



SamTrans Board of Directors
Meeting July 8, 2026

Correspondence as of July 2, 2026

Subject

1. Public comment
2. Comments for the Board
3. Re: FW: Kids left alone on school bus routes — Bus driver leaves bus with kindergarteners alone inside
4. Reimagine Dumbarton Study - Letter from Atherton
5. RE: Vector EHS Management Notification - Customer Service #1016484 – *Staff response*
6. RE: FW: Kids left alone on school bus routes — Bus driver leaves bus with kindergarteners alone inside – *General Manager/CEO response*

From: spirou5@icloud.com
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public comment
Date: Monday, June 29, 2026 11:02:12 AM

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Dear SamTrans Board of Directors and Measure W Citizens' Oversight Committee,

I am writing to strongly oppose any use of public funds to paint buses with thematic designs representing specific cultural groups or universities including Mexican, Filipino, Chinese, San Jose State, or Santa Clara University even pride themes. This constitutes wasteful spending that does nothing to improve transit service for the people of San Mateo County.

SamTrans is already financially strained. The agency ended FY2025 with a projected \$28.8 million deficit. While the FY2026 operating budget of \$323.7 million is balanced, FY2027 is projected at \$339.2 million with a structural deficit. After FY2027, one-time surplus sources will be exhausted. Every dollar spent on cosmetic bus painting is a dollar diverted from maintaining service, repairing equipment, or keeping fares affordable. Efficiency is already declining. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission found that SamTrans vehicle service hours per full-time employee dropped from 1,187 in FY2018 to just 855 in FY2023. Drivers now spend less than half their working time actually transporting passengers. Meanwhile, fare revenue covers less than 6% of operating expenses—taxpayers are subsidizing the rest.

Thematic bus painting is a luxury we cannot afford. Full bus wraps can cost anywhere from \$5,000 to over \$25,000 per bus. These are not one-time costs—wraps need maintenance, replacement, and removal when designs change. Customization of public vehicles has been identified as a driver of higher costs for transit agencies. The Woodlands Township, for example, allocated approximately \$5,300 per bus for wraps. With a fleet of over 200 buses, these costs add up quickly.

These funds should be prioritized for: maintaining existing service levels, keeping buses in good repair, improving safety and security, and addressing the projected budget shortfall. SamTrans should focus on being a transit agency, not a mobile billboard for cultural or institutional branding.

I urge the Board and the COC to reject any proposal that allocates public money toward themed bus painting. If such designs are pursued, they should be fully funded by private sponsors or advertising revenue—not by taxpayers.

Respectfully,
Ivan V

From: [aleta dupree](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Comments for the Board
Date: Monday, June 29, 2026 8:15:27 PM

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Greetings Board Secretary, with thanks, please forward this correspondence to the full SamTrans Board for the next General Meeting.

Good afternoon Chair Marie Chuang and Members.

Aleta Dupree for the record, she, her, with Team Folds.

I bring you my comments in relevance to the ongoing activities of the San Mateo County Transit District.

I share with you on matters of zero emissions vehicles and associated ecosystems. This is a matter that I speak on often, and I am able to do so in greater detail in this letter than in speaking in Public Comments at your various Meetings. I believe in the importance of conversational relationships, of which a major part of this is ongoing sharing of comments in Meetings and in letters. And matters of Public Transportation can be complex, challenging, and even fraught at times. Such goes with the territory of operating a large public transportation system serving diverse areas and populations.

I consider issues of vehicle types, in our case, battery electric, and hydrogen fuel cell. I do not believe this has to be an all or nothing choice. I feel that different technologies have their strengths and weaknesses, and fulfilling different kinds of needs. I do not take any prohibitionist stances in this, instead I advocate for deliberative and respectful conversation. I do not have any professional credentials in this area, and what I say should not be taken as authoritative. I share things as I know them and I call them as I see them. I believe in the importance of commitment to values, with the ultimate goal of building the very best SamTrans that we can have.

Battery and hydrogen powered vehicles have their strengths, and also their shortcomings. Such is true with most anything, and I try not to view such through binary lenses. I have experience in riding on both kinds of vehicles, in different jurisdictions and situations. Yet my experience with zero emission vehicles goes back to early 1970. It was in the 34 Street-8 Avenue Station that I was introduced to the New York City Subway for the first time. I knew even then that the Subway, one of the largest urban transportation systems in the world, was powered by electricity. And later on I rode in golf carts, I had a few electric bicycles and scooters, and eventually I rode in and drove some electric cars. I have taken several hundred rideshare trips in electric cars over the last few years. Some of these trips were in cars of autonomous nature as well. And one time I test drove a hydrogen powered sport utility vehicle at a street fair in downtown Oakland.

