



BILL LEE
GOVERNOR

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NINTH FLOOR, ANDREW JOHNSON TOWER
710 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY
NASHVILLE, TN 37243-0375

LIZZETTE REYNOLDS
COMMISSIONER

Via Electronic Mail

March 28, 2024

Matt Hixson, Director of Schools
Hawkins County Schools
200 N Depot Street
Rogersville, TN 37857

Re: Waiver Request for Maximum Time in Transit

Dear Director Hixson:

I am in receipt of your March 25, 2024 request of a waiver of the maximum transit time requirements in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-2105. You have requested this waiver due to the Tennessee Department of Transportation's closure of a bridge serving students who reside in the McPheeters Bend community in your district. According to your request, the closure of this bridge has substantially increased transit time for these students.

Please note that the Tennessee Department of Education has historically granted a waiver for up to 110 minutes in transit. Therefore, your request for a waiver of the maximum transit time is granted for the remainder of the 2023-24 school year upon the condition that no student is in transit for longer than 110 minutes.

If you find that additional transit time in excess of 110 minutes is needed, please contact us for further review and assistance.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lizzette Reynolds
Commissioner

Subject: RE: Bus Route Time Waiver - Failed Bridge Affecting Alternate Route Bus Time - Hawkins County

From: Hixson, Matt <matt.hixson@HCK12.NET>

Sent: Monday, March 25, 2024 4:25 PM

To: Commissioner of Education <Commissioner.Education@tn.gov>

Cc: McCarty, Chris W. <CMcCarty@LewisThomason.com>; Christian, Chris <chris.christian@HCK12.NET>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bus Route Time Waiver - Failed Bridge Affecting Alternate Route Bus Time - Hawkins County

Good Afternoon Commissioner Reynolds,

Is there a waiver to allow for additional student time on a bus? Currently, I believe TN law only allows for a maximum of 90 minutes per complete route. The reason I ask for consideration is that we were informed late last week, during spring break, that TDOT and the County of Hawkins had effectively shut down access to a bridge we use to serve the McPheeters Bend community of our county school system, affecting roughly 140 students. The shortest of alternative routes available, adds a minimum of 45 minutes to the two routes serving this community. We are extremely close to exceeding our maximum allowable time to have students on the bus after our first routes today. Can you please assist?

Sincerely,
Matt Hixson
Hawkins County