

Dear Ri House Finance Committee,

I am writing to you as a concerned, taxpaying Rhode Island resident. My child attends the Meadowbrook Waldorf School (MWS), and many families in our school use the transportation services provided by their local districts and communities.

The proposed changes to the bussing zones would significantly affect our school community. Under the current plan, MWS would be moved from Zone 4 to a newly drawn Zone 9, resulting in a 70% reduction in bussing services. This drastic cut would create serious challenges for many families who depend on reliable transportation to get their children to school.

Access to public bussing allows families to choose the educational environment that best supports their children's growth and development. It also ensures that parents can continue to participate in the workforce and contribute to our local economy.

There may be an assumption that families who choose private education can simply absorb the cost of transportation. This is simply not true. At MWS, 44% of our families receive tuition assistance. For many of our families, public bussing is not a luxury, it's essential.

The cost of bussing a child out of the public school district is far lower than the cost of educating that child in that same district. The school district is already providing bussing for students within its public system at no extra cost beyond local taxes so why shouldn't those same taxpaying families continue to benefit from that service?

By imposing limitations on the transport of students to non-public schools, you would be establishing a two-tier, unequal system of transportation.

I urge you to support the continuation of public bussing for private school students across Rhode Island. Removing or re-zoning this service would not only hurt families, but could also have unintended consequences including increased enrollment pressure on public schools and higher costs to the state's education system.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to Rhode Island's families and children.

Sincerely,
Amber Gadde
Narragansett, Ri
MWS Grade 3 parent