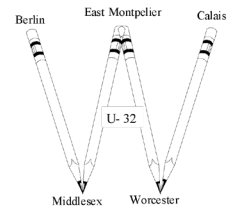


# Washington Central Unified Union School District

*WCUUSD exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.*

1130 Gallison Hill Road  
Montpelier, VT 05602  
Phone (802) 229-0553  
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## Washington Central Unified Union School District Configuration Committee Meeting

November 19, 2025

U-32

930 Gallison Hill Rd  
Montpelier, VT  
In-Person/Virtual  
5:00-6:00 PM

### Virtual Meeting Information

<https://tinyurl.com/4e3b9uun>

Meeting ID: 859 8886 5170

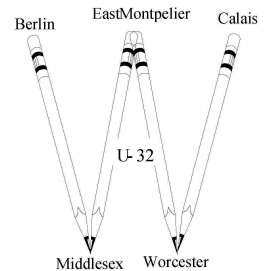
Password: 403402

Dial by Your Location: 1-929-205-6099

1. Call to Order
2. Configuration Committee Meeting ( Discussion/Action)
  - 2.1. [Agenda](#)
  - 2.2. Vision for Configuration (Steven)
  - 2.3. Transition Framework (Steven)
  - 2.4. [Listening Sessions Data](#)
3. Public Comments
4. Adjourn

# WCUUSD: Actualizing Our Strategic Vision

*Excellence and Equity through Configuration*

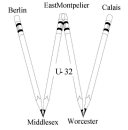


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Good afternoon. As Superintendent, I am privileged to present a vision for the future configuration of the Washington Central Unified Union School District. This is not simply a discussion about buildings; it is about **actualizing our mission** and ensuring a future of sustained educational excellence and equity for every student.

This is an opportunity **reimagine our school culture** and build new identities in a new configuration. In addition to addressing systemic challenges, we will leveraging the **Community Schools Framework**—our strategy for achieving equitable outcomes—to build a feeling of deep belonging, safety, and vitality. This addresses community feedback calling for stronger relationships and connectivity.

# Proposed Model to Meet Our Strategic Goals



- **Goal 1: Build and nurture a culture of well-being and inclusivity**
- **Goal 2: Challenge, empower, and engage each student through evidence based curriculum and varied educational opportunities**
- **Goal 3: Foster and commit to responsive leadership that communicates transparently**

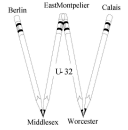
Our approach is deeply rooted in the foundational identity of the Washington Central Unified Union School District (WCUUSD), which exists to **nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity, and power to contribute to their local and global communities.**

Our Core Beliefs and Strategic Plan goals drive our work and that work centers around: **Rigorous Curriculum and Instruction** (ALL students can learn and thrive), **Well-Being** (schools are safe and valued spaces), and **Humanity, Justice, Community and Belonging** (honoring diversity, centering equity).

(slide)

We face critical challenges—declining enrollment, rising costs, and mandates under the new foundation funding model (Act 73). We must heed the urgency expressed by our community: **"Our schools can't wait."** To move forward responsibly and proactively, we must solidify a structure that guarantees the resources and opportunities our students deserve.

# Proposed Model

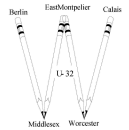


- **Elementary Consolidation (FY27, 2026-2027 school year):** We will consolidate our current five elementary schools into three sustainable K-6 sites
- **Grade 6 Transition (FY28, 2027-2028 school year):** Grade 6 students will transition from the elementary schools to U-32, establishing a developmentally appropriate 6-8 MS and 9-12 HS structure

This plan involves two strategic, sequenced transitions designed to maximize opportunity and minimize disruption:

We will consolidate our current five elementary schools (Berlin, Calais, Doty, EMES, Rumney) into **three sustainable K-5 elementary sites**. These sites—likely Berlin, East Montpelier, and Middlesex—are selected based on current enrollments, capacity utilization, and geographic considerations. This structure allows us to move away from reactive, fluctuating configurations.

# Systemic Challenges



- **Inconsistent Program Delivery:** We cannot consistently provide our curriculum, robust intervention systems (MLSS), or equitable access to Allied Arts across all sites.
- **Staffing Inefficiencies:** Allied arts teachers, nurses and specialists are often spread across multiple small schools, limiting consistent, dedicated support.
- **Reactive structures:** Low and variable enrollment forces us into unpredictable multi-age classroom configurations, making curriculum consistently difficult.

