



April 11, 2025

Dear Board Chair, Members and Superintendent Canning,

I write to inform members of our community that the electric school buses stationed at Barre Town School District were removed from district property out of an abundance of caution, due to factors outside Student Transportation of Vermont or the Barre Unified Union School District's control.

Further, residents will be reassured to know that these buses were not taxpayer funded, and their removal from service has had no adverse effect on operations, routes, or costs associated with BUUSD's student transportation.

The electric vehicles were purchased as a direct result of the 2019 "clean diesel" settlement between Volkswagen and the federal government. Vermont used its share of the settlement funds to launch an electric school and transit bus pilot program. Net cost of the district's two electric school buses, manufactured by Lion Electric Company, were paid for by the Volkswagen settlement via participation in the pilot program.

These buses had been operating safely and continuously since their arrival in 2020. Our staff monitored these buses regularly according to our company's strict, safety-first protocols.

In January 2025, Student Transportation of Vermont temporarily removed the two electric buses from service after reported Lion Electric bus fires in North America. While the issue did not involve any buses in the fleet of our parent company Student Transportation of America, we took a cautious approach. We contacted Lion Electric for information regarding the root cause of the fire and resulting safety precautions. Safety is our number one priority.

Unfortunately, those answers have not come. Lion Electric Company filed bankruptcy, eliminated most staff and communications, and has therefore been unable to address our concerns. After further discussion with its insurance provider, BUUSD requested that we remove the two electric school buses from district property.

We are pleased to report that, despite these issues, BUUSD school bus routes have remained operational with no effect to taxpayers.

We appreciate the community's support and understanding.

Stacy A. Emerson  
NNE General Manager  
Vermont & New Hampshire  
Student Transportation of America