I had my first experience in a zero emission bus in Oakland, on AC Transit, in 2010. I was intrigued at the time, and wanting to know more. I certainly found the experience more comfortable than on a diesel bus, mostly in less noise and vibration. I do not remember exactly when I traveled on a battery powered bus for the first time. This might have been in 2016, in Denver, on the free 16 Street shuttle service. And riding on battery powered buses is still infrequent for me, except when I am in Denver and staying near 16 Street. The first time I used a battery powered bus on a highway was a few years ago. This was on a short visit to Sacramento, and the airport bus route used an all electric dedicated fleet. The bus performed well and I walked around the Sacramento airport for a while given that the route operated at hourly intervals. And in Sacramento I stayed in the hotel that Arnold Schwarzenegger used during the time he served as Governor. I also used the small electric scooters to get around the neighborhood as well.

I think there is a place for both battery and hydrogen powered platforms, the question is of to what degree. The answer is not clear or obvious, as diverse transportation systems have differing needs. For SamTrans the answer may not be clear at this time. Hydrogen buses have their advantages, notably a fairly quick fueling process and substantial range. This is helpful when buses do not spent long times laid over in the yards. Some bus systems operate vehicles on 24 hour routes, only returning for fueling and maintenance. And hydrogen is less sensitive to ambient temperatures, especially in cold.

Yet hydrogen does have its drawbacks. Hydrogen has to be transported to the vehicles, given that hydrogen is almost always made off site. Therefore expense of money and time for transportation of the fuel is incurred. And it seems like there aren't very many places producing hydrogen, limiting options for purchase. And hydrogen propulsion systems are indeed complex, requiring extensive training to maintain and repair. I am sure that our maintenance staff would be up to the task of doing so. Yet can our goals be achieved with simpler solutions? These are questions indeed needing to be asked.

For me the largest issue I raise concerning hydrogen is in its origin. Hydrogen is indeed zero emission at the tailpipe, basically emitting water. Yet there are different ways that hydrogen is produced, with varying levels of byproducts and emissions. Most hydrogen is produced from hydrocarbons such as natural gas. And the resulting process does produce substantial amounts of emissions, just in the places of its production instead at the points of end uses. That does not minimize the issue, given that emissions have effects both local and far reaching from the sources of production. Hydrogen can be produced from water using renewable electricity, through a process called electrolysis. Yet even with the use of electrolysis, if the electricity used for production is not renewable, or even greenhouse gas free, then the end product is not really zero emission. And I do not know if anyone in our region is offering a hydrogen product that is produced using renewable electricity, even so, what would the price be for such product?

I think over time I have come to prefer buses that are battery powered. I am not calling for the abandonment of hydrogen powered bus deployment, I feel both have their appropriate places. Battery powered vehicles are of a simpler infrastructure, both on board, and in the fueling process we know as charging. Yet there are challenges as do exist with hydrogen. Range can be an issue, especially in cold weather, both due to ambient temperature, and the use of climate control. Such is true with hot weather as well. For vehicles that operate 24 hours, only returning to refuel, fast charging has its issues. Fast charging can have some negative impacts on battery health, perhaps leading to faster degradation over time.

And large format electric vehicle charging can be difficult to deploy. I would like to hear more about the capacities of the 37 chargers being deployed at the maintenance facility. If each of these are 100 kilowatts (kW) capable, then the total highest possible demand for energy is 3700 kW, (3.7 MW). This is an industrial sized deployment, needing a large transformer. Sometimes power companies balk at such possibilities, and claim being unable to offer service. I am not able to speak for the incumbent utility that serves our facilities. Yet in Las Vegas, some of the large casino hotel properties have electric demands in the range of 20 MW. Grand Central Terminal, which is a famous public transportation facility that is located in New York City, has a 25 MW power supply. And most of that energy is used to power the many trains that operate in that facility every day.

And the costs of industrial electricity can be challenging, given charges based not just on volume, but of demand as well. Residential electricity is generally billed strictly on volume, in the number of kilowatt hours consumed per month. Such is like filling a vessel with water. And many businesses and industries are also charged based on demand. This is similar to the speed that one fills such aforementioned vessel. I was on an optional demand based electricity plan in my home for about a year. This gave me valuable information and insight into deeper levels of using electricity. I am no longer on this plan, sometimes I came out financially ahead, other times behind. You see, I live in an all electric home, at this time powered by solar energy on an annualized basis. And most of my electric loads are highly episodic and variable in nature. Some I can control directly, such as heat producing appliances, both large and small. I have one of those electric ranges with four coiled elements. Yet some loads I don't control directly, such as the hot water heater. And while I do have a thermostat to control the temperature in my home, I do not directly control when the heating elements or air conditioning unit turn on and off. And when taking a shower, the hot water heater does not turn on immediately. Over time I have found ways to influence electric demand in my favor, in the hope of not having too many large loads drawing power at the same time. And in the summer time, when it is hot outside, I avoid doing heavy cooking in the afternoons, otherwise the house can get uncomfortably hot. So I do the heavy cooking in the earlier times of the day, when the air conditioner can remove the heat more quickly.

