

Rollinsford School Board

Late Bus FAQ

1. What is the late bus?

Also known as the activities bus, the late bus serves students at Marshwood Middle and High Schools by providing transportation to Rollinsford later in the afternoon. It's designed to support students staying after school for extra academic help, participating in sports, clubs, plays, and other activities, etc.

2. When does the late bus run?

Unless otherwise notified, on Monday-Thursday, the late bus picks up riders at Marshwood Middle School at 4 PM. Then, it travels to Marshwood High School to collect riders there. The late bus does not operate on Fridays.

Parents can check for late bus availability via school emails and web sites.

3. Why does Rollinsford participate?

Though Rollinsford students attend Marshwood schools, transportation arrangements are separate. Since the late bus is available to Maine residents attending Marshwood, we endeavored to make the same service available to Rollinsford students.

4. Do students have to sign up ahead of time to use the late bus?

No. Students can simply board the bus on days they need it.

5. What are the costs associated with the late bus?

At this time, there is no cost to students to ride the bus.

The School Board had multiple options for offering and paying for the late bus:

- a.) Contract with First Student (our current bus company) to pick up students and drop them at their normal bus stops around town. This option proved to be cost prohibitive, at approximately \$20,000 per year.

- b.) Marshwood agreed to add a Rollinsford stop to one of their late bus routes for a much lower cost than option a.

The bus drops students at a central location in Rollinsford: the American Legion on Foundry Street. Students must make their own way home from there by walking home, walking to the library, being picked up by a parent, or carpooling with a friend. The cost for this option is approximately \$4,500 per year.

6. What challenges are associated with funding the late bus?

Since the late bus is not part of normal transportation for middle and high school students, its operation requires an additional cost. Although Rollinsford sends approximately 160 students to the Marshwood district, an average of only 4 or fewer students have utilized the late bus on a given day.

The School Board endeavors to always balance the needs of students with the needs of Rollinsford taxpayers. The late bus is a service we'd like to continue offering to students who stay after school to receive extra help from teachers or to participate in activities.

Given the costs associated with having multiple stops, we are offering the centralized Legion stop as a compromise, at a greatly reduced cost. Given the low ridership so far, it's clear that increasing Late Bus spending would not be fiscally responsible at this time. (It's important to note that ridership was still quite low when the bus was stopping at multiple stops around town.)

7. How can I weigh in?

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions about the late bus, please attend a School Board meeting, and we'll be very interested to hear them. Alternatively, you may email the School Board: <https://tinyurl.com/rollinsfordschoolboard>