned seat at all times / blocking the bus aisle</li> <li>● Getting on or off the bus/vehicle at undesignated stops</li> <li>● Low-level physical contact (pushing, poking, touching)</li> <li>● Placing any body part out of windows</li> <li>● Failure to walk safely in front of the bus when loading or disembarking</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Level 1 Referral</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Examples of Intervention and Consequence Action to be Taken by School-based Administration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1st Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (email or call)</li> <li>● Student Management/Assistant Principal Contact</li> <li>● Special Educator notified (if appropriate)</li> <li>● Friendly reminder of bus expectations (driver)</li> <li>● Check &amp; Connect (Student Management/Assistant Principal with student &amp; driver)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                  |
| 2nd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (in-person meeting)</li> <li>● Principal notification</li> <li>● Student Management/Assistant Principal Contact</li> <li>● Temporary Seat Reassignment</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 3rd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Parent Communication (in-person meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Transportation Support / Behavior plan</li> <li>● Permanent seat reassignment</li> <li>● Restorative process</li> </ul> <p><b>Persistent level 1 referrals (three to five) could result in suspension of bus privileges for a period of time</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Elementary 1-3 days</b></li> <li>● <b>Middle School 2-4 days</b></li> <li>● <b>High School 2-4 days</b></li> </ul> |
| Returning to transportation after suspension:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting with Parent, Student, Transportation Director, and Student Management Specialist/Assistant Principal required to resume ridership</li> <li>● Transportation Support/Behavior Plan</li> <li>● Permanent seat assignment for the year</li> <li>● Review of Transportation Behavior Expectations</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                             |

| <b>Level 2 Behaviors and Intervention Examples</b><br>Other infractions may be deemed Level II, depending on severity.                                                                                                                                                |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Threatening behavior towards others</li> <li>● Possession of violent and profane materials</li> <li>● Possession of dangerous chemicals</li> <li>● Watching any material that violates the EWSD technology policy</li> </ul> |  |

| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tobacco or nicotine use</li> <li>● Throwing objects</li> <li>● Vandalism</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Level 2 Referral</b>                                                                                                      | <b>Examples of Intervention and Consequence Action to be Taken by School-based Administration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1st Referral                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (email or call)</li> <li>● Student Management/Assistant Principal Contact</li> <li>● Special Educator notified (if appropriate)</li> <li>● Implementation of learning opportunities to avoid future behavior</li> <li>● Opportunity for restorative process</li> <li>● Check &amp; Connect (Student Management with student &amp; driver)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2nd Referral                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (in-person meeting)</li> <li>● Principal notification</li> <li>● Student Management/Assistant Principal Contact</li> <li>● Special Educator notified (if appropriate)</li> <li>● Temporary Seat Reassignment</li> <li>● Behavior support plan implementation</li> <li>● Opportunity for restorative process</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 3rd Referral                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (in-person meeting with the full team)</li> <li>● Transportation Support/Behavior Plan</li> <li>● Restorative process implementation</li> <li>● Relationship-building with the adult on the bus supported by school staff</li> <li>● Permanent Seat Assignment</li> <li>● <b>Suspension of Transportation Privileges:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Elementary 2-4 days</b></li> <li>○ <b>Middle School 3-5 days</b></li> <li>○ <b>High School 3-5 days</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| Returning to transportation after suspension:                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contact with parent</li> <li>● Transportation Support/Behavior Plan Development with a team of people who know the student's needs</li> <li>● Analysis of skill deficit with intervention/instructional plan at the school</li> <li>● Meeting with Parent, Student, Transportation Director, and Student Management Specialist/Assistant Principal required to resume ridership</li> <li>● Restorative process planning</li> </ul>                                                                                        |

| <b>Level 3 Behaviors and Intervention Examples</b><br>Other infractions may be deemed Level III, depending on severity. |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Physical or verbal aggression or fighting</li> <li>● Alcohol</li> </ul>        |  |

| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Possession of weapons</li> <li>● Consensual Sexual Activity</li> <li>● Offensive touching</li> <li>● Possession, distribution, or under the influence of illegal substances, illegal drugs, or another person's prescription drug</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Level 3 Referral</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Examples of Intervention and Consequence Action to be Taken by School-based Administration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1st Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (in-person meeting)</li> <li>● Principal or Assistant Principal notification and discussion about consequence decisions</li> <li>● Director of Facilities &amp; District Safety notification</li> <li>● Special Educator notified (if appropriate)</li> <li>● Consideration of school-based interventions and other referrals (Counseling and assessment needs, Title IX referral, HHB referral, Threat Assessment need)</li> <li>● <b>5-day Suspension of Transportation Privileges</b></li> </ul>                                                                                |
| 2nd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Full team meeting of those closest to the student (and to include the school assistant principal) to determine extensive intervention plan given severity of behavior.</li> <li>● Consideration of school-based interventions and other referrals or assessments needed to understand the function of the behavior</li> <li>● Director of Facilities &amp; District Safety notification</li> <li>● Director of Special Education notification where appropriate</li> <li>● Student Management/Assistant Principal Contact</li> <li>● <b>5-10 day Suspension of Transportation Privileges</b></li> </ul> |
| 3rd Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent Communication (in-person meeting with full team, including LEA where appropriate)</li> <li>● <b>Suspension of Transportation Privileges for Remainder of School-Year</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Returning to transportation after suspension at the start of the following school year:                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting with Parent, Student, Transportation Director, and Student Management Specialist required to resume ridership</li> <li>● Behavior plan implementation</li> <li>● Educational intervention</li> <li>● Restorative practice implementation</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| <b>Level 4 Behaviors and Disciplinary Action</b><br>Other infractions may be deemed Level IV, depending on severity.                                                                                   |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| The behaviors listed below will lead to police contact and involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sexual assault</li> <li>● Bomb threats</li> <li>● Arson / terrorist threats</li> </ul> |  |

| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firearm and destructive devices, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code and 13 V.S.A. §4016</li> <li>• Use of weapon as defined in 13 V.S.A. §4016</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Level 4 Infraction</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Disciplinary Action to be Taken by School-based and District Administration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 1st Referral                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Communication (in-person meeting)</li> <li>• Superintendent notification</li> <li>• Principal Contact</li> <li>• Director of Facilities &amp; District Safety Investigation</li> <li>• Special Education Director notification, if appropriate</li> <li>• Appropriate service and investigative referrals as required by EWSD Policy</li> <li>• Student Management Contact</li> <li>• Special Educator notified (if appropriate)</li> <li>• <b>Suspension of Transportation Privileges for Remainder of School-Year</b></li> </ul> |
| Returning to transportation after suspension at the start of the following school year:                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with Parent, Student, Transportation Director, and Student Management Specialist required before ridership</li> <li>• Strong behavioral support plan for success</li> <li>• Safety Plan</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| <b>Disability-Based Considerations</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>All students eligible for Special Education and 504 plans may experience consequences that are the same as other students, including up to ten (10) cumulative days of suspension a year from the bus. If regular suspensions occur for a student eligible for an IEP or 504 plan, a referral for a team meeting should be made, and a meeting should be convened to determine unmet needs to support the student's successful access to school transportation. Teams will hold manifestation and transportation-specific placement meetings as required under IDEA and 504 regulations, should a student be suspended for more than ten (10) days in a school year.</p> |

# EWSD Transportation Behavior Support Protocol

## POSITIVE BEHAVIORS EXPECTED FOR ALL RIDERS

- Boarding the bus on time
- Kind and respectful engagement with peers and adults
- Staying seated for the entire bus ride
- Keeping body parts out of the aisle
- Use of voice at expected volume (level 1 or 2)
- Save snacks for later
- Never use phone camera, video, or audio to record or photograph others
- Asking for help from adults when needed
- Use expected language
- Walk in the aisle when boarding or departing from the bus
- Keeping hands and body to self

| LEVEL 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | LEVEL 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | LEVEL 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | LEVEL 4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Delaying bus through refusal to board or exit</li> <li>● Disruptive use of electronic devices (recording, taking video/audio/photos, etc)</li> <li>● Drinking/Eating</li> <li>● Swearing, yelling, or shouting</li> <li>● Not following directions provided by adults</li> <li>● Failure to remain seated in an assigned seat at all times / blocking the bus aisle</li> <li>● Getting on or off the bus/vehicle at undesignated stops</li> <li>● Low-level physical contact (pushing, poking, touching)</li> <li>● Placing any body part out of windows</li> <li>● Failure to walk safely in front of the bus when loading or disembarking</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Threatening behavior towards others</li> <li>● Possession of violent and profane materials</li> <li>● Possession of dangerous chemicals</li> <li>● Watching any material that violates the EWSD technology policy</li> <li>● Tobacco or nicotine use</li> <li>● Throwing objects</li> <li>● Vandalism</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Physical or verbal aggression or fighting</li> <li>● Alcohol</li> <li>● Possession of weapons</li> <li>● Consensual Sexual Activity</li> <li>● Offensive touching</li> <li>● Possession, distribution, or under the influence of illegal substances, illegal drugs, or another person's prescription drug</li> </ul> | <p>The behaviors listed below will lead to police contact and involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sexual assault</li> <li>● Bomb threats</li> <li>● Arson / terrorist threats</li> <li>● Firearm and destructive devices, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code and 13 V.S.A. §4016</li> <li>● Use of weapon as defined in 13 V.S.A. §4016</li> </ul> |

### Disability-Based Considerations

All students eligible for Special Education and 504 plans may experience consequences that are the same as other students, including up to ten (10) cumulative days of suspension a year from the bus. If regular suspensions occur for a student eligible for an IEP or 504 plan, a referral for a team meeting should be made, and a meeting should be convened to determine unmet needs to support the student's successful access to school transportation. Teams will hold manifestation and transportation-specific placement meetings as required under IDEA and 504 regulations, should a student be suspended for more than ten (10) days in a school year.

# Essex Westford School District

## 2026-2027 District Handbook

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### EWSD District Office

- 76 Pearl Street, Suite 201, Essex Junction, VT 05452

**Phone:** 802-878-8168

**Fax:** 802-878-5190

**Visit us online:** [www.ewsd.org](http://www.ewsd.org)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/essexwestford](https://facebook.com/essexwestford)

**Instagram:** [@essexwestford](https://www.instagram.com/essexwestford)

**YouTube:** [www.youtube.com/@essexwestford](https://www.youtube.com/@essexwestford)

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### Handbook Purpose

The EWSD Student Handbook serves as a comprehensive and supportive guide to the School District's rules, expectations, and policies, helping to create a safe, structured learning environment. It communicates behavioral standards, outlines student rights and responsibilities, and clarifies procedures for various situations, ensuring that students, parents, and staff are informed and aligned.

