



Dear LPS Families,

As you may be aware, school districts across the state and country are facing a critical shortage of bus drivers. The Livonia Public Schools Transportation Department has been able to adjust to these shortages through a number of strategies that have been put in place not only this year, but in prior years as well. However, this letter is intended to convey the full picture of the driver shortage locally, and to inform you of likely service interruptions as we move forward.

First, we have the best crew of drivers, routers, paraprofessionals, mechanics and administrators in LPS Transportation. The work that happens behind the scenes every day to ensure over 7,500 students who are assigned a bus route are safely transported to and from school each day is nothing short of incredible. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated staff and we want to assure you that interrupting service would not occur if it were not the absolute last option.

We know that we are facing a point in the near future where we will need to temporarily cancel some routes in order to keep the majority of the service operable. Plans are being drafted to develop scheduled, rotating cancellations in order for any disruption to be as brief as possible. *Please know, all students who have specialized transportation plans that are contained in an IEP will NOT see a disruption in service. Also, at this time, all "shuttle" services and connector services will NOT be affected.*

If your child's route is affected, you will receive a robocall and an email from the Transportation Department, in addition to a communication from your child's school. We will make every effort to give families advanced notice so that other arrangements can be made. Any cancellations will be temporary, while the district continues to recruit and train new drivers. If you, or anyone in your family would be interested in joining our transportation team, please visit our website Career page that is specific for bus driver positions: [PLEASE CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE.](#)

As background, LPS services K-12 and post secondary students located at 23 schools and transports across more than 36 square miles within the district as well as to and from out-of-district special education programs located in surrounding communities. Our drivers also provide one-way transportation for our middle and high school athletics programs in addition to school field trips.

Our team has thus far been able to fill staffing gaps by utilizing certified drivers who work in other departments; has called upon substitute drivers and has even assigned routes to the department supervisor. Some reconfiguration of routes has also occurred, in an effort to maintain service across the district. In short, our team has utilized every tool in its toolbox, in order to staff every bus route, despite shortages. Further challenges occur when drivers are out on a leave. These situations are addressed, but the staffing model is not sustainable. The fill-in drivers need to return to their regular job duties and the Transportation Office needs to be staffed with the supervisor, routers, dispatchers and others who can answer phones while buses are on the road.

This issue is not exclusive to LPS. In fact, surrounding districts have had to cancel routes and a few have had to eliminate general education bussing altogether. The transportation industry, like many others, has experienced staffing shortages that originated during the onset of the pandemic.

We wanted to make every family in our district, whether they receive bus service or not, aware of these serious challenges that are, frankly, unprecedented in LPS.

We strongly encourage families to watch their email inbox for communication from LPS Transportation as we move forward with next steps. If you are unsure of your child's bus route name, please check the Transportation tab in Parent Connect. Some students may have one bus for the morning and a different bus for the afternoon, so be sure to know those letters for each bus (example: Bus AE for morning and Bus C for afternoon).

We know that together, we will get through this challenge! Thank you for your partnership and your patience.

Sincere Regards,

Andrea Oquist, Superintendent  
Phil Francis, Director of Operations