The foundational principle guiding this entire process is that **programming must drive our structural decisions**. We are prioritizing the educational experience first, designing the vision, which then drives the program, and finally drives the structure.

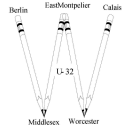
Our current configuration faces critical constraints that undermine equitable student outcomes.

(slide)

This model puts forth a more coherent, equitable, and sustainable educational environment that addresses these systemic shortcomings. We have all agreed on our Strategic Goals and in order to make that happen we must recognize and meet the inherent systemic challenges.

Class size commitment: Classrooms will adhere to WCUUSD Class Size D6 Policy and state minimum standards (Act 73). K-3 classes will maintain a minimum of 13 and a maximum of 20 students; Grades 4-6 will maintain a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 25 students.

## Elementary Benefits: Consistent, High-Quality Programming

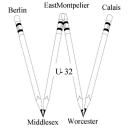


- **Guaranteed Core Instruction:** All students will receive intentional and consistent delivery of our baseline program.
- **Universal Allied Arts Access:** We eliminate the difficulty of allied arts teachers being spread thin by ensuring all elementary students receive Art, Music, and Library once per week, and PE twice per week.
- **Enhanced Student Support:** Fewer sites enable the creation of **full-time dedicated positions**. This means **full-time School Nurse, School Counselor, and Librarian services in every school**, providing the necessary health and wellness support mandated by our core belief in Well-Being.

This consolidation directly supports **Goal 2** of our Strategic Plan by guaranteeing equitable programmatic standards:

- **Consistent Core Instruction (5 days/week):** All students will receive intentional instruction in **Literacy** (including phonics/word study, reading, writing), **Math, Science, and Global Citizenship**.
- **Robust Allied Arts:** Students will have Art, Music, and Library classes once per week each, and PE access twice per week (40 minutes per day). This addresses the constraint of Allied Arts teachers being spread across small schools.
- **Dedicated Professional Staff:** The reduction in buildings allows the district to minimize shared positions and transition staff to full-time roles. We commit to providing **full-time School Nurse, School Counselor, and Library/Media services in every school**. This has been a point of concern for several years of both the board, staff, and community. This proposal answers that concern.
- **Targeted Support (MLSS):** The structure will support a vigorous Multi-Layered System of Support (MLSS), utilizing small groups, when possible, for more targeted and intensive interventions.
- **Professional Collaboration:** Teachers will have more frequent and significant opportunities for collaboration, joint planning time, and embedded professional learning with grade-level peers.

# Grade 6-8 Middle School: Developmental Appropriateness

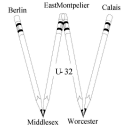


- **Grade 6 students are developmentally ready to transition beyond elementary settings that may include Pre-K students.**
- **The 6-12 model provides greater access to co-curricular activities and a more diverse cohort of learners.**
- **Teachers gain opportunities for specialization through Middle Grade Endorsements.**

This transition honors the developmental needs of our students, aligning with **Goal 1** (Well-Being and Inclusivity):

The three elementary schools will give our students a larger cohort of peers prior to U-32 and can help in the transition to the larger learning environment of U-32.

# Fostering Culture through the Community Schools Framework



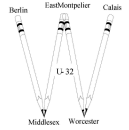
- **Integrated Student Supports**
- **Expanded and Enriched learning time**
- **Active Family and Community Engagement**
- **Collaborative Leadership and Practices**

Our core beliefs demand that we not just reorganize resources, but **reimagine our school culture** and build new identities in our new configuration. We are leveraging the **Community Schools Framework**—our strategy for achieving equitable outcomes—to build a feeling of deep belonging, safety, and vitality. This addresses community feedback calling for stronger relationships and connectivity.

Four pillars create school communities that provide:

1. **Integrated Student Supports:** We address out-of-school barriers by coordinating services such as medical and mental health care, providing a stronger safety net for our students.
2. **Expanded and Enriched Learning Time:** We are investing in "third space" opportunities and grant writing with the goal of providing **universal before-school and after-school programming** across all schools, expanding opportunities beyond the traditional school day.
3. **Active Family and Community Engagement:** We commit to making our schools true **centers of our communities**. Engagement is critical to preserving the depth and relational magic of smaller schools. This involves intentionally integrating the traditions of merging schools and actively involving families as partners.
4. **Collaborative Leadership and Practices:** This is the "relational glue" that comes from all the stakeholders (staff, families, students) to create new, unified school identities and cultures, ensuring that **all students belong** in the new structure.