### Introduction

- [Contact Information](#)
- [District Calendar](#)
- [District Policies](#)

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## **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

[ANIMAL DISSECTION](#)

[ASBESTOS HAZARD EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT \(AHERA\)](#)

[EQUAL ACCESS AND PUBLIC ACCESS](#)

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) NOTICE

HOMELESSNESS

LOCATING, IDENTIFYING AND EVALUATION OF STUDENTS: CHILD FIND

MANDATORY REPORTING

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

PRIVACY RIGHTS AND STUDENT SURVEYS

RESIDENCY

RESTRAINT/SECLUSION

---

### **EWSD Vision**

Growing hearts and minds for a better today and tomorrow: every day, every way, every one.

### **Theory of Action**

When we deepen our commitment to each other and to continuous growth for every one, then our practices create equitable, authentic, inclusive learning experiences that benefit all students.

### **The Why Behind Equity**

The Essex Westford School District is committed to recognizing and addressing practices that have contributed to inequities and disproportionate representation for students and seeks to eliminate these impacts. The purpose of [equity work in EWSD](#) is to eliminate all forms of racism, other oppression, identity based harm, and inequity in EWSD and secure justice for prior and future harm. We are committed to building and sustaining our promise to equity throughout the District to continuously improve the experiences of students, families, and staff and improve outcomes. To support this commitment, all programs, operations, practices, resource distribution, and policies will need to hold equity as a guiding lens and are guided by an understanding of past inequities and focused on creating more equitable outcomes in a manner such that they undo current and past harm.

For this work to move forward, it is critical that we grow the hearts and minds of our employees and community and increase the representation of diverse people working within the EWSD. To center equity in all decision making, we must purposefully act to oppose historical structures that act as if all lived experiences are the same and recognize the value of differences in people. We must also work to:

1. Ensure the District is fully reflective of a wide diversity of students and families.
2. Develop and sustain diverse and well-prepared employees.
3. Create educational experiences for all students that reflect all their identities, languages, and cultures.

4. Make decisions with voices from many different people and points of view across the community.
5. Develop and put into use policies and practices across EWSD that are anti-racist and center equity.

## **The Why Behind SEL**

**“Intertwining social and emotional learning and academics advances the ability of our students to adapt to change with the essential skills to effectively manage new challenges.”  
(Burke, 2018)**

Within Essex Westford School District, we have identified [Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\)](#) as an important area of focus. It is directly connected to our vision and is an important focus within our Continuous Improvement Plan. Research consistently shows that when schools and teachers focus on supporting students with SEL, a large number of benefits take place.

These include:

- Improved student attitudes and experiences about self, school, and others
- Improved sense of belonging
- Improved social-emotional skills
- Improved academic performance
- Increase in positive classroom behaviors
- Reduction in conduct problems
- Reduction in student feelings worried and/or depressed
- Reduction in drug use
- Improved graduation rates and job-related success
- Improved school climate and staff returning
- Equitable and inclusive support that ensures all students have what they need to succeed

For these reasons, we have developed a set of extremely important standards and committed to supporting SEL in a complete, thorough, and well thought out way across the EWSD.

## **SCHOOL LIFE AND EXPECTATIONS**

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **Start and End Times:**

| <b>School</b>       | <b>Start</b> | <b>End</b> | <b>Wed. Early Release</b> |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------|
| Albert D. Lawton    | 8:35 a.m.    | 3:35 p.m.  | 2:35 p.m.                 |
| Center for Tech.    | 8:30 a.m.    | 2:45 p.m.  | 1:55 p.m.                 |
| Essex Elementary    | 7:30 a.m.    | 2:30 p.m.  | 1:30 p.m.                 |
| Essex High School   | 8:40 a.m.    | 3:15 p.m.  | 2:15 p.m.                 |
| Essex Middle School | 8:35 a.m.    | 3:35 p.m.  | 2:35 p.m.                 |

|                   |           |           |           |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Founders Memorial | 7:40 a.m. | 2:40 p.m. | 1:40 p.m. |
| Hiawatha          | 7:30 a.m. | 2:30 p.m. | 1:30 p.m. |
| Thomas Fleming    | 7:45 a.m. | 2:45 p.m. | 1:45 p.m. |
| Westford          | 7:30 a.m. | 2:30 p.m. | 1:30 p.m. |

Regular attendance at school plays a key role for learning and social success. EWSD is committed to supporting students in maintaining consistent attendance, including when attendance becomes a challenge. Please reach out to your student's teacher if attendance becomes a challenge so we can work together to support improvement.

In accordance with [EWSD policy C7 \(Student Attendance\)](#) and Vermont law (Title 16 VSA 1126 & 1127) regular school attendance by students is required. Parents and guardians of students enrolled in school (age six and up) play an important role in ensuring regular attendance, as required by law to make sure of their children's attendance at school. Regular attendance is necessary to support engagement and progress. If your child will not be in attendance, please call the school or fill out the online form to let us know they won't be there before the start of the school day and state the reason for them not being present.

Note: CTE students must also call the program instructor between 7:15 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

To support good communication with the school parents/guardians/caregivers should notify your child's school if they are unable to attend and please note the reason. We do understand that students may be absent due to illness, participation in a religious holiday, death in the family, family emergency, or situations beyond the student's control. Absences should be reported to the school by the person who is legally responsible for the student in writing, in-person, or over a phone. Parents, guardians, translators, or family members in place of the parent should call the school's attendance line as early as possible to report their child's illness. Reporting a student not being present at school is an important method of improving student safety - we want to make sure that every student sent to school arrives at school.

Parents/guardians/caregivers requesting that a student be excused must provide a written application in advance of the student not being present to the school principal.

Late students must report to the school office as soon as they arrive so that there is a true number count of people in the building for safety reasons. Arriving on time helps students fully benefit from their learning opportunities. The school will communicate with families if patterns of lateness arise. School personnel are always available to provide caregivers with success plans to help them in getting their children to school on time. If you are struggling to get your child to school regularly and need support, feel free to reach out to your student's school counselor.

If your child must leave school before the end of the day, please contact the school and include the reason for early dismissal and the student's destination, to the office. To pick up your child, sign the early dismissal log in the school office (grades K-8). School personnel will call the child's

teacher to send your child to meet you in the office. Caregivers please respect our request by staying at the office and not going to the classroom, as oftentimes this can be disruptive to the learning.

A student who stays away from school without a valid cause is considered truant. Letters will be sent from the school when there is concern about the number of days that a student is not present. EWSD Director of Facilities and District Safety Garry Scott serves as the District's truancy officer.

### **CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES**

The EWSD recognizes that healthy eating patterns are essential for students to reach their full potential. The District offers a [school nutrition program](#) that meets the guidelines set by the Federal Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, as well as the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. To ensure compliance with these nutritional standards and to account for potential allergens, we ask families to review the [Local Wellness Policy](#).

A well-planned and accessible school nutrition program positively influences students' eating habits. The EWSD policy enforces that eating a variety of nutritious foods helps increase healthy growth and development, and provides the necessary energy for learning. Questions about CNS? Contact Supervisor Scott Fay ([sfay@ewsd.org](mailto:sfay@ewsd.org) or 857-7263).

**Food and Drinks:** Food and drinks are allowed at school during specified times and/or in selected areas. Unless approved by the principal, and based on the decision of the classroom teacher, consumption of snacks, candy, gum, and/or drinks isn't permitted during instructional time.

**Free Lunch and Breakfast Program:** Children need healthy meals to learn. The Essex Westford School District offers healthy meals every school day. In the school year 2025-2026, all children will get free breakfast and lunch without any concern about household income or ability to participate.

\*All families are asked to submit the application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals to track our community's Free and Reduced Percentage. Filling out and returning the online form may help your family, the school, and community at large, qualify for help. Grant money for the school, and getting money back from telecom companies for the community are just a couple examples of the benefits of having higher Free and Reduced percentages. Information is also available on the [EWSD Child Nutrition page online](#). All information given on these forms is kept strictly private. Please call Scott Fay or Meghan Martin at 857-7333 for more information. Online forms can be filed at any time during the school year.

**Menus:** Menus will be posted throughout the school, will be on the EWSD MealViewer, and school websites, and may be included in occasional newsletters and/or information sent home.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

The District is committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students and staff. Creating this environment is a shared responsibility, and all members of the school community are expected to contribute to a culture of respect, safety, and belonging.

Students are expected to demonstrate kindness and respect for others and for property at all times, including during school, at school-related events, and in situations that may impact the school community. Behaviors that disrupt learning or interfere with another student's access to educational opportunities will be addressed, regardless of where they occur.

We are committed to fostering respectful communication and engagement across differences. Bias, harassment, and harmful behavior based on identity are not permitted and are addressed in alignment with District policies.

### **Expectations for a Positive and Engaged Learning Environment**

Students are encouraged to actively participate in their learning in ways that reflect their individual strengths and needs. Engagement may include listening, contributing, creating, questioning, and collaborating.

Being prepared for learning includes arriving on time, bringing necessary materials, and completing assigned work. Students are supported in developing these habits over time.

A positive attitude toward learning is shaped by each student's experiences, strengths, and circumstances. We recognize that engagement may look different for each learner and strive to support all students in meaningful ways.

Respect for self, others, and the environment is a foundational expectation. Students are expected to communicate thoughtfully, consider the impact of their words and actions, and engage respectfully even when perspectives differ.

**Restorative Practices and/or Discipline:** We believe in the use of restorative practices to repair harm that is done through student behavior. However, each offense cannot be addressed through restorative practices and may require disciplinary actions in addition to or instead of restorative practices. Restorative processes are voluntary among parties to an incident.

When expectations are not met and violations of school policies responses may include, but are not limited to, disciplinary actions, including: loss of appropriate activity or privilege, disciplinary warning, detention, community callback, community service, probationary participation, suspension (not allowed under eight years old except in extreme circumstances), long-term suspension or other restorative or disciplinary actions as thought appropriate by school administrators.

Long-term suspension beyond 10 days requires a school board hearing. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to read the District's [policy](#) and [procedure](#) related to Student Conduct and Discipline (C15) for additional details on suspension and long-term suspension.

While out of school for a suspension, the student is expected to work on school-related tasks and complete all homework. Suspension or long-term suspension may result in the loss of credit or grades for any assignments or tests missed during that time.

Repeated violations may lead to increasingly serious responses, in the end, result in long-term suspension and loss of credit.

Behaviors that may result in restorative practices and/or disciplinary responses include, but are not limited to:

- Disrespectful or non-compliant behavior
- Threats or intimidation
- Use of inappropriate language
- Bullying or harassment
- Physical aggression or fighting
- Theft
- Hazing
- Trespassing
- Destruction of property
- Academic dishonesty
- Any behavior that creates an unsafe or disruptive environment

The administration and School Board may respond to behavior that occurs on school property, on school transportation, at school-sponsored events, or off-campus when such behavior directly impacts the safety, well-being, or learning environment of the school community.