And electric vehicle charging is more sustained in demand, though not flat by any means. You see, I have watched a number of videos about electric vehicle charging, and seeing the profiles of electric demand thereof. Because of this phenomenon, many charging facilities have battery backup systems. This helps to level out demand from the utility over time, and to take advantage of time of use rates. In earlier years I practiced using time of use electricity in my home, at the time the savings were quite substantial. And electric rate design can be very complicated, often understood only in the realm of the mathematically inclined and those who identify as policy wonks. I enjoy reading such material from time to time. And in New York, there are special rates for electric traction systems, mostly applied to the New York City Subway, that which I have used and enjoyed since 1970.

And with electricity, for any purpose, I am concerned about origin as well. I seek for SamTrans to use renewable electricity in its entirety. Caltrain does so for its traction power system. It is absolutely essential to remember that SamTrans is the managing agency for Caltrain. And there is much that we at SamTrans can learn about electricity from Caltrain.

And so I ask of you to stay the course in working toward the goal of a zero emission vehicle fleet. I think this is reasonable and doable, though this will take time. Some questions will not have answers today, but they will come. It is my hope to not just continue talking about SamTrans, but to practice the things of SamTrans in doing them as well. I look forward to your next General Meeting.

Thank you.

From: [M. Walker Wells](#)
To: [Chuang, Marie \[mchuang@hillsborough.net\]](#); [Canepa, David \[dcanepa@smcgov.org\]](#); [Gee, Jeff \[jgee@redwoodcity.org\]](#); [SMCSupSpeier@smcgov.org](#); [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](#); [April Chan](#); [Casey Fromson](#); [Peter Skinner](#); [Jessica Epstein](#); [Jason Baker](#); [Devon Ryan](#); [Tasha Bartholomew](#); [Dan Lieberman](#); [Kevin Yin](#)
Subject: Re: FW: Kids left alone on school bus routes — Bus driver leaves bus with kindergarteners alone inside
Date: Tuesday, June 30, 2026 10:31:10 AM

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SamTrans Board and Staff,

Are there any updates related to this issue and who is the best point of contact for me to speak with?

School is out for the summer, but I plan to work with the district to communicate with parents what changes SamTrans is making or new protocols that are in place for the upcoming school year for children not being left alone with the door open in the middle of a 20 minute route.

Thanks,

Walker
(650) 384-5229

On Fri, Jun 5, 2026 at 7:52 AM M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com> wrote:

Thank you so much for your advocacy on this! Would you be willing to forward the following to staff for their review?

—

Hello Staff, thank you for spending the time looking into this. As you may know, SamTrans is one of many transportation systems under the same Cal/OSHA constraints.

I think it would be helpful to review how others are managing the transportation of minors, including the following aspects:

- Updated protocols when emergency breaks are required
- Communication with guardians and dependent school systems, especially around these practices (for example, no one on our route knew this was happening)
- Cumulative counts on and off the bus of unaccompanied minors
- Emergency protocols when a minor is missing
- Scheduling protocols to avoid unnecessary breaks
- Remote monitoring/chaperoning if an emergency break is needed
- Updated protocols around things like the doors open
- Mapping of available restrooms to avoid 2 hours before starting route
- Comparison to dedicated school bus routes

Just some top of mind thoughts, but I was hoping this would be helpful as you structure your approach to looking into this issue!

Thank you!

Sent from my iPhone
(650) 384-5229

On Sun, May 31, 2026 at 2:44 PM M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com> wrote:
I guess my request would be to have it as a Board of Directors agenda item for discussion.

Would there be an opportunity for me to provide public contact?

Walker

Sent from my iPhone
(650) 384-5229

On Wed, May 27, 2026 at 4:13 PM CEO_SMCSUPSPEIER
<SMCSUPSPEIER@smcgov.org> wrote:

Mr. Walker: This message was provided to me after I asked the personnel at SamTrans whether a response was finally sent to you. What would you like me to tell Supervisor Speier about this response from SamTrans personnel? Brian Perkins, Office of Supervisor Jackie Speier

Good afternoon. Thank you again for your patience while we reviewed this issue.

Our Bus Operations team has met with the operator about these concerns, and our operator will make an effort to use the facilities before/after his schedule to avoid having to do so in the middle of a route. However, please understand that this is something we cannot always guarantee given Cal/OSHA regulations for bus operators; while the Route 85 schedule itself is short, it does take our operator nearly 2 hours to make the trip to Portola Valley in order to start the route.

As mentioned in our initial response to the school, our buses are public routes and do not only serve students. As such, the regulations on SamTrans buses differ from school buses. Please rest assured, though, that SamTrans operators take several steps to safely secure the bus when they leave the vehicle, such as while they are on their legal break.

SamTrans staff will continue to monitor the route and work with the school. Thank you for taking the time to reach out and work with us to ensure our service remains safe and reliable for our riders.

