

## **PTO Getting to School Survey – Text Results**

### **3. On most days, how does your Ray School student(s) arrive at school?**

Other:

- mix of bus and drop off
- We drive them to a bus stop that picks up later than our assigned stop.

### **4. If your child/ren does NOT regularly take the bus in the morning, what are the reasons?**

Other:

- special needs child at RMS so already have to drive
- i have to drive right there every a.m b/c of another child (at DCCCC)
- Sibling at DCCCC
- Bus too loud, kids raucous; waiting for bus too cold, inconvenient and annoying
- feels sick from fumes and noise of radio
- Cranky bus drivers
- I have another child I need to drop off across the street at Dartmouth Day Care
- bus stop requires a car for my house, it is a mile up the road.

### **5. On most days, how does your Ray School student(s) get home from school?**

Other:

- walks to DCCCC, car home from there
- goes to after school care
- mix
- varies sometime bus sometimes family car
- DCCCC walk across street
- goes to HASP, picked up by parent after HASP

### **6. If your child/ren does NOT regularly take the bus after school, what are the reasons?**

Other:

- DCCCC after-K program
- No one home because both parents at the office
- Family errands
- Children in HASP--we both work
- Bus too loud, kids too raucous
- bus takes too long to bring her home!
- child alone with male driver for portion of ride
- HASP 3 x week
- Walk across to DCCCC
- both parents work, requires HASP

**7. What changes, if any, would you like to see to improve bus service?**

Other:

- eliminate 5th grade monitors
- I would like for my children to wear seat belts
- Arrives at school at 8AM or before
- Get to school earlier
- bus company totally unresponsive to safety concern and bus stop locations
- no changes... they ride the bus in nice weather
- More efficient bus routes.
- earlier arrival at school
- Options to ride bus to parent's workplace
- need to add more busses to shorten the ride which will then encourage more people
- Let the kids get on the bus and get seat belts on instead of waiting for pickups
- FREEDOM to choose to drive my child in my own car; PLS NO changes or new rules
- my child feels overwhelmed by rock music on the bus in the morning
- live on King - possible to have minibus? there are plenty of kids
- separate bus for elementary kids and middle/high school kids

**8. If your child/ren does NOT walk or bike regularly to and from school, what are the reasons?**

Other:

- special needs of older sibling
- Need sidewalks on Rip Rd
- younger sibling too young to walk often; we occasionally walk in good weather

**9. What changes, if any, would you like to see to improve walking and biking to school?**

Other:

- would still be too far for us
- 2 miles seems too far for daily ride
- Cars should be inconvenienced not walkers or bus riders.
- Safer pedestrian & bike path needed along Lyme Rd. w/barrier btwn path & road
- Our walk is very pleasant but 20-30 mins each way (too much for younger sib)
- Can a formalized bike/walking path from Brook Hollow to DCCCC in the woods,
- park and ride such that we could park at a reasonable distance to pick

### 11. Ideally, how would you prefer to have your child/ren get to and from school?

Other:

- Walk/bike sometimes, bus other
- bus or carpool
- We do a combination of all; we would use the bus more in the am if later pickup
- walk/bike unless bad weather--bus
- due to work he can't go home without supervision

### 12. Please provide constructive suggestions for improving the way our children get to school and back home:

Answer
Overall I'm happy with our bus situation. An improvement would be to remove the 5th grade bus monitors. It creates a bullying situation on our bus and has for the past several years.
Sidewalk along Rip Road
we are in full support of taking the bus
This does not apply to how my child gets to/from school, but it would be very helpful if the Advance Transit had a route that went towards Lyme and had several stops along Lyme Rd. It goes to Wilder, Canaan, and Lebanon. I don't see why it can't go to Lyme.
We would use bus in the morning if my son with special needs could tolerate it; but it is too noisy and rough. Also too early in the a.m. for either child. They do walk when at their other parent's home, which is closer. This is OK largely because there is an off-road path so my special needs child is away from traffic.
We've been pleased, overall, with the school bus. There were a couple of incidents early in the year of conflict (between older and younger kids), but these seem to have been quickly resolved. We are near the end of the route, so the kids do spend more time on the bus than they would if they were driven in the car, but, as it's a time to socialize, neither child has complained. I do wish kids were required to wear seat belts on the schoolbus My kids say there are belts, but they are "broken".
Sidewalks on Rip rd would help Buses that get to school before 8am would help Ray school only buses would help
The bus company is totally unresponsive to bus stop issues - location adjustment based upon safety concerns or population changes. The map they put out still shows the old middle school location! The drivers have a good understanding of issues and are truly concerned for the children but the administration is very difficult to work with.
Since my kids don't take the bus I can only say from friends experiences. Having older kids on the bus has been a problem. Having their kids on the bus for an hour or longer makes for a very long day.
In general, I am very pleased with the bus service. In the areas of improvement, I would suggest ways of contacting parents if for some reason the buses are delayed and more supervision on the bus, especially for the younger children.