# Transition Framework: Clear and Transparent Action



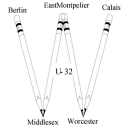
- **Phased Implementation**
- **Dedicated Leadership**
- **Early Communication**
- **Staffing Clarity**
- **Student Support**
- **Logistics Commitment**

In alignment with our strategic commitment to **Transparent and Responsible Leadership**, the process forward is guided by a robust **Transition Framework**. Our goal is a **smooth transition** that is clear, predictable, inclusive, and transparent. We are moving with discipline and care.

## Key Components of the Framework:

- **Phased Implementation:** We are committed to the K-5 consolidation in **FY27 (2026-2027)** and the Grade 6 transition in **FY28 (2027-2028)**. This timeline provides ample opportunity for the careful transition work needed.
- **Dedicated Leadership:** A **Transition Steering Team**, including Configuration Committee members, staff, families, and students (Grade 5-8), will be established to guide the roadmap.
- **Early Communication:** We are launching a comprehensive communications campaign with biweekly updates, infographics, and clear key messages: *"This configuration expands access to high-quality instruction, resources, and peer learning for every student."*
- **Staffing Clarity:** We plan to finalize the Staff Assignment Plan by **March 2026** to reduce anxiety and provide clarity to our dedicated educators.
- **Student Support:** For the Grade 6 transition, we will implement specific actions like **multiple "Step-Up Days"** and **student-led orientation programs** to ensure a welcoming environment and address concerns about interaction with older students. We will replicate the careful support currently given to rising 7th graders.
- **Logistics Commitment:** We acknowledge that travel time is a key criterion. We commit to manage student travel time by adhering as closely as possible to a maximum of **45 minutes one-way for elementary students** and **60 minutes for middle/high school students**.

# Seizing Opportunity



**This transition is not just about efficiency; it is about student opportunity and community vitality.**

**We must shift from systemic inconsistencies towards sustained excellence and equity.**

We stand at a critical juncture. External pressures necessitate change, and we have the opportunity to define that change ourselves, rather than wait for others to define it for us.

This configuration is a strategic action to shift WCUUSD from systemic inconsistencies toward **sustained excellence and equity**. By prioritizing program over structure and centering our core values in the transition, we ensure that we are doing what is right for **all** our students, securing a strong, connected, and student-centered future.

We must stay focused on answering the questions:

Are students learning and thriving?

Are we using our resources effectively and equitably?

Are we making progress toward our strategic goals?

We welcome your feedback and questions now, as your voices will continue to shape this necessary and urgent work.

## A Vision for Excellence and Equity through Configuration

### Mission and Guiding Principles

The Washington Central Unified Union School District (WCUUSD) exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity, and power to contribute to their local and global communities. Our commitment is defined in our **Strategic Plan**, which focuses on building a culture of well-being, challenging and empowering students through evidence-based instruction, and ensuring responsive and transparent leadership.



See the  
**Strategic Plan**

**The core principle guiding this configuration work is that our programming must drive our structural decisions.**

This commitment ensures that the resources and learning opportunities desired for all students are equitably and consistently delivered. A shift in how we are configured will allow us to address current inconsistencies in programming, staffing, and facility utilization, particularly in light of external pressures like declining enrollment and the new foundation funding model (Act 73).

The proposed vision for education in our district involves consolidating into three sustainable K-6 elementary sites in the FY27 (2026-2027 school year) and transitioning Grade 6 students to U-32 in FY28 (2027-2028 school year) to establish a 6-12 middle/high school experience. The vision for PreK is to expand the weekly hours of instruction and support PreK in locations with sufficient enrollments.

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### What Our Elementary Schools Will Look Like (Structure and Resources)

The new configuration will establish three elementary schools (PreK-5) defined by consistency, stability, and optimal capacity, moving away from reactive classroom configurations often necessitated by low and/or fluctuating enrollments.