### **RESTORATIVE PRACTICES**

EWSD actively uses restorative practices to build community, strengthen social and emotional skills in students, understand and address the underlying causes of behavior, and support students in their development as empowered, collaborative and caring citizens.

**Student Leadership & Empowerment:** Restorative practices also make space for student leadership and voice. Youth involved in Restorative Practice work may participate in internships, help adults lead conversations to build community and resolve conflict, and conduct youth participatory action research.

Restorative interventions are thoughtful and humane and have been an important approach to building community and resolving conflict for many cultures over hundreds of years. Our goal is to increase student learning for all, academically, socially, and emotionally. Students who feel safe and cared for are more likely to learn. Students involved in action research with the goal of

making a change will become empowered leaders in their community. Restorative practices fit with our district's mission of "Growing hearts and minds, for a better today and tomorrow: every day, every way, every one."

### **Hazing, Harassment, Bullying, and Retaliation**

- [C10. Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students](#)
- [C10-Procedure: Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying of Students](#)

The EWSD School District is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive learning area in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. The EWSD is committed to preventing the illegal harassment of students based on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, whether someone is single, married, divorced, etc., sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and all other legally protected status under federal or state law.

Retaliation for making a report of HHB or participating in an investigation into accusations of HHB is prohibited. The District will take appropriate action related to any student, volunteer, contractor, or employee of the school District who tries to get revenge or retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report of HHB. Retaliation against a student can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to, any form of threatening, payback, or continued hazing, harassment, and or bullying. A student who feels as if they are experiencing retaliation for making a report of HHB or being involved in the investigation of a possible HHB event should immediately report the situation to a school leader.

The use of vulgar and obscene speech is expressly prohibited within our schools, on our school buses, and within the context of any school-school sponsored activity. Bigoted, sexist, racist, antisemitic, homophobic, Islamophobic, Transphobic, Ableist Slurs - and other similarly dehumanizing language – are likely to cause a substantial disruption to our learning environment and shall be considered vulgar and/or obscene. The District reserves the right to take disciplinary and/or restorative action when students are found to have engaged in conduct that violates this standard. Such language may also constitute a violation of the school's Policy for the prevention of harassment, hazing, and bullying.

Each school campus has at least two school leaders who are charged with receiving and asking questions about reports of hazing, harassment, and bullying. Any person who believes they have been the victim of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying or the victim of revenge by making a complaint of such behavior, or any person with knowledge or objects that prove something of conduct which may be equal to hazing will report the possible acts immediately to a school leader, a school administrator, coach, or the superintendent's office.

### **Prohibiting Title IX Sexual Harassment:**

- [C12: Prevention of Sexual Harassment As Prohibited By Title IX](#)

**Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco; Weapons; Assault/Fighting:** EWSD is committed to maintaining safe, positive learning conditions free of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons and assault/fighting. Students and adults are expected to make choices that support safety. Students and adults are expected to attend school and school-related events free of the influence of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol. The use or possession of alcohol, drugs, and /or tobacco products is prohibited on school grounds or during school activities (refer to "Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco" listed under A below). Students and adults must not carry or possess (openly or hidden) any type of weapon on school grounds or at a school activity (refer to "Weapons" listed under 'B' below). Students and adults are expected to treat each other and staff with respect (refer to "Assault/fighting" listed under C below).

Students who violate drug and alcohol expectations may be removed from participation from all extra and school related activities for three months. Co- and school related activities include: participation on sports teams, clubs, drama productions, attendance at athletic contests, dances, graduation exercises, and those school-sponsored organizations, activities, and events not directly related to the learning, and/or testing programs. Violations of weapons policies may result in long-term suspension.

**A. Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco:** EWSD supports a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free environment. The possession, use, or sale of tobacco, alcohol, and/or drugs is prohibited. Please refer to [EWSD Policy C2: Alcohol and Drugs](#).

**Definition:** The term "drug" is defined as a mood-changing substance to include, but not be limited to, the following categories: tobacco and nicotine products (including electronic cigarettes and vaporizers), illegal drugs and substances, things you breathe in, controlled drugs, prescription medicine, and alcohol.

**Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program:** In keeping with Title 16, VSA sections 1165 and 909, and other state and federal rules, the School Board supports a complete and thorough program that includes at least the following parts: education/prevention programming and staff training; support and referral systems and cooperative agreements; immediate and emergency procedures; possession, use, and/or distribution actions that help a bad situation; performance and behavior-related actions that help bad situations; and community awareness programming.

**Education/Prevention Programming:** EWSD has put into use well-developed tobacco, alcohol, and over-use of drug prevention educational learning for elementary and secondary schools.

**Support and Referral Systems and Cooperative Agreements:** Each school within the District has an in-school process for the first evaluation, support, and, if necessary, referral to community resources for students affected by their own or another's drug use.

**Immediate Procedures:** Importance and focus will be placed on the welfare and rights of the individual to the extent that such respect does not endanger the welfare and rights of others.

For students, in-school procedures will provide for an immediate response to any drug-related event until the student has been discharged to the parent, guardian, social services, medical, or police. As part of the school procedure, the administration will be immediately informed by school staff of any violation of the law and/or school policy. The administration will follow the appropriate legal procedures and due process for restorative justice and/or discipline.

**Emergency Procedures:** In the event of an emergency involving alcohol or overuse of drugs, every step taken to prevent trouble or injury must be taken to protect the person's health and well-being while protecting the health and well-being of the remaining school population.

**Possession, Use, or Distribution Consequences/Interventions:** Any student discovered in a school building, on school property, or at a school-sanctioned activity, having possession of drugs or things that drug users need, using or distributing drugs, or knowingly/intentionally helping another person in using or distributing drugs will be disciplined with established school policy and procedure. Students found to be in violation of District policies, including drug, alcohol, and tobacco policies, will have their parking privileges taken back and will lose the opportunity to participate in campus-sponsored driver education classes.

**Performance and Behavior-Related Problems:** According to school procedures, a minimum of two staff people will be selected for discussion with others related to a student whose behavior or performance may point to a problem with alcohol or other drug use. These staff members will help the strong desire for further screening, education, and counseling in referral to treatment.

Employees of the EWSD (including contractors and drivers) will report events and/or behavior of students, other employees, or visitors who display proof of being impaired. Employees will report events to the principal (or designee) or the superintendent.

When a student is decided to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, they will be discharged to a parent, guardian, social service, medical personnel, or police officer.

Following appropriate discussions and careful thinking, the parent or guardian of any student suspected of being under the influence of drugs will be told by school administrators. A course of action leading toward the formal decision of the facts, and, if necessary, toward the treatment and healing of said student, will be thought about together by school administrators.

**Follow-Up Procedures:** It is recognized that keeping or returning people to the school setting is desirable whenever such action is agreeing with the person's own healing and well-being and whenever such action does not interfere with the learning process for students and the maintenance of discipline and safety. Students may need to look for professional guidance/rehabilitation as a condition of enrollment/re-enrollment in school or other different education programs offered by the District.

**Prescription Drugs and Other Medication:** Any student who must take medication during the regular school day will do so obeying the District procedure about the management of medicines. Also, see the health services section of this handbook.

**Discipline Procedures for Alcohol, Drug, Tobacco Use, and Possession:**

Substance Abuse is the use of any drugs or alcohol in such a way that it interferes with a person's ability to complete physically, related to the mind and thinking, emotionally, or socially. Drug means any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other possibly dangerous drug as defined by state or federal regulation or law. Please see EWSD Policy C2 Alcohol and Drugs and EWSD B7: Tobacco Possession for more information.

EWSD school administration will respond to violations of the Alcohol and Drug Policy through a variety of methods such as counseling, restorative practices, and suspension when needed. Parents/guardians will be notified, and referrals to the school's Student Assistance Program and/or School Counseling program will be completed. If a student is out of school as a result of an Alcohol, Tobacco, or Drug violation, students are expected to be responsible for all school-related tasks. It is the student's responsibility to contact their teachers and make appropriate plans for completion of assignments; students are encouraged to use the school website and/or email system. For continued violations of the policy, disciplinary action, up to and including long-term suspension, will be recommended to the EWSD superintendent.

In addition to the EWSD policy on the Possession and Use of Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Possession, the following applies when a student is found in violation of these policies:

- Possible suspension
- Notice of parents/guardians
- Referral to appropriate school services

Participants in athletics and co-curricular activities will face added consequences as organized and listed in the school's athletic eligibility rules. They will be referred to the athletic director and/or activity advisor or coach.

**Discipline Procedures for Alcohol, Tobacco, Drug Sale, and/or Distribution:** The following procedures will apply when a student is found selling and/or distributing alcohol, tobacco or other drugs on school property or at school-sponsored activities and will build up during the whole school career of the student. School property includes all school buildings, athletic fields, and parking areas. School-sponsored activities include all athletic and co- and extracurricular activities and events, without any concern about location.

Participants in athletics and co-curricular activities will face added consequences as organized and listed in the school's athletic eligibility rules. They will be referred to the athletic director and/or activity advisor or coach.

**First Offense**

- Up to a ten-day suspension from school.
- Parent/guardian and possible law enforcement notice. The principal may recommend long-term suspension to the School Board.
- Referral to appropriate school services.

**Second Offense**

- Five to ten-day suspension from school.
- Parent/guardian and possible law enforcement notice. The principal may recommend long-term suspension to the School Board.
- Referral to appropriate school services.

**Third Offense**

- Suspension and recommendation for long-term suspension
- Student will be suspended or placed in an alternative educational setting until the School Board makes a decision
- Possible notification of law enforcement
- Parent/guardian meeting required
- Referral to appropriate school services

**CTE Program Specific Drug Testing Procedures:** If there is reasonable belief that a student is under the influence of or in possession of drug or substance related items, the student will immediately be sent to the administrative office (nurse's office if it appears to be a medical issue). In addition to any disciplinary results, the following will be followed:

The day the student is referred to an administrator, they to provide a urine sample for drug testing at a clinic used by the school for this purpose. Until results are received, the student may not use tools or equipment, or be placed in positions in which injury to self or others may happen. While some programs rely more on the use of possibly dangerous tools and equipment during instruction, the possibility exists in all programs and many courses. The decision to keep out students from possibly dangerous classroom/lab activities will be made by an administrator.

In all school programs, a student will not be placed on a paid or unpaid work experience, and will not be recommended for employment until/unless drug testing results are negative.

If testing results are positive, contaminated, or watered down, the student must agree to stop use of drugs and submit to added drug testing to document the ending of drug use until a negative drug screen is received.

Drug testing results must be negative and remain negative for the student to continue in the program. Added random drug testing may be needed.

A second positive, contaminated, or watered down drug screen will result in a meeting with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) to review program placement.

Refusal to agree to drug testing will result in removal from the program.

