

SHERMAN BOARD OF EDUCATION
SHERMAN, CONNECTICUT 06784
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING - MARCH 23, 2026
ZOOM ONLY
9:30 AM

A Transportation Committee Meeting of the Sherman Board of Education was called to order by Kristin Grasseler at 9:38 AM on March 23, 2026 on Zoom.

1. PRESENT

For the Board:	Mrs. Grasseler, Mrs. Febbraio, Mr. Laughlin
Administration:	Dr. Cosentino, Dr. Fernand
Invited Guests:	Rich Dufour, Amanda (Dispatcher and Asst. Manager), George Papadopoulos (Terminal Manager)

2. DISCUSSION

2.1. Review and Discuss Bus Routing Modifications and Potential Cost Efficiencies.

After introductions, Mrs. Grasseler began the meeting noting the purpose was to discuss bussing options and alternatives for the 2026-2027 school year. Currently, Sherman Elementary School District utilizes 5 buses and is looking to cut down to 4 buses with a potential savings of \$79,600.

Mrs. Grasseler expressed her concerns of long term effects and the increased time on the buses. As well as, the possible elimination of cul de sacs, which would affect 6 Sherman families.

Mr. Dufour explained that he lives in Florida, but had driven the route when he was last in CT and believed that some of the cul du sacs were unnecessary, but may have been added in the past for a younger child and was never reevaluated. He suggested that the Board may want to go out and drive the cul de sacs to help gauge their comfort level with eliminating unnecessary ones.

Mrs. Grasseler, being a Route 39 resident, was concerned with safety and the state roads. Especially when looking at the cul du sacs, finding a safe place to park, and for students to board buses. Mr. Dufour explained that there were former lake communities that the buses have been unable to get into. making it necessary to meet on Route 39 or 37. He clarified that those situations already exist in Sherman.

Mrs. Grasseler inquired about the potential need to shift start and end times within the school schedule. Mr. Dufour said that the Shepaug bus can't drop students off until 7:15 AM, putting it back in Sherman at 7:45-7:50. That bus drive then has limited time and can only do a very short route when it gets back. To maintain the current routing with cul-de-sacs the start time would

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need to increase by 10-15 minutes. If the cul-de-sacs were eliminated, they would only have to move the start and end times by 5 minutes.

Mr. Laughlin reviewed the spreadsheet for clarification stating that the first bus has a 40-minute AM run and a 38-minute PM run. The second bus has a 41-minute AM run and a 33-minute PM run. The third bus has a 50-minute AM run and 54 minute PM. Then the fourth bus has a 33-minute AM and 34-minute PM run. By eliminating one bus,(option 3) and reducing to 4 buses, there will only be a 5-minute change in school starting and ending times of 8:30 AM to 3:20 PM. If the cul-de-sacs are eliminated, the new bus times would be 45-minutes and 40-minutes, 45-minutes and 38-minutes, 45-minutes and 45-minutes, and then 35-minutes and 36-minutes, for the remaining 4 buses. Then reducing the longest bus time to 45. Mr. Dufour confirmed.

Mrs. Febbraio agreed that the elimination of certain cul-de-sacs was the best option of the choices given.

Mr. Laughlin requested information on the high school busing schedule. Mr. Dufour explained that in the morning, 4 or 5 buses go and do in-town pickup routes for Shepaug, Henry Abbott Tech, New Fairfield and New Milford High students, and meet at Sherman School for a transfer at approximately 6:30-6:40 AM. One bus continues to Shepaug, two buses to New Milford High, and 2 buses stay in town. Mr. Dufour confirmed that the proposed bus change would not affect the high school bus services.

Mrs. Grasseler asked how complicated it would be to add a bus back in the future once it has been removed. Mr. Dufour confirmed that if the school has the funding available, the bus can be added back without an issue.

Mr. Laughlin, for further clarification, inquired as to the evacuation protocol with the combining buses down to 4. Mr. Dufour reassured them that a full evacuation of the entire school, faculty, and administration would remain possible.

Mr. Laughlin and Mrs. Grasseler thanked everyone. Going forward, if the referendum fails, the Board will have an option to fall back on or to be used for the 2027-2028 school year.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Grasseler adjourned the meeting at 10:14 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Grasseler
Sherman Board of Education