

August 27, 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

We have been notified that staffing shortages continue to impact All-Star, and this issue is not unique to Newtown. This is a national bus driver shortage. District leaders through our CAPSS (CT Association of Public School Superintendents) group reached out to the Commissioner of Education to make her aware of the situation facing many school districts. A variety of factors have played a role in hiring new drivers, including a backlog of individuals waiting for background checks, training, and licensure as part of the process.

Members of All-Star Transportation have worked hard to navigate this issue in Newtown and in many other districts they serve. This included reviewing the routes and bus stops based on current ridership to ensure there would be adequate coverage. I want to thank parents at the K-6 level who completed the survey to let us know they would be driving their children. ***Important: Please review the revised bus routes on our website before MONDAY for any changes that might have impacted your child/children (highlighted areas indicate bus number changes). Please know that bus stop pickup times may have been adjusted as well on all stops due to a change in the route. If there is an issue with a bus stop (missing) or any other concern, please let your child's principal know via email. We plan to resolve any issues as quickly as we can.***

On another note, there is construction going on around Riverside and Rt. 34. There may be slower traffic as a result, and also because it is the first day of school. We always wait for late buses on the first few days, and we plan on dismissing schools 10 minutes early for the first three days to make sure students find their buses and departure runs on time. **As a reminder, the first three days of school (8/30, 8/31, and 9/1) are 3-hour early dismissal days.**

Thank you for your understanding and patience as we navigate these issues, and we look forward to seeing our students back to school on Monday!

Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue, Superintendent