**Discipline Procedures for CTE:** The following procedures will apply when a student is found selling and/or distributing alcohol or other drugs on school property or at school-sponsored activities, and will build up during the whole school career of the student. School property includes all school buildings, athletic fields, and parking areas. School-sponsored activities include all athletic and co- and extracurricular activities (and events, without any concern about location).

#### **First Offense**

- 10-day suspension from school
- Parent/guardian/law enforcement notice. The principal may recommend long-term suspension to the School Board.
- If the student returns to school, all policies relating to drug use and/or possession First Offense also apply.

#### **Second Offense**

Suspension and recommendation for long-term suspension. The student will be suspended or placed in another choice educational setting until the School Board makes a decision on long-term suspension, Police notice; Parent/guardian meeting.

If the student returns to school, all drug use and/or possession Second Offense procedures apply.

Participants in athletics and co-curricular activities will face added consequences as organized and listed in the school's athletic eligibility rules, and will be referred to the athletic director and/or activity advisor or coach.

#### **B. Weapons:**

- [C5: Weapons and Firearms](#)

**C. Assault/Fighting:** Assaulting and threatening behavior, including fighting or physical behavior, of any type on school grounds or at any school function, having nothing to do with location, will not be tolerated.

**Consequences:** Any student found in a school building, on school property, or at a school-sanctioned activity engaging in assault, threatening behavior, or physical behavior of any type will start with restorative justice (if both parties are willing) and/or discipline with established school policy and procedure. The matter will be referred to the police as necessary.

**Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to demonstrate integrity by submitting their own work appropriately, referring to the ideas of others. Students are also expected to take care that their behavior in testing situations is open and honest, and that no help is given to other students in testing. Students must use only approved aids in classroom, lab, testing, and performance situations. Failure to maintain Academic Honesty includes actions such as cheating, violation of copyright protection, willful stealing work from someone else and telling people it's their own, or misleading in any way of one's work.

**Definitions:** "Cheating" is defined as using someone else's work as your own, violating the conditions of the assignment, giving another student questions or answers from a test already taken, or speaking or using electronic messaging with someone during a test or quiz.

"Plagiarism" is defined as the presentation of another's work - the ideas, arguments, facts, or language - as one's own work. Not recognizing quotations of another's sentences, phrases, or keywords is stealing work from someone else and telling people it's your own. Not recognizing paraphrasing of someone else's ideas or arguments is stealing work from someone else and telling people it's your own. Using papers (in whole or in part) from the internet as one's own work is stealing work from someone else and telling people it's your own.

**Consequences:** Responses to cheating/plagiarism will be age appropriate and managed in the same way based on a student's individual facts or conditions. A first offense may result in the student needing to redo the assignment or complete an equal assignment with notice to teachers and parents/guardians. A meeting (and/or a restorative meeting ) may be held involving the student, parents/guardians, teacher, school counselor, and appropriate school administrator. Students may be needed to work with added support for academic completion.

Later offenses may result in a remedial option, a zero for the assignment or loss of credit for the class in which the offense(s) happens, and/or possible retention. If the student loses credit, the appropriate school administrator will meet with the student and parent/guardian to inform the parties of the loss of credit, to review its effect on the student's school performance, and to uphold the school's academic honesty expectations.

### **CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Please refer to the athletic eligibility rules at your student's school for detailed information on rules having to do with co-curricular activity participation.

### **CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT**

- Learn more by visiting our [Effective Instruction page online](#)

### **DUAL ENROLLMENT**

Vermont's Flexible Pathways Act (Act 77) provides high school students who are Vermont state residents the opportunity to use two college course vouchers during their junior or senior years in high school. Students may apply for a voucher for the semester they wish to enroll in a dual

enrollment course. The voucher covers the cost of tuition for a course of up to four credits at any participating Vermont college. The voucher does NOT cover the cost of materials, textbooks, or transportation. Dual enrollment courses provide both high school and college credit when successfully completed. Interested students should meet with their school counselor. For more information, [click here](#).

**Early College:** Early College is a full-year other choice to the senior year of high school. Students take courses in college, completing their senior year of high school and their first year of college at the same time, tuition-free. For more information please contact your EHS School Counselor and [visit this website](#). You can find information about one example of a science and technology-focused [Early College program here](#).

### **EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (EST/504/IDEA)**

Educational support appropriate to the needs of individual students is available to support a variety of learning styles. It is EWSD policy to obey state and federal laws concerning Act 117, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Special Education.

Act 117 requires all schools to maintain a complete and thorough system of educational support and services resulting, to the greatest extent possible, in all students succeeding in the general classroom.

Our schools will make sure a range of effective educational supports, interventions, and services will be available to all students. This includes special education services for those children who meet the eligibility criteria established by the rules and regulations of Vermont. A parent/guardian with concerns about their child's academic development should talk to the student's teacher to gain access to educational support and services.

For more information on related policies, please refer to [www.ewsd.org](http://www.ewsd.org), or contact your building principal, or the Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Erin Maguire or Director of Social and Emotional Learning and Wellness, Dylan McNamara, at 802-878-8168.

**Educational Support Teams (EST):** EST is in place to review the concerns and needs of students in order to support their success. There are different levels of educational support and service available for students. Should a parent/guardian have a concern related to a student's academic performance or behavior, they should contact the student's classroom teacher. Parent/guardian concerns may be referred to the EST. Teachers may refer students to the EST also. EST meetings allow teachers to work in a cooperative way to meet the needs of students and to establish follow-up procedures.

### **Locating, Identifying, and Evaluation of Students: CHILD FIND**

The Essex Westford School District follows the expectations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to locate, identify, and evaluate children and students who have disabilities.

EWSD does this in many ways, including making referrals for evaluation through testing, completing data analysis activities, and thinking about student performance across all schools.

We also accept referrals from many different community health partners, preschools, doctors for children, mental health providers, family members, and other people who may believe they are aware of a child with a disability who has yet to be identified.

**Children Birth -3 Years Old:** EWSD locates, identifies, and evaluates young children through our partnership with Children's Integrated Services. Chittenden County school districts and other providers and partners refer young children who are showing signs of concern to Children's Integrated Services. Children's Integrated Services Partners in Chittenden County include Child Care Resource, Howard Center, Lund Family Center, School districts, Vermont Department of Health, Vermont Family Network, and Visiting Nurses.

For more information and referrals to any of the services above, please contact the Chittenden County Children's Integrated Services Coordinator at 860-4426.

**Prekindergarten:** EWSD provides free testing so decisions can be made and evaluations for children through our early childhood special educators, where a referral is received and evaluation is decided to be needed. We look for and receive referrals from some referral sources, including families, doctors for children, private pre-kindergarten providers, our own prekindergarten classroom teachers, and others who come into contact with prekindergarten children. EWSD also reviews data submitted by PreK providers under Act 166 as we think about children in need of evaluation.

**Kindergarten-Age 22:** All EST teams in our schools review data and think about the needs of students for purposes of referral for both 504 and Special Education evaluations. Principal discussions with teachers, parent-teacher meetings, and teacher-team meetings are other meeting structures where teachers and others find and identify students where there is a concern of disability. There is a clear process in place across our schools to think about referrals from parents and other outside sources to make sure each concern is appropriately thought about.

**Resources:** People who have further questions related to special education or 504 can find further information here:

- [Notice of Procedural Safeguards: Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities parental rights and other useful things here](#)
- [Right of Parents of Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Vermont Schools](#)

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

[Learn more about school closings, safety drills, and threat assessment procedures.](#)

## **FIELD TRIPS**

School trips are an extension of educational programs, and all school rules and policies apply. Before a trip, parents/guardians will get a written notice containing all the important details necessary for a successful experience. Parent/guardian permission is needed for a student to participate in a school trip. There will be no cost to students for field trips.

Walking trips and other nearby activities are carefully thought about and a regular part of the school program.

Field trips ordered by the District curriculum and approved by the building principal will be completely paid for by the District.

## **GUARDIANSHIP AND PARENTAL RIGHTS**

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to provide paperwork that supports the legal decisions that affect custody or parental rights connected to a student. If there are any changes in family or custody status that affect access to a student, student records, or residency, please tell the school immediately.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

[Learn more about the following:](#)

- Annual Health Checkups and Updates
- When to Stay Home from School
- Getting Sick or Hurt at School
- Injuries and Concussions (Head Injuries)
- Prescription/Non-Prescription Medicine
- After-School Activities and Sports
- Chronic Illnesses
- Vaccines (Shots)
- Vaccine Requirements
- Hearing and Vision Tests
- Condoms
- Menstrual Products
- Sunscreen

## **LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS**

At any time during the day, leaving the school grounds without permission from the main office or nurse's office is not allowed for students. Students who leave campus without permission will be listed as off school grounds with an unauthorized absence (commonly referred to as 'skipping'). Parents/guardians will be told, and an administrative response will happen.

For more information on Senior Privileges, please see the additional EHS Handbook.

## **LOCKERS**

Label all personal belongings. Each year, many valuable items with no labels go unclaimed. If not claimed within a reasonable period of time, these items - without any concern about value - are donated to organizations that help those in need.

## **MULTILINGUAL LEARNER PROGRAM: TRANSLATION & STUDENTS WITH EL SERVICE PLANS**

The Essex Westford School District is committed to supporting the academic and social needs of all [Multilingual Learners](#) attending our schools and ensuring that Multilingual Learners can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs. A Multilingual Learner is a student with a home language other than English (LOTE). *Multilingual Learner* is an asset-based term used now by the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) and the WIDA Consortium. Other terms historically used to describe Multilingual Learners and the programs that support them are the following: English as a Second Language (ESL), Limited English Proficiency (LEP), English Language Learner (ELL), English Learner (EL) and English Language Program (ELP). In the EWSD, we identify and screen all multilingual students, hire highly-qualified certified EL teachers, maintain service plans, provide access to the same curriculum and opportunities as monolingual students, provide meaningful communication to families in a language they understand, and maintain the district Lau Plan.

At the time of registration, parents/guardians of each new student will complete the state required VT Primary/ Home Language Survey. If any other language is indicated on the survey, the EL teacher assigned to that school is notified and provided with a copy of the survey. The EL teacher assigned to the student's school will review the survey, conduct any necessary interviews and/or testing, and complete the EWSD Screening Form for Multilingual Learner Student Identification.

Multilingual Learners are assessed by a qualified EL (English Language) teacher using the WIDA Screener and the ACCESS test, as well as other measures. All students who are Multilingual Learners must be identified and screened in a timely, valid, and reliable manner. Some learners will require EL (English Language) services to acquire English as a second language, but all Multilingual Learners are encouraged to continue to develop skills in their primary language as they learn English. We are responsible for monitoring and evaluating Multilingual Learner progress in English and academics, exiting students from EL programs when they are proficient in English, and monitoring those exited students. Students are determined to be eligible for EL (English Language) Services through a screening and identification process outlined by specific exit and entry requirements established by the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE).