Your SamTrans BOD Public Support Team

From: CEO_SMCSUPSPEIER <SMCSUPSPEIER@smcgov.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2026 3:11 PM
To: Jessica Epstein <epsteinj@samtrans.com>
Subject: FW: Kids left alone on school bus routes — Bus driver leaves bus with kindergarteners alone inside

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Jessica: What is the status of this inquiry? Thank you, Brian Perkins

From: M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2026 3:24 PM
To: MChuang@hillsborough.net; David Canepa <dcanepa@smcgov.org>; jgee@redwoodcity.org; CEO_SMCSUPSPEIER <SMCSupSpeier@smcgov.org>; Board@samtrans.com
Cc: April Chan <ChanA@samtrans.com>; fromsonc@caltrain.com; Peter Skinner <SkinnerP@samtrans.com>; epsteinj@samtrans.com; bakerj@caltrain.com; ryand@caltrain.com; bartholomewt@samtrans.com; liebermand@samtrans.com; yink@samtrans.com
Subject: Re: Kids left alone on school bus routes — Bus driver leaves bus with kindergarteners alone inside

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Ms. Epstein—it sounds like someone on your team responded to the principal. Could you take point on consulting the right people within samTrans to avoid leaving Kindergartners (and all kids) alone as part of the program?

Thanks! Walker

On Thu, May 14, 2026 at 3:09 PM M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com> wrote:

Board of Directors & Staff,

Sorry for including you all, but I am not sure who to reach out to. The current response from samTrans is "Contact Customer Service." Below is an email thread between the Portola Valley Elementary Principal, myself, and a samTrans representative.

Last week, I rode the bus with my Kindergartener son and I discovered that it makes a stop at Little People's Park (Town Center) in Portola Valley so the bus driver can take a bathroom break.

During these five minutes, the bus driver is not in the bus and the kids are left unattended with the door open. My son indicated that this is normal, but I am not sure. The route is very short and is exclusively used by elementary and middle school kids.

Is it possible to institute a policy that requires the driver to take a break at a different time?

Thank you,

Walker Wells

(650) 384-5229

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Lynette Hovland <lhovland@pvsd.net>
Date: Thu, May 14, 2026 at 9:14 AM
Subject: Re: San Mateo County Bus Route
To: M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com>

Dear Walker,

I forwarded your concern to SamTrans and received this response.

Route 85 is a school-oriented route but it is still a public route which means anyone can also take this bus. Also, the operator is not responsible for supervising students but to stay focused on the road and drive safely.

Please ask the parent to call SamTrans Customer Service at 1-800-660-4287 if there are additional questions or concerns.

Lynette

On Thu, May 14, 2026 at 8:03 AM M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com> wrote:

Hi Lynette, hope you're doing well!

I meant to connect with you last week, but I wanted to raise a concern regarding the bus route from Alice's restaurant to Corte Madera to Ormondale.

I rode it with Max last week and I discovered that it makes a stop at Little People's Park so the bus driver can take a bathroom break.

Max indicated that this is normal, but I am not sure. During this five minutes, the bus driver is not in the bus and the kids are left unattended.

At least this was the case when I was on the bus last week.

Is it possible to get in contact with the right person at Samtrans to request that the driver take a break at a different time?

All the best, Walker

Sent from my iPhone
(650) 384-5229

--

Ms. Lynette Hovland, MPA

Principal/District Title IX Coordinator

Portola Valley School District

Ormondale School

[200 Shawnee Pass](#)

[Portola Valley, CA 94028](#)

650-851-1777 ext. 2650

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From: [Michael Gallagher](#)
To: chuangm@samtrans.com
Cc: [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](#); [April Chan](#); [Board \(@smcta.com\)](#); [Anthony Suber](#); [Robert Ovadia](#)
Subject: Reimagine Dumbarton Study - Letter from Atherton
Date: Tuesday, June 30, 2026 1:39:34 PM
Attachments: [Outlook-oha2nvuk.png](#)
[Dumbarton Letter 063026 SamTrans Chuang.pdf](#)

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Good afternoon, SamTrans and SMCTA Board of Directors.

Attached to this email is a formal letter from the Atherton City Council concerning the Reimagine Dumbarton Study.

A paper copy of this letter has been sent in the mail as well.

If you have any questions or concerns for Atherton City Council, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or City Clerk Anthony Suber.

Michael Gallagher
Receptionist / Clerk
(650) 752-0500
80 Fair Oaks Lane
Atherton, CA 94027



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TOWN OF ATHERTON

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
80 FAIR OAKS LANE
ATHERTON, CALIFORNIA 94027
(650) 752-0500

June 30, 2026

Marie Chuang, Chair
SamTrans Board of Directors
166 North Rollins Road
Millbrae, CA 94030

SUBJECT: Reimagine Dumbarton Study

Dear Ms. Chuang:

The Town of Atherton writes to provide formal feedback on the Reimagine Dumbarton Corridor Study currently being conducted by SamTrans. The Town appreciates and commends SamTrans' effort to reimagine this long-dormant rail corridor, which has been an unused eyesore for decades and represents a genuine opportunity to improve connectivity between the Dumbarton Bridge area and the Redwood City Transit Center. We are supportive of this corridor being improved and put to productive use for the benefit of the region.

