

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES – GENERAL CONDITIONS

Background

The Division operates a student transportation service for its resident students taking into consideration student educational needs, student safety, system efficiency, financial accountability and provincial legislation.

The distances referred to in this administrative procedure are in accordance with Alberta Education regulations:

"Distance is measured by the most direct route on a highway as defined in the Traffic Safety Act. The Traffic Safety Act defines "highway" as: ...any thoroughfare, street, road, trail, avenue, parkway, driveway, viaduct (pedway), lane, alley, square, bridge, causeway, trestle way or other place, whether publicly or privately owned, any part of which the public is ordinarily entitled or permitted to use for the passage or parking of vehicles..."

The Assistant Superintendent, Corporate Services is responsible for the administration of this administrative procedure.

Procedures

1. Routing and Bus Stops

- 1.1 Transportation service will be provided to Division resident students attending their attendance area school or the school designated by the Division and who reside:
 - 1.1.1 EC–Grade 6: Students must reside more than 1.6 km driving distance from their designated school.
 - 1.1.2 Grade 7–Grade 12: Students must reside more than 2.0 km driving distance from their designated school.

- 1.2 Transportation service may also be provided to students attending a school of choice or students who are resident in another school jurisdiction or students who live less than the distances designated in 1.1 but in such cases the level of service provided will be at the discretion of the Division and transportation fees will apply for all students.

- 1.3 Transportation service will be provided on legal municipal roadways only and buses will not enter onto private property with the following exceptions:
 - 1.3.1 Providing service for physically disabled children subject to an individual case review;
 - 1.3.2 Where stopping or turning the bus on a legal municipal roadway

constitutes, in the opinion of the Division, a significant safety hazard to students.

- 1.4 Authority to grant these exceptions will be the responsibility of the Director of Transportation Services and the Division's liability insurance coverage will apply in such instances.
- 1.5 Student transportation service shall be provided from bus stops designated by the Division. Buses will not be going into cul-de-sacs that are less than 800 meters. Students will not have to walk more than 800 meters on municipal roadways.
- 1.6 For morning pick-ups, students are required to be at their designated stop five (5) minutes prior to their scheduled pick-up time.
 - 1.6.1 If it becomes necessary to change the pick-up time during the year, the driver will advise students and parents prior to implementing the revised time.
 - 1.6.2 Students and parents must be aware that buses need to work to a schedule and that drivers are not required to wait for students.
- 1.7 Students will be dropped off at their designated bus stop in the evening.
 - 1.7.1 For those students who connect with an existing bus route, parents will be required to provide an alternate drop-off point in the same location.
- 1.8 The Division's Director of Transportation Services is responsible for establishing bus routes and designated bus stops.
 - 1.8.1 Parents or guardians of Students registering with the Division for the first time who require bussing will be directed to contact Transportation Services to arrange service.
 - 1.8.2 School bus drivers must contact each family on their route prior to the commencement of the school year to inform them of the designated stop and the expected pick-up and drop-off times.
- 1.9 Unless other arrangements have been made with the school by the Director of Transportation Services, school buses shall:
 - 1.9.1 Arrive at the school ten (10) minutes prior to the start of the instructional day.
 - 1.9.2 Be in position for school bus loading a minimum of ten (10) minutes prior to dismissal at the end of the instructional day.
 - 1.9.3 Depart from schools at the end of the instructional day not earlier than ten (10) minutes after the school's regular dismissal time.

2. Transportation – Inclement Weather/Hazardous Road Conditions

2.1 Refer to [Administrative Procedure 132](#).

3. Transportation for ECS Students

3.1 For ECS programs that operate on a full-day basis, transportation services will be provided in accordance with this administrative procedure.

3.2 For ECS programs that operate on a half-day basis, transportation will be provided in accordance with this administrative procedure with the following exceptions:

3.2.1 For morning programs, one (1) way transportation to the designated school will be provided.

3.2.2 For afternoon programs, one (1) way transportation from the designated school to the nearest bus stop to the student's residence will be provided.

4. Student Conduct on Buses

4.1 Students are responsible to the bus driver for their behavior while riding on the school bus.

4.1.1 At the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians are required to review and acknowledge the rules and responsibilities outlined in the [Transportation Handbook, and as](#) incorporated within the [Transportation Application](#). This document outlines specific rules with respect to student conduct while riding the Division's buses.

4.2 Student Misconduct – Transportation Response Process

4.2.1. Driver Intervention - The bus driver shall address student misconduct at the time it occurs, where reasonable and safe to do so.