If it is determined that a Multilingual Learner requires EL Services, the EL teacher will develop an EL Student Service Plan, which outlines the nature and frequency of EL services provided to the student that year. The service plan will be revisited throughout the year and may be revised to meet the changing needs of the student. Parents/guardians will receive notification of assessment results and status determination, as well as a copy of the EL Service Plan (if applicable). Parents/Guardians will be given an opportunity to ask questions or share their

concerns. Based on the screening and identification process, Multilingual Learners identified as requiring an EL Service Plan fall into one of three categories:

**Current EL (English Learner)** – A Multilingual Learner who is qualified and is receiving services to learn English.

**Monitoring** – A Multilingual Learner who has passed the ACCESS test must be, per Vermont AOE regulations, monitored by a qualified EL teacher for two years prior to fully exiting the program. Students are listed as Monitoring Year 1 (MY1) or Monitoring Year 2 (MY2). During this time, EL teachers will review student academic records assessment results and consult with teachers to ensure that the student's academic progress is not being hindered by language proficiency.

**Exited** – Following two years of monitoring, students who no longer qualify for EL services will exit from the EL program.

Multilingual Learners who have or are suspected of having a disability under IDEA or Section 504 (such as learning, emotional, behavioral, physical) are identified, located, and evaluated in a timely manner, and their language needs are considered in evaluations and services. It is important not to underscreen or over-identify Multilingual Learners for special education. A translator, interpreter, or Multilingual Liaison should be included in the screening process to ensure language acquisition is not confused with disability.

We are also responsible for ensuring that Multilingual Learners have access to the same curriculum and experiences as their peers outside of the Multilingual Learner Program. Multilingual Learners receiving EL services should have full access to the core curriculum while using appropriate language assistance strategies in the core instruction so that they can participate meaningfully as they acquire English as a second language. Multilingual Learners must have equal opportunities to participate meaningfully in curricular and extracurricular activities. We are also required to continue to meet the needs of multilingual students when families opt them out of EL services.

All parents and guardians of Multilingual Learners, including non-native speakers, are entitled to meaningful communication in a language they can understand. The Essex Westford School District provides interpretation and translation services for families in order to support access to their child's educational program. These services include parent meetings, special education meetings, hearings for children not attending school, open house events, field trip permission forms, report cards/progress reports, school events, and documents. Translation services done by the school district are limited only to school-related events and materials.

Translators and multilingual liaisons can provide both oral and written translations depending on the job and the needs of the family so that families of Multilingual Learners have fair access to their child's education. We have on-call translators/interpreters for all students and families who need interpretation, as well as Multilingual Liaisons for Nepali, Maay Maay, Somali, and

Arabic. All translators, interpreters, and liaisons sign a Translator Confidentiality Agreement, which ensures that student and family information is kept in strict confidence.

EL teachers of Multilingual Learners must, at a minimum, possess a valid Vermont teacher's license, which includes an English as a Second Language endorsement. EL teachers are responsible for using data from WIDA screeners, ACCESS tests, and teacher team input to create and maintain the service plans for Multilingual Learners at their school who are currently in the Multilingual Learner Program. EL teachers are required to focus on meeting the needs of all students in the program in two areas: becoming proficient in the English language and adjusting to the school and community culture.

For more information about the EWSD Multilingual Program, the EWSD Lau Plan, or Translation Services, please see the [EWSD Multilingual Program webpage](#).

### **PARKING**

To more effectively manage our District-wide parking, we introduced a new permit system in the fall of 2021 that matches up with industry standards. During regular school hours, students will not be allowed to park on school grounds without a parking permit and within designated areas.

In the past, for staff, parking permits were only needed on the EHS/CTE campus. It is important to expand the permitting District-wide due to such factors as safety in emergency situations, staff members working in many locations, and grade-level PLCs gathering at different schools. Given the historical challenges of parking on our campus and our surrounding community, the plans behind this are focused on the safety of our students, staff, and visitors. This permitting process will help the District develop a long-term strategic plan to address parking district-wide, create a computer file full of information that can be accessed in case of an emergency when cars may need to be moved, and also create a system that promises a parking spot for those with a permit.

If you have any questions, please contact the [EWSD Safety Office](#) at 857-7485 or view our [Parking & Building Access page](#) online.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

The EWSD and its member schools are not responsible for lost/stolen property. Should an item be missing, students are encouraged to check the school's lost and found. Each school has a container for lost and found items where students and parents/guardians can check for lost items. Items lost on school buses are sent to each school. Lost money and unique or expensive items such as jewelry, eyeglasses, and watches are held by office staff or safety officer.

### **POSTERS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND/OR DISPLAYS**

Posters, announcements, and/or displays may be posted in the school for school-related events with school administrative permission. Distribution of non-school-related materials is prohibited.

At the principal's discretion, announcements for non-school events for students may be posted for a set amount of time in selected areas of the school. At the principal's discretion, books for non-school-related events may be kept at the school office (or selected area) for students/parents/guardians to access.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Please visit the EWSD website for the [latest updates on progress reports](#).

### **RESPONDING TO CONCERNS**

The EWSD and its schools encourage open communications. If a concern arises, students and parents/guardians are encouraged to first communicate directly with the staff member involved. Should a resolution not happen, or prove to be unsatisfactory, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the principal to discuss the concern. If the concern is unable to be settled at the school level, parents/guardians should contact the superintendent's office.

### **SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS**

All people are welcome to attend School Board meetings. A schedule of meetings can be found at [www.ewsd.org/schoolboard](http://www.ewsd.org/schoolboard). School Board agendas are posted in schools, libraries, city-based offices, and the EWSD District offices. Minutes, agendas, and much more can be found on the School Boards' website. Regular meetings are also filmed (and posted online) by the Media Factory.

### **SCHOOL CHOICE**

Learn more about [school choice at the high school level](#) as well as the EWSD's [K-8 voluntary school reassignment policy](#).

### **SCHOOL DRESS**

School dress is intended to reflect our commitment to promoting a positive, comfortable learning environment for all, as well as our continued effort to help prepare students for the workforce beyond school. Students are to arrive at school or related events dressed for the activity and weather with clothing that is practical for the learning environment. Clothing Items with obscene or offensive terms, messages of hatred, violence, unfair treatment of others, or are related to the use of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco are not permitted. Parents/guardians are responsible for making sure their student(s) meet these expectations. If you have any questions related to this issue, please talk with the building principal.

**CTE School Dress Standard:** CTE students are expected to dress appropriately for professional work conditions. Many programs require professional clothing or uniforms.

## **SCHOOL TEXTS AND PROPERTY/EQUIPMENT**

Students are responsible for items assigned to them (including Chromebooks) and are responsible for those items. Damage or destruction of school property will result in an administrative response and repayment to the District.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

School authorities may search a student, student lockers, or bookbags. Also, all cars parked in school lots may be subject to search by school officials. They may take control of any illegal, unauthorized, or crime-related materials discovered in the search. Police may be told based on the decision of the administration. This applies to any school-related or school-sponsored event, such as school dances and field trips. Examples of unauthorized materials include, but are not limited to: lighters, matches, tobacco products, drugs (illegal and prescription), alcohol, and any type of weapon. For more information concerning Search and Seizure, refer to EWSD Policy C21.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Online behavior is to reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration used face-to-face. Any speech that is believed inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online. This includes, but is not limited to: cursing, racist, sexist, or discriminatory statements, and personal attacks. For example, using individual Facebook accounts to post personal complaints or sharing individual judgments about people or schools can be disruptive to the educational process and the partnership we are trying to create between schools and families.

Social media posts that happen outside the school building or during the school day and become an issue in school may be looked at by the administration and/or the police. These guidelines are pursuant to the prevention of harassment, hazing, and bullying policy and those of the responsible computer, network, and internet use policy.

## **TECHNOLOGY USAGE**

Information about student data privacy, artificial intelligence, digital learning, and more [can be found on our Technology page online](#).

## **TELEPHONES**

If you wish to send a message to a student or teacher during the school day, please call the school's main number. Voice mail messages may be left for individual teachers. There are phones available for student use. Students need permission from their teacher to access these phones.

## **TITLE I PROGRAMS**

Title I is a federally funded program designed to make sure that all children have an opportunity to access a high quality education. The goal of this federal program is to close the achievement gap for all students.

A school's eligibility for Title I funding each year is determined by its average poverty rate, which is based on the number of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Eligibility for Title I services is decided based on academic performance and the eligibility for intervention services.

For more information about Title I programs and related Title I policies, please visit the [EWSD Title I web page](#).

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Bus routes, transportation policies and procedures, and behavior protocols can be [found online on the EWSD Transportation webpage](#).

## **TRUANCY**

Staying in school is the first step to a good education. A student will be declared truant if that student was not present at school for more than 20 days during the course of the year.

Per state law (Title 16 VSA 1126 & 1127), school interventions will happen after a student misses 10, 15, 20 days. Ongoing truancy may lead to sworn statements being submitted to the appropriate state agencies and the Office of the State Attorney General. EWSD Director of Facilities and District Safety Garry Scott, serves as the District's Truancy Officer.

## **VANDALISM**

Students who intentionally damage or destroy school District property and the property of its agents may be held responsible for payment of damages. Criminal charges may also apply. If a student demonstrates repeated negligence with school District property, they will also be held responsible for payment of damages.

### **Guidelines and Procedures:**

- Any teacher, employee, student, or public member in a school who witnesses damage done on purpose will attempt to identify those responsible for the damage and will report to the principal immediately.
- In case of damage considered significant by the principal, the principal will advise the superintendent.
- The principal will get an estimate of the damage and report it in writing to the superintendent.
- Upon receiving a report of the damage, the school district will do any or all of the following:
  - Recover damages from parents/guardians or from the student (in the case of an independent student);
  - File charges if considered necessary by administration

In the case of damage considered significant by the principal, the student may work on restorative justice practices, be suspended, and/or be recommended for long-term suspension.

## **VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS ON CAMPUS**

Volunteers play an important role and are an integral part of our schools. We welcome and encourage volunteer involvement at events and other school happenings. There are many opportunities to assist our schools. Learn more by visiting the [Volunteering page online](#).

All volunteers and visitors are expected to abide by all applicable EWSD policies and procedures, federal and state laws and regulations, and other administrative rules while providing service within our schools.

Below is an outline of some of the District safety and confidentiality standards and rules applicable to both volunteers and visitors:

1. Plan your visit in advance by contacting your student's teacher or administration so instruction is not disrupted
2. Please, enter through the main office doors, sign in, and wear a visitor pass while you are in the school or Central Office
3. Any information about a student observed during a visit cannot be shared
4. If you are a vendor on campus, you are required to wear a pass showing that you are a visitor

Schools frequently host many visitors, parent/guardian volunteers, and helpers during the school year. Individuals visiting, and/or volunteering, in our schools have an obligation to protect the confidentiality of students. This is a protection of the student's civil rights, and we ask visitors to pay special attention to this very important issue. We encourage you to take the opportunity to visit our schools and see the exciting, interesting things your student is doing.