As the project has been described to the Town, the evaluation is leading towards providing a dedicated right-of-way for transit services, with multiple routes and potential headways of as little as 15-minutes during commute periods, classifying the service as Bus Rapid Transit under various legislation. The introduction of Bus Rapid Transit service along this corridor would trigger serious and unacceptable consequences for Atherton and other communities along the route under Senate Bill 79 (SB 79).

Under SB 79, any transit service that meets the definition of Bus Rapid Transit would cause stops along this corridor to be designated as transit-oriented development sites. That designation would grant developers the right to construct high-density residential buildings of seven to nine stories within a quarter to half-mile radius of each stop, with limited local land use authority to regulate or condition that development. The Dumbarton Rail corridor runs through or immediately adjacent to established residential neighborhoods in Atherton and other San Mateo County communities. The imposition of SB 79 entitlements along this corridor would expose those neighborhoods to a scale and intensity of development that is wholly inconsistent with their character and for which no infrastructure planning has been done. This is not a hypothetical concern. It is a direct and foreseeable consequence of the law as written. Complicating matters, SB 79 extends to "planned" Transit Oriented Development Stops and provides such development rights before service is available and proven viable. Additionally, these development rights are provided regardless of accessibility. Currently, there are no directly accessible pedestrian pathways and bikeways for Atherton residents to access the corridor and any proposed stops, and current state laws may not allow Atherton to require development to construct these needed access improvements.

The Town does not oppose Bus Rapid Transit service along this corridor as a matter of principle. Bus service, if well-designed, appropriately scaled to demonstrated demand, and accessible could provide genuine transportation benefits to the region. The Town cannot, however, support a Bus Rapid Transit designation under current law. The risk to residential neighborhoods along the corridor is too significant and the legislative remedy too straightforward to ignore.

With this letter, the Town is seeking the SamTrans' support in seeking legislative amendments to SB 79 to exclude newly established transit corridors of this type from its automatic transit-oriented development provisions, where transit is new, unproven, or in early planning stages, reducing land use impacts to communities along the corridor until the project is built, operating, and serving its intended ridership. If SB 79 is amended to address these concerns, the Town would be prepared to engage constructively on the full scope of the Reimagine Dumbarton project, including its Bus Rapid Transit component.

The Dumbarton Rail corridor has enormous potential. The Town of Atherton wants to see that potential realized in a way that benefits the region without imposing unplanned, disproportionate impacts on the communities through which the corridor runs. We urge SamTrans to advance the active transportation components of this project without delay, and to seek the statutory fix that would allow this community and communities like it throughout the state to say yes to the full vision of this project.

Sincerely,



Stacy Holland

Mayor, Town of Atherton

cc: Board of Directors, SamTrans
April Chan, General Manager/CEO, SamTrans
Board of Directors, San Mateo County Transportation Authority

From: [SamTrans BOD Public Support](#)
To: [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](#)
Subject: RE: Vector EHS Management Notification - Customer Service #1016484
Date: Tuesday, June 30, 2026 4:38:17 PM
Attachments: [1016484.Response.pdf](#)

Copy of correspondence Customer Service is sending to customer regarding issues noted in CRs 1016483 and 1016484.

Alexis Salandanan

San Mateo County Transit District
Customer Service Dept.
166 N Rollins Rd
Millbrae, CA 94030-3147
1-800-660-4287
www.smctd.com

From: Board (@samtrans.com) <board@samtrans.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2026 12:55 PM
To: SamTrans BOD Public Support <SamTransBODPublicSupport@samtrans.com>
Subject: FW: Vector EHS Management Notification - Customer Service #1016484

From: Vector EHS Management <noreply@industriysafe.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2026 7:54:31 PM (UTC+00:00) Monrovia, Reykjavik
To: Board (@samtrans.com) <board@samtrans.com>
Subject: Vector EHS Management Notification - Customer Service #1016484

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You are being notified of the following Customer Service #1016484

System ID: 1016484
Date Received: 6/24/2026
Time: 10:30 PM
Region: SamTrans
Division: SamTrans
Facility: Bus Transportation-South Base
Section (City/Station): Bus Route
Detailed Location: Bus Route ECR
Run Number or Train Number:
Bus #: 504 (Provided by customer)