The driver shall make reasonable efforts to:

- Correct the behaviour
- Reinforce expectations for safe and respectful conduct
- De-escalate the situation to allow transportation services to continue safely

4.2.2. Report to Transportation Services - Where student misconduct cannot be resolved through on-bus intervention, the driver shall:

- Report the incident to the Transportation Office
- Complete a Student Incident Form
- Contact the parent/guardian to discuss the concern and outline expectations as per the Transportation Handbook.

4.2.3. Escalation to School Administration - If the issue remains unresolved following parent/guardian contact, the Director of Transportation Services, in consultation with the driver, shall involve the school's Administrative Team.

4.2.4. Severe Misconduct - Bus drivers must immediately report severe misbehaviour that:

- Jeopardizes bus safety, or
- Challenges the driver's authority to safely operate the vehicle.

Based on these reports, school administration may suspend bus riding privileges, in consultation with Transportation Services. Severe violations include, but are not limited to:

- Vandalism
- Fighting
- Failure to cooperate with the driver or officials
- Abusive or defiant language
- Threats directed at the driver or office staff
- Possession or use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, and/ or weapons

4.3 A student's parent or legal guardian can be held liable for restitution of damage to a school bus.

4.4 Students carrying loose articles will, upon the direction of the driver, ensure that they are stored in such a way as not to constitute a danger to other students or in any way obstruct the aisles, exits or windows on the bus. Additional information on which items can and/or cannot be transported on the bus can be found in Appendix B.

4.4.1 Students will be required to make alternate transportation arrangements for oversized articles or potential safety hazards.

4.5 Student behaviour while riding on school buses may be monitored by a video camera system.

4.5.1 Video and audio surveillance on school buses shall be in accordance with [Administrative Procedure 181](#).

5. Co/Extracurricular Transportation and Charter Bus Activities
 - 5.1 Principals are able to arrange transportation to support co/extra-curricular activities in accordance with [Administrative Procedure 553](#).
 - 5.2 Community groups are able to charter Division buses in accordance with [Administrative Procedure 553](#).
6. Other Conditions
 - 6.1 Where a student has been directed to attend a school to which the student is unable to access regular transportation service, or where the provision of transportation service is not practical for the Division, arrangements will be made to enter into a Parent Provided agreement with the student's parent or legal guardian and to pay an allowance in-lieu of transportation.
 - 6.2 Where a student has been suspended from a school, transportation service will not be provided during the time of the suspension.
 - 6.3 Where a student has been expelled from a school but is able to enroll in another school within the Division, the parent or legal guardian will be responsible for transporting the student to and from this school.
 - 6.3.1 Where feasible, transportation may be provided by the Division subject to an individual case review and payment in advance of a transportation fee determined by the Division.
 - 6.4 Parents are requested to notify their driver in advance if their students will not be riding the bus.
 - 6.5 School buses, while performing service for the Division, will only convey passengers as authorized by this administrative procedure.
 - 6.6 Transportation service may be restricted or cancelled where road conditions, weather conditions and other factors deem that the service is unsafe.
 - 6.6.1 Parents/guardians are expected to monitor the Foothills School Division website and the [FSD mobile Application](#) for the most current and accurate information regarding delays or cancellations.
 - 6.6.2 When required, radio announcements may also be made using local radio and other media. The Division utilizes AM 1140 and FM 100.9 "The Eagle" to notify the public of delays or cancellations.
 - 6.6.3 Parents/guardians will receive calls and emails for major bus cancellations.
 - 6.6.4 Specific details on transportation restrictions or cancellation are contained in [Administrative Procedure 132](#).
7. Student Transportation Fees
 - 7.1 Student transportation fees will be applied to all students, including eligible and non-eligible riders, who have been approved by Transportation Services. The fee structure is set at \$100.00 per student, with a maximum charge of \$250.00 per family.

Student transportation eligibility is determined based on the following criteria and in alignment with section 1.1 above:

- EC–Grade 6: Students must reside more than 1.6 km driving distance from their designated school.
- Grade 7–Grade 12: Students must reside more than 2.0 km driving distance from their designated school.

- 7.1.1 Transportation fees will be applicable to non-Division students attending Division schools in cases where no letter of understanding or education services agreement exists with their resident board. Bus stop locations will not be altered to accommodate these students; they will be required to access an existing stop within the Division boundary.
- 7.2 Transportation fees will be applicable to non-Division students attending Division schools in cases where there is a letter of understanding or education services agreement exists with their resident board. Bus stop locations will not be altered to accommodate these students; they will be required to access an existing stop within the Division boundary.
- 7.3 Transportation fees will apply to non-Division students attending Division schools unless a Transfer of Student Transportation Funding Declaration Form is completed by the parent or guardian by October 31. If the declaration is submitted by this deadline, no fee shall be charged. Forms received after October 31 will take effect in the following school year. Once submitted, Student Transportation Declaration forms will remain valid for as long as the student continues to attend the same school.
- 7.4 Fees for student transportation services are as per Appendix A. Fees are prorated by full months of service.
- 7.4.1 Students who request school bus transportation one-way shall be required to pay the full transportation service fee.
- 7.5 For students who withdraw from the Division or relocate to an area where transportation services are no longer required during the school year, a prorated refund based on months of services will be issued.