Individuals or groups may be denied access to school grounds if the principal or designee determines the individual is acting, or can reasonably be anticipated to act, in a manner that disrupts normal educational functions. Affiliations with the school may include, but are not limited to: students, faculty, other District employees, and vendors. The principal or designee may refuse to allow persons having no legitimate business to enter property under the District's control, and may contact law enforcement to remove unauthorized persons upon their refusal to leave peaceably upon request. Loitering or trespassing on school grounds/school buildings is prohibited.

**Guest Students:** Students wishing to bring a guest student to school must obtain prior approval from the main office.

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## **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **ANIMAL DISSECTION**

In compliance with 16 VSA, §912 “Pupil Right to Refusal: Animal Dissection Law,” any EWSD student has the right to be excused from participating in any lesson, exercise, or assessment requiring the student to dissect, vivisect, or otherwise harm or destroy an animal or any part of an animal to observe any of these activities, as part of a course or instruction. Any EWSD student and parent/guardian may exercise this right by completing the Opt-Out Form at the school’s main office. EWSD schools will provide alternative education methods for those students who choose to opt out of these activities so they may learn and be assessed upon the curriculum material. The Opt-Out Form must be completed within two weeks from the first day of school (or within the first two weeks of enrollment), or the student will be deemed to have opted-in to participation in course requirements.

**Alternative Education Method:** A student who is excused under this policy shall be provided with alternative methods through which they can learn and be assessed on material required by the course. The alternative methods shall be developed by the teacher of the course in consultation with the principal, if necessary.

**Discrimination:** No student shall be discriminated against based on their decision to exercise the right to be excused afforded by this policy.

#### **ASBESTOS HAZARD EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT (AHERA)**

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires written notice be given to workers and building occupants, or their legal guardians, that all schools have Management Plans for the safe control and maintenance of asbestos-containing materials found in their buildings. These Management Plans are available and accessible to the public at the main office of each school facility. The Assistant Director of Mechanical Systems is the EWSD-designated person for AHERA requirements. This notification is required per 40 CFR §763.93(g)(4).

#### **EQUAL ACCESS AND PUBLIC ACCESS**

EWSD and its member Districts will not discriminate against any person or group on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender identity, marital status, or any other legally protected status under federal or state law. Appropriate measures will be taken within the context of Vermont’s Public Accommodation Act, 9 V.S.A. 4500 et seq., Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guidelines and regulations to ensure such compliance.

The Board, in compliance with [Title VI](#), [Title IX](#), and [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act](#), affirms:

- The right of all students to equal treatment (including aid, benefits, services, and application of rules and regulations) without regard to gender.
- The right of every student to access all courses with regard to gender.

- That no student will be excluded on the basis of gender from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in Health and Physical Education programs.
- That no student will be excluded on the basis of gender from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in athletics, intramural, or co-curricular activities.
- That no student shall be excluded on the basis of gender from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in vocational programs and activities.
- The rights of all students to equal treatment without regard to marital or parental status.
- The right of every student to counseling without regard to gender and with non-discriminatory counseling instruments/materials.

**Grievance Procedure:** In the event a student, parent/guardian, or employee believes there is a basis for a grievance regarding equal educational opportunities, that person shall follow the procedures outlined below:

**Step 1:** The person who believes there is a basis for a grievance regarding equal educational opportunities will present the alleged grievance in writing on a standard form supplied by the EWSD office to the building principal or immediate supervisor within ten (10) workdays following the time when the aggrieved reasonably should have gained knowledge of its occurrence. The principal or immediate supervisor will attempt to resolve the grievance, and will respond within five (5) work days following receipt of the completed form.

**Step 2:** If the action of Step 1 fails to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the affected party, the aggrieved will, within five (5) workdays, submit such grievance in writing to the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee will reply in writing within five (5) workdays after the initial presentation of the grievance.

**Step 3:** If the action of Step 2 fails to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the aggrieved party, the aggrieved party will, within five (5) workdays after receiving the written reply from the Superintendent or designee, submit such grievance to the member District School Board for resolution. The member District School Board will review the grievance and hold a hearing, if necessary, within twenty (20) workdays after receipt of the Step 2 response. The member District School Board will reply to the grievance in writing within five (5) workdays thereafter, and the decision of the School Board will be final. Reprisals taken by the member District School Board or any of its members as a result of a grievance decision will be grievable.

**Step 4:** The aggrieved party has the right to bypass the grievance procedure and make the complaint directly with federal officials. However, it is suggested the aggrieved parties follow the procedure as outlined above. If the aggrieved party follows the grievance procedure and the grievance is not resolved, the party may then direct their complaint to the Office of Civil Rights or Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) NOTICE**

The EWSD policy [C1. Student Records](#) refers to the maintenance of and access to certain educational records. FERPA affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. EWSD will assume that either parent has the right to inspect, review, and release the student's records unless evidence is provided demonstrating there is a legally binding instrument or court order providing the basis for specifically excluding a parent from such areas.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception permitting disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing their tasks. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school District in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. The school will also release student records without prior consent or authorization under certain other exceptions, including: government officials and authorities as required by law, in health and safety emergencies, in connection with the application and receipt of financial aid, and (if required by state law) to accrediting organizations carrying out their official functions and to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena after having made a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena. Student information is provided to the State of Vermont concerning certain incidences of discipline and student behavior, including: bullying, harassment, physical restraint, suspension, and long-term suspension.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office administering FERPA is Family Policy Compliance Office Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20202-4605.
- The District has determined that student directory information is not harmful or an invasion of privacy, and therefore will release this information without first obtaining parent consent or prior authorization. The purpose of releasing such information is to enable the District to publish newsletters, yearbooks, directories, and similar publications, and to release information to media outlets concerning student academic and athletic achievements. The following directory information may be released or

posted online (via the District website or EWSD social media accounts), or used in District publications, as stated above, without obtaining parental/guardian consent: student's name, parent's/guardian's names, address, telephone number, email address, date and place of birth, grade level, field of study, enrollment status (e.g. full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports including audiovisual or photographic records of the openly visible activities thereof (e.g. artistic performances, sporting contests, assemblies, service projects, awards ceremonies, etc.), weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, honors and awards received, most recent previous school attended and photographs (including video) of regular school activities that do not disclose specific academic information about the student and/or would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy.

- If a parent/guardian, person acting as a student's parent/guardian, or the student (if 18 or older) does not want the District to release the directory information listed below, they must notify the District in writing within 10 days of receiving this document that they don't want directory information released. A non-disclosure form is part of each student's Biographical Verification Form (BVD) at the beginning of the school year. If no written request is received in a timely manner, the school will disclose directory information without prior consent. Military recruiters and institutions of higher education are entitled under federal law to a list of names, addresses, and telephone numbers of high school students unless parents/guardians object to such release. If you parents/guardians notify the school principal in writing of their wish to not release their student's name, address and telephone number to recruiters and institutions of higher education, the school will honor the request at that time.
- Lists of student names and other directory information will not be made available except to school-related organizations, such as the PTO, at the discretion of the principal. Lists of such directory information are also provided to military recruiters and institutions of higher education.

### **HOMELESSNESS / STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

Students and families can become homeless for a number of reasons. The U.S. Department of Education defines homeless youth as youth who "lack a fixed, regular, and nighttime residence" or an "individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is a) a supervised or publicly operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations; b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill; or c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings."

Students and families experiencing homelessness can find support and have their questions answered by calling the EWSD McKinney-Vento/Homelessness Liaison, Tamara Eklof, at 802-878-8168 or by contacting the principal of the school.

Students experiencing homelessness are eligible for free and reduced lunch, academic intervention (if needed) and support with school supplies or other needs associated with school participation.

Students have the ability to maintain enrollment in the school of attendance during their period of homelessness as outlined in federal law. Students can also enroll in the school District where they are staying during their period of homelessness. The Homelessness Liaison will review each case, consider the student's needs, discuss the need for transportation to and from school in order to maintain attendance and school participation.

Homelessness is not a barrier to school attendance and we have support in place to help students and families who are experiencing this circumstance. We are here to help!

### **LOCATING, IDENTIFYING AND EVALUATION OF STUDENTS: CHILD FIND**

**Formal Child Find Notice:** Any individuals from birth through age 21 with disabilities currently residing within Essex Junction, Essex Town, or Westford, and who are in need of special education and related services need to be identified, located, and evaluated by the Essex Westford School District (EWSD). This includes children: not enrolled in school, attending private or independent schools located within the aforementioned towns, enrolled in home study programs, suspected of having a disability despite advancing from grade to grade, who are highly mobile (such as migrant children), and who are homeless or in the custody of the state. Any person with information about any disabled person fitting these descriptions should contact EWSD.

In accordance with EWSD's policies and with 34 CFR Part 99 (the Family Education Rights Privacy Act of 1974), this public notice informs all parents within their jurisdictions about how information is maintained when it is collected during identification, location, and evaluation of all people with disabilities.

- Personally identifiable information will be protected by each school
- Personally identifiable information about people eligible, referred, or considered for special education services is maintained
- Parents have the right to know what types of information have been designated as directory information (i.e. contained in a student's education record and is not generally considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed). This information includes the student's name (unless otherwise requested), address, phone number, date/place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially-recognized activities/sports, weight/height, membership in athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees/awards received, and previous school attended
- Parents have the right to know the types and locations of educational records kept by the school and the titles and addresses of officials responsible for the records
- A list of the names and positions of employees within EWSD who have access to personally identifiable information shall be available for public inspection

- If anyone other than an authorized EWSD employee looks at the educational record of a child, that person shall so indicate by signing her/his name, date, and purpose for reviewing the record on a form to become part of the education record
- Parental permission will be obtained prior to disclosing confidential information to anyone who is not an authorized employee of EWSD
- Information relevant to a child's specific disability (such as: medical information, intelligence test results, social/developmental history, comprehensive evaluation report, and the individualized education program) will be part of the education record
- Personally identifiable information will be gathered from screenings, qualified diagnostic centers, and other sources, as deemed necessary, to complete a comprehensive evaluation
- Parents, or eligible students, will be able to access personally identifiable information and inspect and review their education records no later than 45 days after the request is made
- Parents have the right to a response to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the education records
- Parents may obtain a copy of the education record without a fee for copying, if a fee will be a financial burden and/or will prevent them from obtaining the record
- Parents have the right to request the education record be amended. The school district will decide whether to amend the record within a reasonable time of the request. If the district refuses to amend the record, it shall inform the parent and advise the parent of the right to a hearing. If, as a result of the hearing, it is found that the education record must be amended, the school district will amend the record and inform the parent in writing. If, as a result of the hearing, it is found the disputed information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy right of the child, the school will inform the parent of her/his right to place in the education record a written statement commenting on the information or stating any reasons for disagreeing with the results of the hearing. This written statement will become part of the education record and will always be included whenever the contents of the education record is properly viewed or requested
- Parents have the right to a hearing to challenge the education records of their child
- Parents will be notified prior to the school district's destruction of personally identifiable information about their child
- The parent has the authority to inspect and review records relating to her/his child unless EWSD has been advised that the parent does not have the authority under applicable state law governing matters such as guardianship, separation, and divorce
- Parents have the right to file a complaint with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by EWSD to comply with this policy NOTE: If there are parents within the above-mentioned towns who need this information interpreted, please notify EWSD.