<b>Answer</b>
<p>I find the Dresden bus system and my driver on H5 EXCELLENT.</p> <p>The major after school activity for us is Ford Sayre - alpine/Wed and xc/Tues-Thur. This is what causes me to be a part of the after school traffic jam. I don't have a good alternative. But I will throw out the idea of buses to the SkiWay on winter Wednesdays.</p> <p>Perhaps, Dresden or non-Dresden public transportation for kids to key after school sites - Howe Library, the Montshire Museum, Upper Valley Music</p>
<p>For the most part I am pleased with with the bus service. The afternoon is the most difficult, because my children are the second to last stop, which puts them getting home late. The bus stops at the end of our road. On days when the weather is bad, I may stop at the school to pick them up, so they don't have to walk the half mile (up hill - literally) in poor conditions.</p>
<p>We love using the bus as we are in town and our children's rides reasonable. Our only concern is that many of the bus routes are inefficient in their paths. A lot of money and fuel could be conserved by better planned routes. I know of one family who lives in town, and their bus leaves town after picking up their children and proceeds to Etna. Why not start in Etna and then pick up children who are in town en route to the school?</p>
<p>We're pretty pleased with the bus- our daughter enjoys it and the stop is very close. If we rose earlier and she was not so slow in the am, she'd take the bus more often. It's just too cold/dark to wait for it/get up in time and/or walk most of the winter. And it takes a very long time for the very short distance from our house to school because the middle school rides the same bus, which also probably isn't a good idea socially. She'll take the bus more this spring as she did in the fall.</p>
<p>I guess we live maybe 4 miles from the school. It's a 6-10 minute car ride. It takes our kids anywhere from 35 to 45 minutes to get to and from the school.</p>
<p>A great help would be if they only did this long commute one way i.e. if they were among the last to be dropped off one way but first to be dropped on the other. This would be a fairer system for the kids riding the bus.</p>
<p>Keep bus rides to 30 minute maximum.</p>
<p>Provide bully awareness training to drivers.</p>
<p>Make it easier to communicate with bus drivers about changes in plans.</p>
<p>Provide more stops within the main Dartmouth campus.</p>
<p>I would at least like to know that the routes have been reexamined since the move of the Richmond School. As it is even the published routes are inaccurate in many cases (Ex: H2B does not go down Grensboro, as it shows). Could all Ray School kids on Dogford (currently on H1 and H4) be on one Ray only bus, or Ray/Richmond bus? My kids ride H2B in the afternoon because it is Ray School only and drops them 30 minutes earlier at least. I have to drive 2 miles but the H4 experience is unacceptable.</p>
<p>at least for us, the pick up is so early and the time so long that it becomes very easy to imagine more time with your kids in the morning and a drop off. If you add more buses to the route and they come closer to when school starts, I think you will see increased ridership. I know that will mean some emptier buses at first, but I think this would change over time. We would greatly improve hanover morning traffic too!!</p>

<b>Answer</b>
Our route should be covered by two busses, allowing for a shorter ride.
If the route could change to make the time on the bus shorter for Etna kids. I like the idea of using the bus, but they are on there for a LONG time.
use smaller buses carrying only Ray School children. Increase number of routes to reduce time children are on the bus. 45 minutes is just too long
I noticed that you indicated letting school out earlier - YIKES!! What if we had a longer day, but integrated arts and athletics every day for every child? Why do the kids have to feel rushed during their lunch? Why do they have to feel rushed all the time? If the day were longer, there would be more time for all the good things that already occur!
The kindergarten bus used to drop many k's from all over etna and hanover center at trumbull hall, where parents would meet the bus and take them home from there. This worked well, it kept a lot of cars from the school lot, but was reasonable for people who live far out, and who would not be able to walk or bike. This idea of remote, safe places where people could drop or pickup their kids and know they would go quickly and directly to school is a time and traffic saver.
The time spent to pick up/drop off children at the middle and high school makes the trips very long. The mixed ages, without supervision, is not a good situation. Having an adult ride in the bus was helpful last year - but I this doesn't happen anymore on H1, at least.
We live in Hanover 17 miles from the Ray School (east of Moose Mt.). AM bus pickup is estimated at 6:50 - simply too early for any school-age child - and then a 1 hr. 15 min ride on top. We suggest that H12 be dedicated first to families living farther out than 10 miles in order to reduce time spent on the bus. There is no reason for H12 to be picking up kids who live within walking distance of other in-town bus routes. H12 should be dedicated to Goose Pond Road and beyond. Thank you!
The H1 bus arrives at our house very early (7:15). This makes for a very, very long day for elementary kids. It seems strange to us that the bus also is often the first to arrive at the Ray School, long before the bell. I wish the schedule would be adjusted to allow the latest possible arrival at the school and then the latest possible pickup times. It is so early that we can wait 15 minutes later, drive for 10 minutes, catch a "Ray School Only" bus, and the kids still get to school on time.
Even though my daughter has a short bus ride, I don't see why other kids need to be on the bus for more than 1 hour. We need more buses.
We are completely satisfied with our bus route and driver on H1. He is always on time, friendly, etc. However, I do think they system needs to be improved. My biggest request is that I would like elementary school students to be separate from middle and high school student riders.
We need to figure out an environmentally responsible way for our children to get to school in a timely fashion. No child should spend more than 40 minutes on a bus. Routes need to more efficiently designed and we need to make sure the bus/van is safe for everyone. We have incredible resources in this community...we need to creatively use them and develop a "Green Transportation System" for our children and staff.

