

AP 5619: Transportation

Background

Recognizing that school buses provide the safest way for students to attend school, field trips and reduce barriers for school attendance, the District endeavors to provide a safe, efficient, inclusive and cost-effective system of school bus transportation for students enrolled in the District or registered on a School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) school team through BC School Sports.

Within British Columbia, transportation to and from school is the responsibility of parents and guardians. Parents/guardians are responsible for student safety up until the moment the student boards the school bus at the beginning of the day and from the moment that the student disembarks from the school bus at the end of the day. The District is responsible for the safety of students while being transported by school bus.

The district makes an effort to place school bus stops at locations where students and parents have adequate pathways to walk to and from home, however due to some highway structures or topography it is not always possible to have a desirable pedestrian route home from the bus stop.

Procedures:

1. Only registered riders are permitted to use the bus service, except for approved after school courtesy.
2. All registered riders must possess and present a bus pass to the bus driver to ride the school bus on a regular bus route.
3. The Director of Operations or designate has the right to cancel bus trips if it is deemed that travel would be unsafe (i.e., bad weather/roads).
 - 3.1. The bus driver is responsible for the bus and safety of the passengers. The driver shall inform the Manager of Transportation if they believe travel is not safe.
4. Students are expected to walk whenever possible. To be eligible to ride a bus, a student must reside within catchment, at a distance from their catchment greater than 2.5 kilometers for primary students and 3.0 kilometers for intermediate and secondary students.
5. The District Transportation Department will determine if registered students' ridership needs to be adjusted in the case of a delay or cancellation and, if so, this would then be communicated to schools and parents through School Messenger or parent letter.
6. Transportation assistance may be available when the District is not able to provide bus

services to those students who live too far away from a bus stop as per Policy 770: Transportation as determined by the Transportation Department as per Administrative Procedure 5620: Transportation Assistance.

7. The District strongly recommends that parents have alternate transportation for circumstances such as the bus being late getting to the stop or other unforeseen circumstances. This will ensure that students are not left at the stops unsupervised or left on their own in bad weather conditions.
8. Transportation services may be provided to courtesy riders if there is space available, at no additional cost, where no scheduling or routing adjustments have to be made. This permission will be granted by the principal on an exemption slip. Courtesy rider seats may be provided on buses travelling on established routes provided that those seats are not required for eligible or board approved riders. Established bus routes and schedules will not be altered to accommodate courtesy riders. Courtesy riders are listed as follows in priority order:
 - 8.1. Elementary Out of Catchment Courtesy - students enrolled in district schools that attend a school other than the catchment school.
 - 8.2. Middle/Secondary Out of Catchment Courtesy - students enrolled in district schools (or programs) that attend a school other than the catchment school.
 - 8.3. Child Care Courtesy - students enrolled in district schools that are in the care of a daycare provider at a residence different than the home address. This care may be in or out of the catchment school's area for the home address.
 - 8.4. After School Courtesy - issued by schools to provide students that are registered at their school and that present a signed and dated note from parents or guardians with permission to go on the bus to a specific stop on the route. This will only be allowed for daycare or after school extracurricular activities. Abuse of this privilege may result in cancellation of this service by the Manager of Operations or designate.
 - 8.5. Out of District School Transportation - students enrolled in schools other than SD8.
9. Notwithstanding the above, there may be a need to give priority to unique situations, i.e. student injury, discipline transfers, custody issues or students unable to attend the designated school due to school overpopulation and, therefore, must attend another school while they are on the waitlist. The Manager of Operations or designate will determine the specific method to address these needs.
10. Courtesy Rider Seat Assignment Priority

10.1. In the event that the number of requests for courtesy riders exceeds the number of available seats, the following guidelines will be considered in order to determine allocation of seats:

10.1.1. Younger students will be given priority over older students.

10.1.2. Students traveling greater distances will be given priority over those traveling lesser distances.

10.2. The Manager of Operations or designate will determine priority of courtesy riders depending on individual situations.

11. The bus routes will be reviewed throughout the year and adjusted accordingly. Bus stops are determined based on safety, efficiency and in consultation with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit and Highways contractor. For example, bus stops are placed a minimum of 2.5 kilometers apart and have 200 meters of visibility before and after stops.

12. Bus stop additions or changes may be submitted to the Transportation department for review using the appropriate form. Requests should be submitted before the end of the registration deadline in order to build bus runs for the following year.

13. Students will only be dropped off at the school or pre-approved location. Students will not be dropped off at a student or parent requested location.

14. Equipment on Buses

14.1. Equipment or items smaller than 76 centimeters, may be transported on the bus if they are kept on the student's lap without impeding the seat of another student and if carried in an appropriate case.

14.2. Equipment such as hockey sticks, skateboards, skis, poles, snowboards and large musical instruments will not be transported inside the bus. Larger items, used for approved school programs, will be transported in the cargo compartment only if a teacher or supervisor is on the bus to assist students with loading and unloading.

14.3. The use of the cargo bay is prohibited during regular bus routes.