



## LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

151 Merrimack Street  
Lowell, MA 01852

John Descoteaux  
Transportation Director

Tel: 978-674-2018  
email: [jdescoteaux@lowell.k12.ma.us](mailto:jdescoteaux@lowell.k12.ma.us)

### MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Hall, Chief Operating Officer  
From: John Descoteaux, Transportation Director  
Date: January 31, 2024  
Ref: School Transportation Update

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**Please see the responses to the motions below from School Committee member Eileen Delrossi:**

**“Request the superintendent to review the zoning of the schools in terms of dismissal times and efficiency with bus drop off times.”**

**“Request the superintendent to work with the director of transportation to allow live bus GPS for all parents who have a student on the bus so they will be aware of where their child is.”**

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Under our present zoning format, our dismissal and drop-off times are as efficient as possible, given the ongoing shortage of bus drivers. We are evaluating a new zoning scenario that could lead to greater efficiencies, but it is a more involved process that will take several months to complete.

North Reading Transportation (NRT) is in the process of creating their own GPS application that they will be presenting to school districts hopefully by this September. However, a few obstacles have slowed the process down and the driver shortage has had a profound effect on the accuracy of data that has been provided.

For example, if a driver calls in sick and there are no spare drivers to perform the route, the Transportation Director needs to split the route between two (2) or maybe three (3) buses. When the district is forced to do this, it creates a problem with transposing the student's bus number to the other bus transporting the student. At this point, the only way to perform this task is manually. Obviously, when dealing with multiple drivers calling out sick on a daily basis, the task can be laborious and time sensitive.

I am hopeful that an update on the progress of the application would be forthcoming sometime in August.