Categories: Operator

Potential Safety Issue: No

Occurrence Description / Comments: Re: Driver ID: 1883, Bus Route ECR, Bus Number 504, Time 10:30 PM, Direction heading south form Burlingame to San Carlos. Date 06/01/26. A dark skinned non-African. CEO and Complaint Clerk: It is not like we want to waste our time sending your office and the board, paper that belongs in the trash bin. I do so, because your high-flying office seems helpless, out of date, incapable and completely inadequate to do its job. Your BOD spends too much time scanning for new office spaces instead of benches for the many stops-without benches, sun, wind and rain covers-to create a bus system which is user friendly. SamTrans bus system is in the stone age. So-to tell the county/country this theme, I can't wait for the 'attempted murder trial' while riding the bus. This complaint is about a SamTrans bus driver that picked me up in the middle of the road and dropped me off in the middle of the road. He did not respond to questions and did not turn this head from looking straight dead ahead. Was he on drugs? I asked him if he was going to put a ramp out: His response was 'no answer' while starting dead ahead. 'While driving'-in his wokeness-he may have been praying to God Almighty. Ms. Chan, let's have some answers. Did SamTrans cancel woke DEI, or does it still apply to Caltrain and the PCJPB and it bus drivers? Tell me about federal law and compliance to it. Sincerely, Emil Lawrence MBA Shores Landing Hotel Suite 218-POB 14B 1000 Twin Dolphin Drive SC/RWC CA 94065 *Please see Attachments for copy of correspondence.

[Click here](#) to view this report.

You received this email because of matching rules in your Vector EHS Management site. Please contact your system administrator if you believe you received this email in error and to opt out of future communications. Vector EHS Management will not accept replies to this email. Do not click the reply button on your email toolbar.



1608 Walnut St, Suite 700, Philadelphia, PA 19103



June 30, 2026

Emil Lawrence
1000 Twin Dolphin Dr
Unit 14/B
Redwood City, CA 94065

To Emil Lawrence,

Thank you for contacting SamTrans. We are sorry to hear you had such trouble travelling on our ECR service earlier this month. Our operators should always be mindful in maintaining safe operations, which includes properly pulling into bus stops to facilitate passengers' boarding and alighting.

To ensure we are providing our riders with safe and reliable service, your comments and concerns with your experience were forwarded to the proper parties for review. However, SamTrans staff were unable to make a determination pertaining to the specifics you provided, which noted the incident involved Route ECR, Bus 504, and Operator 1883 on 06/01/2026 around 10:30 PM. Operator 1883 was not in service on the noted date. Additionally, though Bus 504 was active on the date of the incident, it was driven by different operators and on different routes and times.

Nevertheless, please rest assured SamTrans is committed to the safety of our service, and our staff will continue to monitor our operations and address any such issue identified.

Additionally, the District is looking into your encounter with conductor "Joules," but we are likewise running into issues identifying the staff member in question. As you suspect this conductor's actions towards you were discriminatory in nature, our Office of Civil Rights asked you be provided with a copy of our Title VI Complaint Form. Please complete and submit this form to allow our Office of Civil Rights to move forward with their investigation, and please provide a description of the conductor, the number of the train, and the name of the station of where this incident occurred to help us in addressing this issue.

Your SamTrans BOD Public Support Team

SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT
1250 San Carlos Ave. - P.O. Box 3006
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306 (650) 508-6200

Caltrain – Title VI Discrimination Complaint Form

Caltrain is committed to ensuring that no person shall be excluded from the equal distribution of its services and amenities because of race, color or national origin. Any person who believes they have been discriminated against based on one of these categories may file a complaint. Complaints must be filed within 180 calendar days of the incident.

Within 10 working days of receipt of your completed complaint form, Caltrain will contact you to confirm receipt of your complaint form and begin an investigation (unless the complaint is filed with an external entity first or simultaneously). The investigation may include discussion(s) of the complaint with all affected parties to determine the nature of the problem. The investigation generally will be conducted and completed within 60 days of receipt of a complete complaint form. Based upon all information received, an investigation report will be submitted to the Caltrain Chief Operating Officer - Rail. The complainant will receive a letter stating the Caltrain's final decision by the end of the 60-day time limit.

Please complete the information below and send to: Caltrain, Title VI Administrator
166 N. Rollins Rd. 5th Floor
Millbrae, CA 94030
or: TitleVI@samtrans.com

SECTION 1 – CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: (Home) _____ (Cell) _____ (Work) _____

[Please note if any of the phone numbers are for a TDD or TTY.]

E-mail: _____ @ _____

SECTION 2 – FILING FOR ANOTHER PERSON

Are you filing this complaint on your own behalf? ____ Yes ____ No

[If you answered "yes" to this question, go to Section 3.]

If not, please supply the name and relationship of the person for whom you are filing the complaint:

Please explain why you have filed for a third party. _____

Please confirm that you have obtained the permission of the aggrieved party if you are filing on behalf of a third party. ____ Yes ____ No

SECTION 3 – DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT

Which of the following describes the reason you believe the discrimination took place? Was it because of your:

____ Race ____ Color ____ National Origin

Please describe the Race, Color or National Origin of the aggrieved party _____

Date and time the alleged discrimination took place: Date ____ / ____ / ____ Time ____ a.m. / p.m.

Where did the alleged discrimination take place? Specific vehicle information is helpful (e.g. vehicle number).

Is there a person you can identify who discriminated against the aggrieved party?

