

***E.H. Merrifield Bus Co.Inc.***  
**>1938<**  
**P.O. Box 337**  
**Chestnut Hill Avenue**  
**Athol, Massachusetts 01331**  
**Tel 978-249-4804-Fax 978-249-7896**

September 23, 2020

Dear Athol-Royalston Regional School District Parents/Guardians:

Due to COVID-19 and the CDC safety protocols, the busing of students to their schools will be very different this year. We are allowed 23 students per bus. Many of our routes will require double bus runs which means some of our students will be picked up later than usual with a later arrival to school. We anticipate no more than 25 minutes between each bus run. Please have your child at his/her bus stop 10 minutes prior to the designated time. Some of our students may arrive past the official school start time. The staff is prepared to accommodate the two different arrival times.

Departure from school will follow a similar pattern. The first group of students leaving from school are the same students who were dropped off first. Students who were dropped off last will be the last to be picked up. Students in the second group will arrive home approximately 25-minutes later than previous years.

The students will be picked up at their typical bus stop and an approximate designated time for each stop. The times for each bus stop will be posted on the district's web page starting Thursday, September 24th.

At this time, the Royalston Community School does not require double bus runs but this could change when and if more students chose to return to in-person learning at the school. Royalston Community School parents will be notified of changes in their child/ren's bus times if the need for double bus runs occurs.

All students will be given an assigned seat where they will sit for the entire year. There will be one student per seat. All students, including pre-k, kindergarten and first grade, are required to wear masks while riding the bus to and from school. After the morning and afternoon routes are finished, each bus will be disinfected. Bus windows will remain open during each route weather permitting.

Each bus driver will be required to wear a mask. If a driver feels ill and has some COVID-19 symptoms, he/she will be required to be tested for COVID-19 and a substitute driver will be assigned that route until a negative test result is received or he/she has followed the CDC established protocols for an individual that tested positive for COVID-19.

It is vital that we all work collaboratively to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Please do not send a sick child on the bus. Our bus drivers will monitor the students on the bus. If they think a student may be sick at the bus stop and a caregiver is there they will have the child remain with the parent/guardian. If a child exhibits symptoms on the bus the school will be contacted to evaluate the child once he/she arrives at school. We look forward to working with you to ensure the health and safety of the students and drivers.

If you have any questions please contact Merrifield Bus Company at 978-249-4804.

Sincerely,  
Merrifield Bus Company