



School District 8
Kootenay Lake

School Bus Handbook

Pupil Transportation Procedure Manual

School Bus Registration

Students must be registered and have a seat assigned in order to be given the privilege to ride the school bus. Bus registration will be available online year-round. Priority registration will be open in the spring and until May 31 for the upcoming school year. Applications made after May 31 for students deemed to be eligible riders shall be accommodated if there is a seat available.

Eligible Riders: Students who live within their school's catchment area *and* outside of the school walk limits.

Courtesy Riders: Students who live outside of their school's catchment *or* within the school walk limits.

School Walk Limits: Students are expected to walk to school wherever possible. To be eligible to ride an SD8 school bus a student must reside at a distance from their catchment school greater than 2.5 km for elementary, and 3 km for intermediate and secondary.

Bus Routes

Bus routes are built annually by the Transportation Department prior to September school start up. Routes may be extended if deemed necessary by the direction of the Director of Operations or designate. Route extensions will not be added mid-year and must be requested in writing, prior to the bus registration deadline. Generally, bus stops are established two kilometers apart, bearing in mind safety factors and the concentration of the population. A student's bus and routes assigned will be determined based on the home address on file with the school.



Bus Passes

Each registered bus rider will be issued a bus pass in the form of a hard-plastic card which is carried by the student. **This pass must be presented each time the student boards and departs the school bus.** In the event we have a missing child the transportation department can look up the location where the student entered and exited the bus in real time. Bus Passes also provide the school with an accurate list of riders, should the bus be involved in an emergency.



Forgotten Bus Pass: If a student forgets his/her bus pass at home, the school will issue the student a bus pass exemption slip*, which will be presented to the driver. Ensure this is done when you first get to school to avoid missing the bus in the afternoon if the office is busy! **The student may not board the bus in the afternoon without the exemption slip if their pass is lost.*

Lost or Damaged Bus Pass: If a bus pass is lost, damaged, or no longer works (doesn't scan on the bus);

- A student/parent reports to the school office that they have lost or damaged their pass. The office will request a new pass from the district transportation department.
- The school will issue the student a bus pass exemption slip* for the lost pass, which will be given to the driver. Damaged cards may be held and presented to board. Ensure this is done when you first get to school to avoid missing the bus in the afternoon if the office is busy! **The student may not board the bus in the afternoon without either a pass or exemption slip.*
- The student will be issued a new bus pass once it arrives at the school. A damaged or defective card must be surrendered to the office at this time.

Students will be charged \$15 for each replacement pass after 3 bus pass replacements. Fees are submitted to the school office. Bus drivers will not accept the replacement fee.

Guest Riders: All guest riders must obtain a bus pass exemption slip from the school office in order to ride the bus as a guest rider. Your school will be notified by the transportation department if a bus route is at or near capacity and if there are restrictions on guest riders for that route. **The student may not board the bus without either a pass or exemption slip.*

School Bus Safety

School bus transportation is a privilege. Students must always remember that the bus is a means of transportation and not a place of play. The bus driver is responsible for the safety of all passengers, they must maintain order on the bus and to see that the regulations and policies regarding the safe transportation of his/her passengers are respected. Misbehavior on the bus may distract the driver which could affect the safe operation of the school bus. The driver's focus must be on the traffic and the road ahead and they cannot be expected to maintain constant attention to students behind them on the bus. Both students and parents have responsibilities regarding safe school bus operations.



Student Responsibility

Waiting for the school bus

- Be at the bus stop at least **5 minutes ahead of the scheduled arrival** of the bus.
- Wait in the proper loading zone. Stay 10 steps back from the edge of the road or on the sidewalk and remain still until the bus comes to a complete stop. Never touch the outside of the bus
- Refrain from pushing, shoving, fighting or horseplay, and show respect to others.
- Do not cross in front of the bus until signaled by the driver to cross.
- Return home or to a predetermined safe location if the bus does not arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled time.
- Student behaviour at the bus stop is the responsibility of the students and parent.

Riding the school bus

- A bus pass or exemption slip must be presented to the driver upon entry of the school bus
- Students must ride the bus to which they are assigned unless they receive an exemption slip from the school to change buses or for guest riders. If guest riders stay overnight and intend on riding the bus the next day, they must also have a slip from the school for the morning run.
- Remain properly seated during the entire journey and wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before rising.
- Students are not to put their head, arms or any other body part out of the open windows.
- Students are to refrain from throwing articles inside of the bus and are not to throw anything from the bus windows.
- Students must follow direction from the bus driver. If a student's behavior on the bus has been unsatisfactory after warnings have been issued, they will be subject to further discipline.

