



Eastchester Eagle

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE EASTCHESTER UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Information regarding the Transportation Referendum will be available in Spanish upon request at the District Clerk’s Office. Please contact Jeanette Messina at (914) 793-6130 ext. 4211.

La información sobre el Referéndum de Transporte estará disponible en español si lo solicita en la Secretaría del Distrito. Por favor, comuníquese con Jeanette Messina al (914) 793-6130 ext. 4211.

Dear Eastchester Community Members,

On March 12, 2019, we are asking you to vote on a vital issue facing our community, the transportation of students within our school district. In order to assist you in making this very important decision we are providing you with pertinent information that currently guides our transportation system and explains why we are revisiting the matter at this time.

THE LAW

New York State Education Law Section 3635 governs the transportation of resident students and requires school districts to provide transportation to and from school for students attending grades K-8 who live more than 2 miles from school, and for students attending grades 9-12 who live more than 3 miles from school, up to a distance of 15 miles from school. New York State Education Law Section 3635(1)(a) allows transportation of students residing a lesser distance from school if authorized by the school district’s qualified voters.

HISTORY

On May 7, 1980, voters in the Eastchester UFSD passed a ballot proposition authorizing busing from a distance of .5 miles and greater for students in grades K-6, and from a distance of 1 mile or greater for students in grades 7-12. It is important to note that in 1980, the district had three elementary schools with populations that included students in grade 6.

On April 20, 2010, voters rejected a transportation proposition that would have changed the mileage limitations for transportation of students in grades 6-8 from 1 mile to 2 miles; and for students in grades 9-12 from 1 mile to 3 miles.

Since the proposition vote in May of 1980, there have been many changes in our district. Students in the sixth grade were moved from the elementary schools to Eastchester Middle School during the 1980s. Waverly became a K-1 school in the fall of 2004.

PRACTICE

While the parameters of the May 1980 vote were adhered to initially, exceptions were made and courtesies granted over time providing bus transportation to students who lived below the mileage limitations established by the voters. The extent of these courtesies and exceptions became evident last spring during a review of our transportation routes in preparation for the revised elementary school hours for the 2018-2019 school year. We were advised by district counsel that only the voters may authorize transportation to students who live below the mileage limitations. Absent voter approval, the Board of Education does not have the authority to make any such changes.

NEXT STEPS

To comply with New York State Education Law Section 3635, the voters will have to approve any change to the May 1980 proposition, which authorized transportation as follows:

- Grades K-6 0.5 miles or greater from the school
- Grades 7-12 1.0 miles or greater from the school

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION VOTE

March 12, 2019 - Poll Hours: 6:00am – 9:00pm

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q How many students are projected to lose transportation if both Proposition #1 and #2 fail and the district returns to the 1980 mileage limits, and what is the financial impact?

SCHOOL	STUDENTS IMPACTED	COST/(SAVINGS)
Waverly	62 students will lose busing	(\$105,060)
Anne Hutch	41 students will lose busing	(\$76,266)
Greenvale	65 students will lose busing	(\$76,266)
EHS/EMS	236 students will lose busing	\$0
TOTAL FINANCIAL IMPACT		(\$257,592)

If both propositions fail, then the May 1980 limits will remain in effect providing transportation only to students in grades K-6 who live more than .5 miles from their school and students in grades 7-12 who live more than 1.0 miles from their schools. NO EXCEPTIONS will be made.

Q What is the impact if Proposition #1 fails, and Proposition #2 passes?

There would be no financial impact either way. The district would continue to bus sixth graders who live more than 1.0 miles from their school of attendance. However, there are approximately 26 sixth graders who currently receive busing that would no longer be eligible, as they live less than 1.0 mile from their school of attendance.

Q What is the impact to students if Proposition #1 passes?

SCHOOL	.25 MILE	COST/(SAVINGS)
Waverly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 62 students will retain busing 15 new students will get busing 0 students will lose busing 	\$0
.4 MILE		
Anne Hutch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27 students will retain busing 42 new students will get busing 14 students will lose busing 	\$76,266
Greenvale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 students will retain busing 2 new students will get busing 25 students will lose busing 	\$0
.8 MILE		
EHS/EMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 202 students will retain busing 36 new students will get busing 34 students will lose busing 	\$0
DISTRICT-WIDE TOTALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 331 students retain busing 95 new students will receive busing 73 students will lose busing 	\$76,266

Transportation Proposition #1

Grades K through 1 who reside more than a quarter of a mile (0.25) to/from the school they legally attend.

Grades 2 through 5 who reside more than four-tenths (.4) of a mile to/from the school they legally attend.