- **Optimized Learning Spaces and Class Sizes:** The physical structure will consist of three K-5 elementary schools. This consolidation minimizes the need for multi-grade classes that are created reactively due to low and inconsistent enrollment, which can negatively impact our ability to deliver an articulated curriculum. We are committed to adhering to the WCUUSD Class Size D6 Policy and state minimum standards (Act 73).
  - **Class Size Commitments:** Classrooms will adhere to these standards: K-3 classes will maintain a minimum of 13 students and a maximum of 20 students; Grades 4-5 classes will maintain a minimum of 15 students and a maximum of 25 students.
  - **Grade level configurations:** Classes will be one grade level when possible and, if not, elementary classes will be configured as Grades 1-2, 3-4, and 5-6.
  - **Consistent School Location:** Students will be in one location for their elementary school instead of having low enrollment classes attend other schools.
- **Dedicated Professional Staff:** The reduction in the number of buildings allows the district to minimize shared positions and transition staff to full-time roles wherever possible, ensuring stability and consistency. This structural change creates the opportunity to deliver equitable access to specialized services.
  - **Support Staff Commitments:** We will provide full-time School Nurse services and full-time School Counselor services in every school. Library/Media will also be full-time and allow for collaboration between staff and the Librarian.
  - **Special Education Staffing:** We are committed to averaging 1 special educator for every 70 students in our elementary schools. The new configuration will mean that special educators are not spread across a wide span of grade levels, and they can also increase their effectiveness of instruction by allowing for small group instruction. The configuration will also reduce travel time for specialists (Psychs, OTs, ECSES).

## What Our Elementary Schools Will Sound Like (Instruction and Equity)

The sounds of our new elementary schools will be those of robust, articulated curriculum and deeper student discussions with more diverse experiences and ideas. Our staff will be able to provide consistent student support and deep professional collaboration, guaranteeing that all students receive equitable and high-quality instruction regardless of their school site.

- **Equitable and Consistent Programming:** All students will receive an intentional and consistent baseline program across all three sites. This consistency directly addresses existing program variations and the difficulty of delivering a curriculum in reactive multi-age settings.
- **Core Instruction (5 days/week):**
  - » Literacy (including phonics/word study, reading, writing)
  - » Math (including first instruction lesson, math menu, i-Ready MyPath)
  - » Science
  - » Global Citizenship
- **Allied Arts Access:** Students will have Art, Music, and Library access once per week each, and PE access twice per week. These classes will be 40 minutes per day. This ensures robust enrichment opportunities are consistently delivered, addressing the current constraint where allied arts teachers are often spread across multiple small schools. Allied arts and content teachers can also collaborate and do collaborative work.
- **Multi-Layered System of Support (MLSS):** The structure will support a vigorous MLSS, leveraging cohort sizes for more targeted interventions and specialized instruction. High-quality universal instruction (Layers 1 and 2) will be evidence-based and aligned across settings to address expectations and practices identified district-wide. MLSS Layers 3-6 will be staffed and provided to students so that they receive targeted and intensive interventions and enrichments that supplement the core classroom curriculum in order to meet specific student academic, behavioral, and social needs. Students will receive these services in appropriately sized cohorts that are as diverse as possible. The district will continue to provide guidance, training, and implementation support related to Child Find, special education referral, and evaluation processes.
- **Professional Collaboration:** Teachers will have enhanced opportunities for collaboration and co-planning time with grade-level peers, fostering high-quality instruction and intervention delivery. The new scheduling will support joint planning time, embedded professional learning, and the development of teaching teams.

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## What Our Elementary Schools Will Feel Like (Culture, Community, and Transition)

The feeling of our new schools will be characterized by a deep sense of belonging, safety, and vitality, reflecting our Core Beliefs in Well-Being, Community Engagement, and Humanity, Justice, Community, and Belonging. This culture will be built upon the implementation of the **Community Schools Framework**, which we have started working on in the district, and which serves as our strategy for achieving equitable outcomes.