Getting off the bus

- A bus pass or exemption slip must be presented to the driver upon exit of the school bus
- Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop and the doors are open.
- Get off the bus in a quiet and orderly manner.
- Check to the right for vehicles passing on the right of the bus.
- Once out of the bus get well clear of the bus, never touch the outside of the bus or cross the street behind the bus.
- Students crossing the road
 - o Stand well in front and wait for drivers signal to cross.
 - o Check in both directions for oncoming vehicles while crossing.
 - o “FREEZE” and do not cross if the driver blows the horn.



Discipline

The rules and regulations on the bus are established to ensure a respectful safe ride, free from harassment, violence, or intimidation for all pupils riding the buses. Any form of behavior that is detrimental to the safe operation of the school bus, that would result in damage, excessive cleaning of the school bus, or makes it unpleasant for other students or driver on the bus will be subject to discipline and may including suspension or loss of bus privileges.

Examples of behavior that result in discipline

- o Not following the driver's directions.
- o Bullying or harassment of the driver or other passengers.
- o Fighting, hitting, roughhousing, spitting, foul language.
- o Moving around while bus is in motion.
- o Not remaining in assigned seat.
- o Eating or drinking on the bus when not permitted.
- o Use of alcohol, cannabis or other prohibited drugs.
- o Vandalism, weapons, lighting matches/lighters.
- o Smoking / vaping
- o Throwing objects or garbage within the bus or out a window.
- o Shouting and unnecessary noise.
- o Not following loading and unloading best practices

Transportation of Equipment in the School Bus

Equipment that cannot be held on the lap of the student without projecting into the aisle or above the seat or is deemed to be dangerous (e.g. skates without guards) will not be permitted on the bus. Items that can roll around, such as skateboards or balls will only be permitted if they meet the above criteria for size and are either stored in an appropriate container or securely attached to a backpack. Fuel or other flammables are not permitted on the bus.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

In collaboration with the Board and the Transportation Department, parents are expected to support the safe and efficient transportation of our students to and from school. School districts are not required to provide student transportation and have limited resources to do so. It should be recognized that *riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right*.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility:

- Register their children for bussing prior to the annual deadline.
- Support their child with bus pass usage and retention.
- Have their children to the bus stop 5 minutes ahead of scheduled time of pick up.
- Parents are responsible for the safety of their child to and from the bus stop.
- Provide supervision at the bus stop if necessary
- Warn their children that vehicles are required by law to stop for the school bus red lights, however, *sometimes other vehicle drivers are negligent and do not stop when they should*. Therefore, children should proceed with caution when getting off the school bus and crossing the road.
- Promote safety to their children concerning *Student Responsibilities*
- Parents are responsible for willful damage to school buses caused by their children. Fees may apply in case of vandalism.
- When a child's transportation privileges are suspended, students are still expected to attend school and it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to provide transportation, including extra-curricular trips.
- Parents or other adults are never authorized to enter a school bus unless special permissions have been granted by the transportation department, and criminal record checks have been processed.
- When weather conditions are such that the buses may be cancelled, parents should ensure that their children do not wait for extended periods of time at the stop. If parents leave home before the student(s) have been picked up by the bus, parents are to ensure alternate care arrangements are in place.

Bus Delays or Cancellations

Drivers make every effort to stay on schedule, yet road conditions, severe weather and other events can have buses arrive later than anticipated. It is recommended that you and your child have a plan and a safe location for your child to return to (home or a neighbor's), in the event the school bus does not arrive after 15 minutes or is cancelled.

Bus delays of more than 15 mins will be posted on the following;

- Announcements on the SD8 Website
- Announcements on the School Website
- Twitter
- Facebook



Family Safety Plan

- ✓ Teach your child traffic safety rules and whether driving or walking, practice and establish a safe route for them to get to and from the bus stop.
- ✓ Discuss the bus rider rules and how to be safe at the bus stop while waiting for the school bus to arrive.
- ✓ Explain that the bus may be delayed, and they may have to wait up to 10 minutes for the bus to arrive.
- ✓ Have a safe location for your child to return to (home or a neighbor's), in the event the school bus does not arrive after 15 minutes or is cancelled.
- ✓ Provide contact information for your child to call in an emergency.

Transportation Contact Information

Nelson Operations

Office Phone: 250-354-4871

Creston Operations

Office Phone: 250-428-5329

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