Name: _____ ID# _____

In your own words, describe the alleged discrimination. Explain what happened and who you believe was responsible. Please use additional sheets if necessary.

SECTION 4 – PREVIOUS OR EXISTING COMPLAINTS AND LAWSUITS

Have you previously filed a Title VI discrimination complaint with Caltrain?

____ Yes, for this incident ____ Yes, for a different incident ____ No

Have you filed this complaint with any other agencies or a court?

____ Federal Agency ____ State Agency ____ Local Agency

____ Federal court ____ State court

____ Other (please specify): _____

Have you filed a claim or lawsuit regarding this complaint? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please provide a copy of the complaint form and note court where filed:

____ Federal Court ____ State Court

Please provide contact person information for the agency/court where the complaint was filed.

Name / Office: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number

SECTION 5 – SIGNATURE

Please sign below to attest to the truthfulness of the above. You may attach any written materials or other information that you think is relevant to your complaint.

Complainant's Signature

Date

Note: A complaint also may be filed with: Federal Transit Administration, Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Title VI Program Coordinator, East Building, 5th Floor – TCR, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590.

11/28/16

From: [April Chan](#)
To: [M. Walker Wells](#); [Chuang, Marie \[mchuang@hillsborough.net\]](#); [Canepa, David \[dcanepa@smcgov.org\]](#); [Gee, Jeff \[jgee@redwoodcity.org\]](#); [SMCSupSpeier@smcgov.org](#); [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](#); [Casey Fromson](#); [Peter Skinner](#); [Jessica Epstein](#); [Jason Baker](#); [Devon Ryan](#); [Tasha Bartholomew](#); [Dan Lieberman](#); [Kevin Yin](#)
Cc: [Emily Beach](#)
Subject: RE: FW: Kids left alone on school bus routes — Bus driver leaves bus with kindergarteners alone inside
Date: Tuesday, June 30, 2026 7:17:51 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Thank you Mr. Wells for your email. I'll have one of my staff get in touch with you.

Regards, April

April Chan, General Manager/CEO

San Mateo County Transit District
166 N. Rollins Road, Millbrae, CA 94030
Phone: 650-508-6228 | Cell: 650-868-9930

Email: chana@samtrans.com

Websites: [SamTrans](#) | [Caltrain](#) | [SMCTA](#)



From: M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com>

Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2026 10:31 AM

To: Chuang, Marie [mchuang@hillsborough.net] <MChuang@hillsborough.net>; Canepa, David [dcanepa@smcgov.org] <dcanepa@smcgov.org>; Gee, Jeff [jgee@redwoodcity.org] <jgee@redwoodcity.org>; SMCSupSpeier@smcgov.org; Board (@samtrans.com) <Board@samtrans.com>; April Chan <ChanA@samtrans.com>; Casey Fromson <fromsonc@caltrain.com>; Peter Skinner <SkinnerP@samtrans.com>; Jessica Epstein <epsteinj@samtrans.com>; Jason Baker <bakerj@caltrain.com>; Devon Ryan <ryand@caltrain.com>; Tasha Bartholomew <bartholomewt@samtrans.com>; Dan Lieberman <liebermand@samtrans.com>; Kevin Yin <yink@samtrans.com>

Subject: Re: FW: Kids left alone on school bus routes — Bus driver leaves bus with kindergarteners alone inside

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders.

SamTrans Board and Staff,

Are there any updates related to this issue and who is the best point of contact for me to speak

with?

School is out for the summer, but I plan to work with the district to communicate with parents what changes SamTrans is making or new protocols that are in place for the upcoming school year for children not being left alone with the door open in the middle of a 20 minute route.

Thanks,

Walker
(650) 384-5229

On Fri, Jun 5, 2026 at 7:52 AM M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com> wrote:

Thank you so much for your advocacy on this! Would you be willing to forward the following to staff for their review?

—

Hello Staff, thank you for spending the time looking into this. As you may know, SamTrans is one of many transportation systems under the same Cal/OSHA constraints.

I think it would be helpful to review how others are managing the transportation of minors, including the following aspects:

- Updated protocols when emergency breaks are required
- Communication with guardians and dependent school systems, especially around these practices (for example, no one on our route knew this was happening)
- Cumulative counts on and off the bus of unaccompanied minors
- Emergency protocols when a minor is missing
- Scheduling protocols to avoid unnecessary breaks
- Remote monitoring/chaperoning if an emergency break is needed
- Updated protocols around things like the doors open
- Mapping of available restrooms to avoid 2 hours before starting route
- Comparison to dedicated school bus routes

Just some top of mind thoughts, but I was hoping this would be helpful as you structure your approach to looking into this issue!

Thank you!

Sent from my iPhone
(650) 384-5229

On Sun, May 31, 2026 at 2:44 PM M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com> wrote:

I guess my request would be to have it as a Board of Directors agenda item for discussion.

Would there be an opportunity for me to provide public contact?