Reference: Relevant Legislation & Guidelines

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION FEES

Students eligible for partial funding

- Grade 1 to 12 students including language immersion programs
- Half - day Kindergarten
- Full - day Kindergarten
- Out-of-designated school boundary

(For the above fees, there is a family maximum fees to be determined)

Students Ineligible for Funding

- Kindergarten students living less than 1.6 km from their designated school
 - Grades 1-6 students residing less than 1.6 km from their designated school
 - Grades 7-12 students residing less than 2.0 km from their designated school (For the above fees, there is a family maximum fee to be determined)
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- Non-Division students attending a Division school when there is no Letter of Understanding or Education Services Agreement in place with the resident Board or a Transfer of Student Transportation Funding Declaration Form

LARGE ITEMS ON SCHOOL BUSES

The issue of transporting large items such as band equipment, hockey bags, skateboards, scooters, science projects, golf clubs, suitcases with handles and wheels, and oversized back packs, etc. has been a frustrating one for schools, teachers, parents and school divisions. We are charged with running a transportation system that is safe, and effective. There are times when these two principles can seem to be at odds with each other. In order to ensure that everyone understands the issues we offer the following:

The Division is required to adhere to the School Bus Operation Regulation as stated in the Province's Traffic Safety Act, which has the following requirement regarding the transportation of items on school buses:

Luggage, equipment and tools

16(1) When luggage, equipment or tools are carried on a school bus they shall not be carried in the interior of the school bus.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), where it is not practical to carry luggage, equipment or tools other than in the interior of the bus they may be carried in the interior of the school bus if they

(a) are stored under the seats where possible,

(b) do not block the aisles or emergency exits, and

(c) are stored, lodged or secured in such a manner so that they cannot be dislodged or move about when the brakes of the school bus are applied, during acceleration of the school bus or in the event of an accident involving the school bus.

Purpose of School Bus

The purpose of the school bus is to transport students safely to and from school. The Division is not required to transport students involved in other activities, work experience, after-school jobs, tutoring, music lessons, sports events, etc. Parents of students who are enrolled in programs that require special equipment, tools or instruments are ultimately responsible for the transportation of any items that may be required.

Design of School Bus

The biggest safety feature of a school bus is called compartmentalization. This means the specially padded and designed seats are placed close together to cushion students in the event of an accident. This also means there is not a lot of space available for large items. It should be noted that a ripped or torn seat affects the integrity of this safety feature in the event of an accident.

Items Eligible for Transportation

Large items cannot protrude into the aisles or above the seats or into another student's space. Bus seats are 39" wide and a number of buses are carrying three (3) students to a seat, which is the allowed maximum capacity. **Anything the students are carrying must be held on the students' lap, or rested on the floor between the students' legs.**

The following items are allowable on school buses:

- Flute, piccolo, clarinet, oboe, trumpet, alto sax, bass clarinet, trumpet, bassoon, trombone
- Lunch pails, school backpacks
- Text books and school supplies
- Sports equipment in sport bags (large hockey bags not included)

The following items are a few examples of what is not allowed on school buses:

- Tuba, sousaphone, baritone, guitars, drums, French horn, tenor sax, bass trombone
- Hockey bags, hockey sticks, skis & poles, skateboards, golf clubs
- Science boards

As many of the Division buses are at or near capacity, students will only be allowed to take either a sports bag or band instrument along with their school books/back pack.

A small number of Division buses have luggage compartments underneath the bus. Due to safety issues, these compartments may be used for transporting larger equipment (e.g. hockey bags) if they can be loaded safely without substantially increasing the time to load/unload.

Band Programs

Band instructors within the Division will need to do what they can to ensure that students have the ability to meet these guidelines, whether it's a spare instrument at home to practice with (bring mouthpiece back and forth) or assigning instruments that are easily carted on the bus. As well instructors will have to plan band excursions/trips so that there is separate, safe, transportation for band instruments and music stands so that they are not on the same bus as students.

Consistency

It is important that all bus drivers operating for the Division follow these guidelines, as well all band directors and school administrators need to be aware of the issues and plan accordingly.