Essex Westford School District contact:  
Directors of Student Support Services

76 Pearl Street, Suite #201, Essex Junction, Vermont 05452  
Phone: 802-878-8168

### **MANDATORY REPORTING**

We are committed to the safety and welfare of each student under our care. Under State law and EWSD policy, school personnel are mandatory reporters and are required to report suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) within 24 hours. School personnel are mandated to report all suspected cases of abuse or neglect to DCF.

Schools work with Child Protection Teams (which include the school nurse, principal, guidance counselor, classroom teacher, and other designated school personnel). These teams meet routinely to review the safety and well-being of students.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

The EWSD is committed to providing all of its students, employees, families and visitors with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect and are free from discrimination of any kind. EWSD prohibits the unlawful discrimination of students, employees, families and visitors based on their actual or perceived race, age, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability and any other protected class under federal or Vermont law. EWSD shall uphold the requirements of Vermont's Public Accommodations Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972.

Applicants for admission, employment, services and facilities are hereby notified that EWSD does not discriminate on the basis of any person's actual or perceived race, age, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability and any other protected category under federal or Vermont law in admission or access to, or treatment of, or employment in, its programs and activities.

The following person has been designated by EWSD to coordinate efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:

Mark Holodick  
76 Pearl Street, Suite #201  
Essex Junction, VT 05452  
Phone: (802) 857-2002/Fax: (802) 878-5190

### **PRIVACY RIGHTS AND STUDENT SURVEYS**

Surveys and evaluations can be a valuable resource for schools and communities in determining student needs for educational services. Surveys and evaluations are often essential to help schools determine where to focus instruction and resources to better help our students. EWSD

schools will notify parents/guardians when a planned survey, analysis or evaluation will be conducted. Parents/guardians have the right to opt their student out of participating in certain surveys, as listed below.

**Right to Opt-Out:** Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt-out of participation in the administration of any survey which reveals information concerning one or more of the following topics. Additionally, no student shall be required, without parental/guardian consent, to take part in a survey, analysis, or evaluation funded by the U.S. Department of Education that reveals:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of a student or student's parents/guardians
- Mental or psychological problems of a student or student's family
- Sexual behavior or attitudes
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom student respondents have close family relationships
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, or members of the clergy
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program for receiving assistance under such program)
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents/guardians

Parents/guardians, or students 18 years or age or older, have the right to "opt-out" of the following activities:

- The collection, disclosure and use of personal information gathered from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information. This does not apply to the collection, disclosure or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational services for, or to students, such as: college or other postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment; book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low cost literary products; curriculum and instructional materials used in schools; tests and assessments; student recognition programs; and the sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related activities.
- The administration of surveys that include the subject areas listed above.
- The administration of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school that is not necessary to protect the immediate health or safety of a student or other students, and otherwise not permitted or required by state law.

**Right to Inspection:** Parents/guardians shall have the right to inspect any survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to a student. Requests for inspection

shall be in writing, and shall be made in sufficient time to allow a response at least two weeks in advance of any survey given. Parents/guardians shall have the right to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum. Tests or academic assessments or evaluations are not instructional materials.

### **RESIDENCY**

Under Vermont law, the school a student attends is determined by where parents/guardians reside. At least one parent/guardian must reside in the District in order for their student(s) to attend school in that District. Verification of residency is required. Misrepresentation of residency is a violation of state law.

Notification is required if residency changes during the school year. Any non-residents are required to pay tuition.

Students and parents who are, or may be experiencing, homelessness should refer to the section on Homelessness in this handbook for assistance and guidance.

### **RESTRAINT/SECLUSION**

It is the practice in EWSD that students not be subjected to inappropriate restraint or seclusion as defined by Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4500. It is the intent of the District to create a positive and safe learning environment, and promote positive behavioral interventions and supports in our schools.

## TRIP SUMMARY

06/18/2025

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### AM EHS Georgia

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| <u>STOP TIME</u> | <u>LOCATION</u> |
|------------------|-----------------|
|------------------|-----------------|

|          |                                            |
|----------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | 7:11 AM <b>Bus Garage</b>                  |
| <b>2</b> | 8:00 AM <b>United Methodist Church</b>     |
| <b>3</b> | 8:05 AM <b>Georgia Library</b>             |
| <b>4</b> | 8:07 AM <b>Georgia Mobil - Maplefields</b> |
| <b>5</b> | 8:30 AM <b>Essex High School(388)</b>      |
| <b>6</b> | 8:38 AM <b>Bus Garage</b>                  |

## TRIP SUMMARY

06/18/2025

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### PM EHS Georgia

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| <u>STOP TIME</u> | <u>LOCATION</u> |
|------------------|-----------------|
|------------------|-----------------|

- |          |                                                 |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>3:15 PM Center for Technology Essex(806)</b> |
| <b>2</b> | <b>3:25 PM Essex High School(388)</b>           |
| <b>3</b> | <b>3:55 PM United Methodist Church</b>          |
| <b>4</b> | <b>4:00 PM Georgia Library</b>                  |
| <b>5</b> | <b>4:02 PM Georgia Mobil - Maplefields</b>      |
| <b>6</b> | <b>4:20 PM Bus Garage</b>                       |

## TRIP SUMMARY

06/18/2025

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### AM EHS-EMS-ADL Islands

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| <u>STOP TIME</u> | <u>LOCATION</u>                               |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1                | 6:00 AM 20 Founders Rd                        |
| 2                | 7:07 AM Dollar General-Alburgh                |
| 3                | 7:16 AM Harborside Store                      |
| 4                | 7:24 AM Savage Point Road, Grand Isle         |
| 5                | 7:30 AM US Route 2 & Point Farm W (S)         |
| 6                | 7:32 AM US Route 2/Faywood                    |
| 7                | 7:35 AM Post Office - Grand Isle 203 US Rte 2 |
| 8                | 7:39 AM Donaldson Road                        |
| 9                | 7:41 AM Breakaway Farm                        |
| 10               | 7:44 AM McKee's/Island Beverage               |
| 11               | 7:47 AM South Hero Town Clerk                 |
| 12               | 8:09 AM Essex High School(388)                |
| 13               | 8:09 AM Center for Technology Essex(806)      |
| 14               | 8:17 AM ADL(9)                                |
| 15               | 8:30 AM Essex Middle School(101)              |

## TRIP SUMMARY

06/18/2025

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### PM EHS-EMS-ADL Islands

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| <u>STOP TIME</u> | <u>LOCATION</u>                               |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1                | 3:25 PM Center for Technology Essex(806)      |
| 2                | 3:25 PM Essex High School(388)                |
| 3                | 3:40 PM Essex Middle School(101)              |
| 4                | 3:55 PM ADL(9)                                |
| 5                | 4:20 PM South Hero Town Clerk                 |
| 6                | 4:25 PM McKee's/Island Beverage               |
| 7                | 4:27 PM Breakaway Farm                        |
| 8                | 4:28 PM Donaldson Road                        |
| 9                | 4:31 PM A&B Market/Emmon's supermarket        |
| 10               | 4:32 PM Post Office - Grand Isle 203 US Rte 2 |
| 11               | 4:34 PM US route 2/Faywood Rd                 |
| 12               | 4:35 PM US Route 2 & Point Farm W (S)         |
| 13               | 4:42 PM Savage Point Road, Grand Isle         |
| 14               | 4:50 PM Harborside Store                      |
| 15               | 5:00 PM Dollar General Alburgh                |
| 16               | 6:00 PM 20 Founders Rd                        |

| Name                          | Duration | # Stops | Distance | Schools          | Start Time | Finish Time |
|-------------------------------|----------|---------|----------|------------------|------------|-------------|
| AM BLUE ADL-EHS NEW           | 50       | 12      | 11.2     | 9, 806, 388      | 07:50 AM   | 08:40 AM    |
| AM BLUE HIA-FLEM NEW          | 52       | 18      | 11.54    | 299, 141         | 06:38 AM   | 07:30 AM    |
| AM GREEN ADL-EHS NEW          | 50       | 13      | 12.74    | 9, 388, 299      | 07:50 AM   | 08:40 AM    |
| AM GREEN HIA-FLEM NEW         | 70       | 25      | 13.59    | 141, 299         | 06:20 AM   | 07:30 AM    |
| AM RED ADL-EHS NEW            | 65       | 14      | 13.55    | 299, 388, 9      | 07:35 AM   | 08:40 AM    |
| AM RED HIA-FLEM NEW           | 65       | 14      | 11.48    | 299, 141         | 06:30 AM   | 07:35 AM    |
| AM_02_EES/FMS                 | 63       | 21      | 19.27    | 99, 113          | 06:20 AM   | 07:23 AM    |
| AM_02_EMS/EHS                 | 74       | 21      | 27.32    | 388, 101         | 07:25 AM   | 08:39 AM    |
| AM_03_EES/FMS                 | 42       | 23      | 8.74     | 113, 99          | 06:46 AM   | 07:28 AM    |
| AM_03_EMS/EHS                 | 65       | 23      | 18.05    | 806, 388, 101    | 07:32 AM   | 08:37 AM    |
| AM_04_EES/FMS                 | 53       | 32      | 16.08    | 113, 99          | 06:35 AM   | 07:28 AM    |
| AM_04_EMS/EHS                 | 58       | 28      | 21.37    | 806, 388, 101    | 07:35 AM   | 08:33 AM    |
| AM_05_EES/FMS                 | 25       | 10      | 5.11     | 113, 99          | 07:05 AM   | 07:30 AM    |
| AM_05_EMS/EHS                 | 76       | 17      | 21.5     | 101, 113, 388    | 07:35 AM   | 08:51 AM    |
| AM_06_EES/FMS                 | 51       | 24      | 13.71    | 113, 99          | 06:35 AM   | 07:26 AM    |
| AM_06_EMS/EHS                 | 37       | 23      | 21.79    | 388, 101         | 07:39 AM   | 08:16 AM    |
| AM_08_EES/FMS                 | 55       | 20      | 15.14    | 113, 99          | 06:38 AM   | 07:33 AM    |
| AM_08_EMS/EHS                 | 75       | 19      | 19.21    | 388, 101         | 07:30 AM   | 08:45 AM    |
| AM_09_EES/FMS                 | 51       | 27      | 17.07    | 113, 99          | 06:30 AM   | 07:21 AM    |
| AM_09_EMS/EHS                 | 68       | 26      | 26.46    | 388, 101         | 07:25 AM   | 08:33 AM    |
| AM_10_EES/FMS                 | 66       | 32      | 18.56    | 113, 99          | 06:15 AM   | 07:21 AM    |
| AM_10_EHS/EMS                 | 60       | 27      | 20.91    | 101, 388         | 07:34 AM   | 08:34 AM    |
| AM_12_EES/FMS                 | 46       | 21      | 15.54    | 113, 99          | 06:37 AM   | 07:23 AM    |
| AM_12_EMS/EHS                 | 74       | 26      | 22.26    | 388, 101         | 07:25 AM   | 08:39 AM    |
| AM_16_EES/FMS                 | 83       | 23      | 17.39    | 113, 99          | 06:00 AM   | 07:23 AM    |
| AM_16_EMS/EHS                 | 60       | 24      | 28.77    | 388, 101         | 07:30 AM   | 08:30 AM    |
| AM_K-12_Westford_1 ELEM/2 new | 105      | 41      | 59.31    | 388, 101, 333    | 06:10 AM   | 07:55 AM    |
| AM_K-12_Westford_2 ELEM/2 New | 82       | 40      | 39.46    | 388, 101, 333    | 06:28 AM   | 07:50 AM    |
| AM_K-12_Westford_3 ELEM/2 New | 73       | 34      | 36.08    | 388, 101, 333    | 06:37 AM   | 07:50 AM    |
| AM EHS Georgia New            | 87       | 6       | 47.27    | 388              | 07:11 AM   | 08:38 AM    |
| AM EHS-EMS-ADL Islands        | 148      | 15      | 90.65    | 9, 806, 388, 101 | 06:00 AM   | 08:28 AM    |