### A. Fostering Culture through the Community Schools Framework

We will implement the **Community Schools approach**—a “way of doing school” focused on improving school climate, student success, and civic engagement—by emphasizing its four pillars:

1. **Integrated Student Supports:** We will address out-of-school barriers to learning by coordinating services such as medical, dental, and mental health care. This provides a stronger safety net for students experiencing anxiety or complex needs. The community school director will coordinate support programs and foster a positive and healthy school climate.
2. **Expanded and Enriched Learning Time and Opportunities:** We will expand access to enrichment and academic support outside the traditional school day. This includes grant writing for before- and after-school programming and investing in “third space” (spaces where students can gather informally to socialize, explore interests, and develop a sense of community). The goal is to provide universal before-school and after-school programming.
3. **Active Family and Community Engagement:** We will build trust and foster relationships by actively involving families and community members as partners. This engagement is critical to preserving the “magic” and relational depth of smaller schools. We strive to offer educational opportunities for adults (such as English classes or computer skills) and structure events like two-town spaghetti dinners or community library nights to create connections between adults and families from different towns. We commit to making our schools the centers of our communities.

- 4. Collaborative Leadership and Practices:** We will leverage the collective expertise of all stakeholders—including teachers, families, and partners—to develop shared goals and tailored programming. This collaborative process will be used to create new, unified school identities, ensuring that **all students belong** in the new structure and fostering a sense of ownership and pride. We will intentionally integrate the traditions of merging schools into the new culture.

## **B. Ensuring a Smooth Transition (Timeline and Logistics)**

Elementary school configuration is recommended for FY27, the 2026-2027 school year. Grade 6 transition to U-32 is recommended for FY28, the 2027-2028 school year.

The district is committed to executing a smooth transition that aligns with our core values, keeping the process clear, predictable, inclusive, and transparent, addressing community concerns about lack of information and haste.

- 1. Transition Planning and Leadership:** A comprehensive transition plan will be developed once the configuration structure is approved. This plan will include a Steering Team composed of Configuration Committee members, teachers, support staff, families, and students (Grade 5-8). We will implement a communications campaign featuring biweekly updates and infographics on the new configuration to communicate clearly and often.
- 2. Staff and Facility Timeline:** We will finalize the Staff Assignment Plan by March 2026 to reduce staff anxiety and provide clarity. Building capacity and readiness assessments of Berlin, East Montpelier, and Middlesex will be conducted by February 2026. Teachers interested in teaching in the Middle School will be supported in the process to obtain middle grades licensure. Celebration and closure events for consolidating schools will be planned for May-June 2026.
- 3. Middle School Transition:** The shift of Grade 6 students to U-32 allows for a developmentally appropriate 6-12 structure and greater access to co-curricular activities. We will ensure Grade 6 students feel welcome in the 2027-2028 school year. We will have specific actions to create a welcoming environment including student-led orientation programs, multiple “Step-Up Days”, community library nights at U-32, and by providing multiple exposures for families to meet teachers and understand scheduling. We acknowledge concerns about the transition and will develop a transition plan that includes identifying students with additional emotional or logistical needs and planning appropriately.
- 4. Busing and Travel Commitments:** The configuration plan will also manage student travel time, a key criterion impacting student well-being.
  - We will adhere as closely as possible to maximum one-way travel times: 45 minutes for elementary students and 60 minutes for middle/high school students.
  - We will ensure the new configuration integrates a cost-benefit analysis of transportation implications.
  - We will update transportation policies based on new state guidelines under Act 73 (expected December 15, 2025). We will explicitly address the concerns about 6th-grade students riding buses with older high school students by developing a clear plan for safe and welcoming transportation routes.

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## **Conclusion: Actualizing Our Strategic Plan**

This reconfiguration proposal is a necessary and strategic action to actualize our **Strategic Plan** now (see QR code on first page). By moving to three consolidated K-5 schools and shifting Grade 6 to U-32, the district is creating a coherent, equitable, and sustainable educational environment that delivers the consistent, high-quality programming mandated by our strategic goals. The foundation of this system rests on **prioritizing our vision, which drives our programming, which ultimately drives our structure**. This commitment ensures we move from systemic inconsistencies toward sustained excellence and equity for every student.

Once a Configuration Structure has been approved, the following transition plan will be fully developed.

Goal: Ensure a smooth transition to the new WCUUSD configuration that keeps the Core Values centered and strengthens student learning, belonging, and access to opportunities.

Overall Framework: align the transition with the core beliefs and strategic plan.