Walker

Sent from my iPhone
(650) 384-5229

On Wed, May 27, 2026 at 4:13 PM CEO_SMCSUPSPEIER
<SMCSUPSPEIER@smcgov.org> wrote:

Mr. Walker: This message was provided to me after I asked the personnel at SamTrans whether a response was finally sent to you. What would you like me to tell Supervisor Speier about this response from SamTrans personnel? Brian Perkins, Office of Supervisor Jackie Speier

Good afternoon. Thank you again for your patience while we reviewed this issue.

Our Bus Operations team has met with the operator about these concerns, and our operator will make an effort to use the facilities before/after his schedule to avoid having to do so in the middle of a route. However, please understand that this is something we cannot always guarantee given Cal/OSHA regulations for bus operators; while the Route 85 schedule itself is short, it does take our operator nearly 2 hours to make the trip to Portola Valley in order to start the route.

As mentioned in our initial response to the school, our buses are public routes and do not only serve students. As such, the regulations on SamTrans buses differ from school buses. Please rest assured, though, that SamTrans operators take several steps to safely secure the bus when they leave the vehicle, such as while they are on their legal break.

SamTrans staff will continue to monitor the route and work with the school. Thank you for taking the time to reach out and work with us to ensure our service remains safe and reliable for our riders.

Your SamTrans BOD Public Support Team

From: CEO_SMCSUPSPEIER <SMCSUPSPEIER@smcgov.org>

Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2026 3:11 PM

To: Jessica Epstein <epsteinj@samtrans.com>

Subject: FW: Kids left alone on school bus routes — Bus driver leaves bus with kindergarteners alone inside

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Jessica: What is the status of this inquiry? Thank you, Brian Perkins

From: M. Walker Wells <walker@kwells.com>

Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2026 3:24 PM

To: MChuang@hillsborough.net; David Canepa <dcanepa@smcgov.org>; jgee@redwoodcity.org; CEO_SMCSUPSPEIER <SMCSupSpeier@smcgov.org>; Board@samtrans.com

Cc: April Chan <ChanA@samtrans.com>; fromsonc@caltrain.com; Peter Skinner <SkinnerP@samtrans.com>; epsteinj@samtrans.com; bakerj@caltrain.com; ryand@caltrain.com; bartholomewt@samtrans.com; liebermand@samtrans.com; yink@samtrans.com

Subject: Re: Kids left alone on school bus routes — Bus driver leaves bus with kindergarteners alone inside

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of San Mateo County. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.

Ms. Epstein—it sounds like someone on your team responded to the principal. Could you take point on consulting the right people within samTrans to avoid leaving Kindergartners (and all kids) alone as part of the program?

Thanks! Walker

On Thu, May 14, 2026 at 3:09 PM M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com> wrote:

Board of Directors & Staff,

Sorry for including you all, but I am not sure who to reach out to. The current response from samTrans is "Contact Customer Service." Below is an email thread between the Portola Valley Elementary Principal, myself, and a samTrans representative.

Last week, I rode the bus with my Kindergartener son and I discovered that it makes a stop at Little People's Park (Town Center) in Portola Valley so the bus driver can take a bathroom break.

During these five minutes, the bus driver is not in the bus and the kids are left unattended with the door open. My son indicated that this is normal, but I am not sure. The route is very short and is exclusively used by elementary and middle school kids.

Is it possible to institute a policy that requires the driver to take a break at a different time?

Thank you,

Walker Wells

(650) 384-5229

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Lynette Hovland <lhovland@pvsd.net>

Date: Thu, May 14, 2026 at 9:14 AM

Subject: Re: San Mateo County Bus Route

To: M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com>

Dear Walker,

I forwarded your concern to SamTrans and received this response.

Route 85 is a school-oriented route but it is still a public route which means anyone can also take this bus. Also, the operator is not responsible for supervising students but to stay focused on the road and drive safely.

Please ask the parent to call SamTrans Customer Service at 1-800-660-4287 if there are additional questions or concerns.

Lynette

On Thu, May 14, 2026 at 8:03 AM M. Walker Wells <walker@wkwells.com> wrote:

Hi Lynette, hope you're doing well!

I meant to connect with you last week, but I wanted to raise a concern regarding the bus route from Alice's restaurant to Corte Madera to Ormondale.

I rode it with Max last week and I discovered that it makes a stop at Little People's Park so the bus driver can take a bathroom break.

Max indicated that this is normal, but I am not sure. During this five minutes, the bus driver is not in the bus and the kids are left unattended.

At least this was the case when I was on the bus last week.

Is it possible to get in contact with the right person at Samtrans to request that the driver take a break at a different time?

All the best, Walker

Sent from my iPhone
(650) 384-5229

--

Ms. Lynette Hovland, MPA

Principal/District Title IX Coordinator

Portola Valley School District

Ormondale School

[200 Shawnee Pass](#)

[Portola Valley, CA 94028](#)

650-851-1777 ext. 2650

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