| Name                         | Duration | # Stops | Number Assigned | Distance | Schools          | Start Time | Finish Time |
|------------------------------|----------|---------|-----------------|----------|------------------|------------|-------------|
| PM BLUE ADL-EHS NEW          | 40       | 12      | 57              | 9.95     | 9, 806, 388      | 03:40 PM   | 04:20 PM    |
| PM BLUE HIA-FLEM NEW         | 80       | 18      | 70              | 15.81    | 9, 299, 141      | 02:10 PM   | 03:30 PM    |
| PM GREEN ADL-EHS NEW         | 46       | 14      | 58              | 12.33    | 9, 388           | 03:40 PM   | 04:26 PM    |
| PM GREEN HIA-FLEM NEW        | 92       | 24      | 51              | 18.48    | 9, 299, 141      | 02:10 PM   | 03:42 PM    |
| PM RED ADL-EHS NEW           | 55       | 12      | 32              | 10.88    | 9, 388           | 03:25 PM   | 04:20 PM    |
| PM RED HIA-FLEM NEW          | 65       | 14      | 78              | 12.43    | 388, 299, 141    | 02:10 PM   | 03:15 PM    |
| PM_02_EES/FMS                | 69       | 25      | 24              | 23.41    | 113, 99          | 02:31 PM   | 03:40 PM    |
| PM_02_EMS/EHS                | 61       | 23      | 28              | 23.13    | 101, 388         | 03:39 PM   | 04:40 PM    |
| PM_03_EES/FMS                | 65       | 26      | 51              | 9.68     | 113, 99          | 02:15 PM   | 03:20 PM    |
| PM_03_EMS/EHS                | 43       | 23      | 85              | 12.24    | 806, 388, 101    | 03:37 PM   | 04:20 PM    |
| PM_04_EES/FMS                | 91       | 33      | 39              | 18.58    | 113, 99          | 02:15 PM   | 03:46 PM    |
| PM_04_EMS/EHS                | 44       | 28      | 39              | 16.66    | 806, 388, 101    | 03:39 PM   | 04:23 PM    |
| PM_05_EES/FMS                | 60       | 10      | 43              | 10.56    | 113, 99          | 02:15 PM   | 03:15 PM    |
| PM_05_EMS/EHS                | 55       | 17      | 60              | 13.85    | 101, 388         | 03:25 PM   | 04:20 PM    |
| PM_06_EES/FMS                | 60       | 25      | 62              | 15.45    | 113, 99          | 02:35 PM   | 03:35 PM    |
| PM_06_EMS/EHS                | 36       | 23      | 66              | 16.91    | 388, 101         | 03:50 PM   | 04:26 PM    |
| PM_08_EES/FMS                | 88       | 24      | 56              | 18.14    | 113, 99          | 02:15 PM   | 03:43 PM    |
| PM_08_EMS/EHS                | 40       | 19      | 51              | 10.33    | 101, 388         | 03:50 PM   | 04:30 PM    |
| PM_09_EES/FMS                | 85       | 30      | 54              | 19.5     | 113, 99          | 02:15 PM   | 03:40 PM    |
| PM_09_EMS/EHS                | 44       | 26      | 56              | 19.12    | 101, 388         | 03:45 PM   | 04:29 PM    |
| PM_10_EES/FMS                | 72       | 30      | 60              | 21.04    | 101, 113, 99     | 02:31 PM   | 03:43 PM    |
| PM_10_EHS/EMS                | 60       | 27      | 72              | 24.33    | 101, 388         | 03:50 PM   | 04:50 PM    |
| PM_12_EES/FMS                | 78       | 23      | 26              | 16.39    | 113, 99          | 02:15 PM   | 03:33 PM    |
| PM_12_EMS/EHS                | 66       | 24      | 36              | 18.12    | 101, 388         | 03:34 PM   | 04:40 PM    |
| PM_16_EES/FMS                | 82       | 25      | 31              | 23.3     | 113, 99          | 02:15 PM   | 03:37 PM    |
| PM_16_EMS/EHS                | 56       | 25      | 33              | 20.55    | 101, 388         | 03:48 PM   | 04:44 PM    |
| PM_6-12_Westford_1 MS/HS new | 90       | 37      | 24              | 59.05    | 388, 101         | 04:00 PM   | 05:30 PM    |
| PM_6-12_Westford_2 MS/HS new | 73       | 32      | 34              | 34.83    | 388, 101         | 03:50 PM   | 05:03 PM    |
| PM_6-12_Westford_3 MS/HS new | 95       | 32      | 33              | 35.52    | 388, 101         | 03:35 PM   | 05:10 PM    |
| PM_K-5_Westford_1 ELEM/New   | 118      | 37      | 22              | 54.13    | 101, 333         | 02:00 PM   | 03:58 PM    |
| PM_K-5_Westford_2 ELEM/New   | 87       | 35      | 24              | 34.88    | 101, 333         | 02:00 PM   | 03:27 PM    |
| PM_K-5_Westford_3 ELEM/New   | 110      | 31      | 26              | 38.3     | 388, 101, 333    | 02:00 PM   | 03:50 PM    |
| PM EHS Georgia New           | 65       | 6       | 43              | 44.52    | 806, 388         | 03:15 PM   | 04:20 PM    |
| PM EHS-EMS-ADL Islands       | 155      | 17      | 45              | 97.42    | 9, 806, 388, 101 | 03:25 PM   | 06:00 PM    |

Rates for service REQUIRED IN BID

| Completion of this section is a required element for all responses to the RFP. |                               |                        |                         |                           |                                           |                                            |                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| School year                                                                    | Annual rate per "Daily Route" | Field trip hourly rate | Field trip mileage rate | Minimum Field Trip Charge | Athletic/Extracurricular trip hourly rate | Athletic/Extracurricular trip mileage rate | Minimum Athletic/Extracurricular trip charge |
| 2027-2028                                                                      |                               |                        |                         |                           |                                           |                                            |                                              |
| 2028-2029                                                                      |                               |                        |                         |                           |                                           |                                            |                                              |

| Completion of pricing for add-alt routes is optional |                                                                  |  |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| School year                                          | Add-Alt annual rate per route "ESY" Summer School 5 week program |  |
| 2027-2028                                            |                                                                  |  |
| 2028-2029                                            |                                                                  |  |

| School Code | Name                        | Feed School | Bus Arrival Time | School Start Time | School End Time | Bus Departure Time | Address             | City           | State | ZIP   | Grade Range                             |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------|-------|-----------------------------------------|
| 9           | ADL                         | 388         | 08:25 AM         | 08:35 AM          | 03:35 PM        | 03:45 PM           | 104 Maple Street    | ESSEX JUNCTION | VT    | 05452 | 06,07,08                                |
| 806         | Center for Technology Essex |             | 07:55 AM         | 08:05 AM          | 02:05 PM        | 02:15 PM           | 2 Educational Drive | ESSEX JUNCTION | VT    | 05452 | 09,10,11,12,S                           |
| 99          | Essex Elementary            | 113         | 07:20 AM         | 07:30 AM          | 02:30 PM        | 02:40 PM           | 1 Bixby Hill Road   | ESSEX JUNCTION | VT    | 05452 | 01,02,K,KA,KP,P,PA,PP                   |
| 388         | Essex High School           |             | 8:30 AM          | 08:40 AM          | 03:15 PM        | 03:25 PM           | 2 Educational Drive | ESSEX JUNCTION | VT    | 05452 | 09,10,11,12,S                           |
| 101         | Essex Middle School         | 388         | 08:25 AM         | 08:35 AM          | 03:35 PM        | 03:45 PM           | 60 Founders Road    | ESSEX JUNCTION | VT    | 05452 | 06,07,08                                |
| 299         | Thomas Fleming              | 9           | 07:35 AM         | 07:45 AM          | 02:45 PM        | 02:55 PM           | 21 Prospect Street  | ESSEX JUNCTION | VT    | 05452 | 03,04,05                                |
| 113         | Founders Memorial           | 101         | 07:30 AM         | 07:40 AM          | 02:40 PM        | 02:50 PM           | 33 Founders Road    | ESSEX JUNCTION | VT    | 05452 | 03,04,05                                |
| 141         | Hiawatha Elementary         | 299         | 07:20 AM         | 07:30 AM          | 02:30 PM        | 02:40 PM           | 30 Hiawatha Avenue  | ESSEX JUNCTION | VT    | 05452 | 01,02,K,KA,KP                           |
| 333         | Westford Elementary         | 388         | 8:20 AM          | 07:30 AM          | 02:30 PM        | 03:40 PM           | 146 Brookside Road  | WESTFORD       | VT    | 05494 | 01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08,K,KA,KP,P,PA,PP |