Grades 6 through 12 who reside more than eight-tenths (.8) of a mile to/from the school they legally attend.

Transportation Proposition #2

IN THE EVENT THAT PROPOSITION #1 IS NOT APPROVED, commencing with the 2019-2020 school year, the Eastchester Union Free School District shall be authorized to provide transportation for students attending grade 6 who reside more than one (1) mile to/from school they legally attend which is estimated to not increase or decrease the School District's current annual home-to-school transportation costs.

★ **VOTE March 12, 2019 Poll Hours: 6:00am – 9:00pm** ★

Q Should I vote on both propositions?

There is no requirement to vote on both propositions but there is also no disadvantage to voting on both propositions. Proposition #2 only goes into effect if it passes and if Proposition #1 fails.

Q What system will the district utilize to measure distances?

The district will be utilizing the routing software called Transfinder. Transfinder is used by over 1,700 school districts in 47 states, and is considered the industry leader in New York.

Q What point on each of the five schools' property is used to measure the distance to a child's residence?

The measurement point is the center of the driveway (bus loop) in front of the building entrances.

Q Does the measurement begin from the middle of the property line that abuts the road OR the middle of the property plot?

Transfinder locates the center of the parcel of property, then locates the roadway closest to that center point and begins measuring on that roadway from the point parallel (directly across from) the center of the parcel of property. The distance from the roadway to the center of the parcel is not included in the measurement.

Q Is the measurement the shortest walking distance or the shortest legal driving route using an odometer? If it is walking distance, does it use legal NYS road crossings? Is it from the property to the school OR the distance from the school to the property?

The measurement is made over the nearest available (shortest) route between home and school. It can be either driving or walking, and in either direction, whichever is shortest. It does not consider "legal NYS crossings."

Q Are all the crosswalks used by Transfinder either controlled or enhanced crosswalks that actually exist?

Transfinder does not take into account use of controlled or enhanced crosswalks. The law does not require the nearest available (shortest) route between home and school to use controlled or enhanced crosswalks.

Q When determining eligibility, can the lack of sidewalks, topography, busy streets, limited direct routes or other perceived hazards be considered?

No. The Commissioner of Education has ruled that without voter authorization, distance is the only factor which can serve as a basis for eligibility for transportation.

Q If someone is on the cusp of the eligibility cut off, who verifies and adjudicates? To whom do they appeal?

The Board of Education will determine, via BOE policy, the appeal process within the district. Once a final decision has been reached by the district, the decision can be appealed to the NYS Commissioner of Education.

Q What are the district's rules on providing busing between schools and childcare locations? Does mileage impact eligibility for this as well?

The Board of Education, at its discretion, provides transportation between before and after school child care. Children are eligible for such transportation when the distance between the school and the child care provider exceeds the district's transportation eligibility limits. The district does not transport to private, unlicensed child care locations outside of the designated school attendance zones, i.e. a Greenvale student will not be transported to a private, unlicensed child care location in the Anne Hutch zone. The district does transport to licensed child care locations throughout the district, i.e. a Greenvale student will be transported to a licensed child care location in the Anne Hutch zone.

Q Where in the budget would the savings be applied, or additional funds be acquired?

The Board of Education has the discretion to reallocate the realized savings to any other area of the budget, or conversely, to reduce spending in any other area of the budget to fund the additional expense. Once the community decides on this proposed referendum, the cost/savings will be incorporated into the 2019-2020 budget. Please note that individual tax bills will not be impacted either way as a result of this referendum.

Q If more children will be walking to school, would the district be adding additional crossing guards or safety officers?

Crossing guards and officers are employed by the Town of Eastchester. We are currently in discussions with them, and will finalize options once the outcome of the referendum is known.

Q What cost would be incurred to continue as is and support all of the current exceptions?

This is simply not an option. We are currently treating students in similar situations differently, so we must remedy that. There is no scenario that exists that would allow us to maintain the status quo.

Q Will exceptions be made for special needs students if the current mileage limits are maintained or changed?

Yes. Students who qualify for specialized transportation through the CSE process will not be impacted by any change in mileage limits, or enforcement thereof.



**580 WHITE PLAINS ROAD
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(914) 793-6130**

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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VOTING INFORMATION



**Tuesday, March 12, 2019
6:00am-9:00pm**

**Eastchester Middle School
550 White Plains Road**

OR

**235 Garth Road
(Garth Road residents only)**



APPLICATIONS FOR ABSENTEE BALLOTS

**The Office of the District Clerk:
District Administration Building
580 White Plains Road, Eastchester, New York
or www.eastchesterschools.org**