#### Actions:

- Purpose of configuration - student opportunity and community vitality, not just efficiency.
- Create a Steering Team - Configuration committee and teacher, support staff, families, and students grade 5-8.
- Set Values for Decision Making: Core values and configuration criteria
- Develop a roadmap (December 2025)

#### Specific Areas:

- Communication and community engagement
  - Launch a communications campaign
    - Biweekly update
      - Key messages: This configuration expands access to high-quality instruction, resources, and peer learning for every student. We are designing every step with belonging and care at the center - for students, families, and staff. Every child will have equitable access to the programs, teachers, and support they deserve. We will communicate early, often, and clearly. Your questions and voices will shape our work.
      - Transition Steering Team launch
      - Infographic on new configuration
      - Listening sessions
    - Staff Communication
      - Staffing assignments and placement confirmations
      - Transition toolkits (transportation, calendars, FAQs, support contacts)
    - End of August “Welcome Week”
      - Messages from principals
      - Press releases
      - Beginning the new chapter
  - Host community conversations at each school
  - Develop a FAQ for transition
  - Plan and hold celebration and closure events for schools (May-June 2026)
- Student Transition and Belonging
  - Student led orientation programs
  - Move up day planning
  - Identify students with additional needs for emotional or logistical support

- Develop new elementary identities (colors, mascots, traditions) What do we want to preserve from each community in the new configurations?
- Staffing and Culture
  - Communication Plan about staffing processes, transfers, and timelines (Staff Assignment Plan March 2026)
  - Determine placement criteria and licensing requirements
  - Build cross-school learning teams
  - Have “Welcome to our new school” retreats for merged staff
- Curriculum, Instruction and systems alignment (April 2026)
  - Review K-5 Curriculum and class configurations
  - Build 6-8 team structure
  - Review MLSS systems across schools and plan for student needs in new environments
- Facilities and Operations
  - Conduct building capacity and readiness assessments of Berlin, East Montpelier, and Middlesex (February 2026)
  - Facilities transition plan - moving materials and resources where needed
  - Transportation Plan
  - Determine next steps for vacated facilities.

**TRANSPORTATION SYNOPSIS**

**CURRENT DATA**

**Transportation Data for 2025/2026**

School	No. of Buses AM	No. of Buses PM	Enrollment	Total Miles AM	Total Miles PM	Longest Ride AM	Longest Ride PM
Berlin	3	3	192	62	65	48	48
Calais	3	2	108	61	55	32	52
Doty Memorial	1	1	61	19	30	55	53
East Montpelier	3	3	205	21	22	54	68
Rumney Memorial	3	2	120	18	23	43	50

**Current Stats: lowest to highest, all bus routes**

School	AM Ridership	PM Ridership	% Usage Range (On Total Enrollment)	Avg %
Berlin	20	27	41%–53%	47%
Calais	11	32	42%–60%	51%
Doty Memorial	5	14	15%–38%	26.5%
East Montpelier	20	34	34%–62%	48%
Rumney Memorial	16	25	59%–67%	63%

Bus capacity is 72 students. We are currently utilizing between 15% and 67% of bus capacity.

Longest morning bus ride = Doty / 55 minutes

Longest afternoon bus ride = East Montpelier / 68 minutes

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## PROPOSED DATA

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### Three Elementary Schools and Sixth Grade to U-32 Estimated Transportation Data for 2026/2027

(These numbers will likely be less; based on this year's numbers)

School	No. of Buses AM	No. of Buses PM	Enrollment	Total Miles AM	Total Miles PM	Longest Ride AM	Longest Ride PM
Berlin	3	3	168	62	68	48	48
Calais/EMES	6	5	274	70	70	45	52
Doty/Rumney	4	3	181	35	35	60	60

### Proposed stats:

**Number of buses:** same as 2025-26

**Longest morning bus ride:** Doty / Rumney = 60 minutes

**Longest afternoon bus ride:** Doty / Rumney = 60 minutes

### Takeaways:

- The longest am bus ride **increases** from 55 to 60 minutes.
- The longest pm bus ride **decreases** from 68 minutes to 60 minutes.\*

*\*shortest / longest bus rides vary by bus route & geography covered.*

### Impacts:

- Rumney's longest am bus ride increases from 43 - 60 minutes
- Rumney's longest pm bus ride increases from 50 - 60 minutes
- Doty longest am bus ride increases from 55 - 60 minutes
- Doty longest pm bus ride increases from 53 - 60 minutes
- Calais longest am bus ride increases from 32 - 45 minutes (no change in pm)
- EMES longest am bus ride decreases from 54 - 45 minutes
- EMES longest pm bus ride decreases from 68 - 52 minutes
- Berlin = no change