<b>Answer</b>
there should be a 30 min max for time spent on the bus no matter of location of student's home; younger kids should be required to sit up front for better supervision.if the bus driver is early for a stop, s/he should have to wait for the scheduled departure time for every stop before leaving that bus stop;we've found that if for some reason that the bus is early along the route, they will "fly" by our stop even if over 5 minutes early,so we often miss the bus, so we've given up riding the bus
Biggest concern is the amount of time spent on the bus. One hour is too long for elementary age.
Suggest more buses to have Ray-school only runs, eliminating time spent going to High School and Middle School.
Consider rerouting buses for more efficiency to factor in new location of Middle School.
Unfortunately, I think we live too far out for any practical solutions. We both work and one of us needs to drive past the school anyway. We do have a neighbor carpool for one day. The bus stop for us is either 1/2 mile away or 1 mile away and during the winter months this is not an alternative. Additionally the bus leaves too early for our children and arrives after 8:00--which can be a 45 minute ride. Homeward, my children are at HASP, so again the bus then doesn't work for us.
We live far and bus comes very early 715a, then picks up large group in town after dropping off High school children. Maybe if the H12 bus did not have to do that it could come a bit later, they already get up at 6am to make bus.
<b>Bridgman Road</b>
Sidewalks on Rip Road Slower traffic on East Wheelock Shorter bus rides--my kids have a 40 minute ride in the afternoons and we live 1.5 miles from school.
<b>FREEDOM</b> to choose mode of transportation, specifically driving my child in my own car. Please <b>NO</b> new rules or changes.
Our main (parental) concern is the mix of ages on the bus. It was challenging in the K year to have to ask older kids to move on a crowded bus (they sit on the aisle seats, leaving only the window seats). My child is now happy to ride the bus in the afternoon--the concerns are parental. The a.m. bus we rarely use because it is inconsistent in timing (pickup anywhere from 7:20-7:45, too long to stand outside with a younger sibling). K & maybe 1st kids should have reserved seats in the front.
Children can take bus to school, but have to be picked up at HASP after school since parents both work. Some after HASP option?
Kids would ride bikes more in appropriate weather, but some of the intersections are too dangerous.

<b>Answer</b>
<p>My daughter describes feeling sick from both the diesel fumes and rock music playing over the bus loudspeaker in the morning. I don't know if these are extreme or not, just that she is affected, and is much more relaxed and cheerful when she is not made to take the bus. Can these things be checked to verify that they are reasonable?</p>
<p>This is a hard issue!</p>
<p>Thank you.</p>
<p>Current arrangement is quite nice.</p>
<p>In the case of Low Road, it would be great if Ray School and Middle School students had a separate bus, even if it were to pick up at the end of the street. It seems wasteful to have a 7:20 pickup for the few high school students that do ride the bus from here, and for the rest of the kids to ride all over town. High School students could catch their own bus (eg, one coming from Etna) from the end of the street, and Low Road/Haskins/East Wheelock kids could have a later pick up time.</p>
<p>Tips from prior town:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elementary school started later than upper school so bus could make two trips, separating younger children from older</li> <li>- They had assigned seating, K-1 in first 4 rows, 2-3 in rows, with oldest in back</li> <li>- Bus drivers were very sweet to little kids</li> <li>- Bus route reversed on way home so kids with the longest ride on way to school got shortest ride home</li> </ul>
<p>One adult supervising so many kids while trying to drive seems an outdated practice.</p>
<p>Thanks and good luck!</p>
<p>more bus stops with some ability to track where the bus actually is.</p>
<p>Children taking the bus should absolutely be released before those being picked up by parents, rather than the other way around. The school should make every effort to encourage families to choose the school bus (or walking/riding bikes) and to dissuade parents from dropping off and picking up their children from school. I would support any effort that made it less convenient/desirable for families to drive their children to and from school. We have a high quality bus system already!!!</p>