

POLICY 17

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The Board shall provide transportation to eligible students to and from school in a safe, economical and efficient manner in the Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Lac La Biche and Waskatenau areas.

Eligibility for Transportation - Rural

The Division will provide school bus transportation for all resident rural students in accordance with section 59 of the Education Act, the School Transportation Regulation and the policies as outlined herein.

1. Transportation shall be provided for all rural resident students if the student resides at a distance equal to or greater than 2.4 kilometres from the site of the school that the Board has directed the student to attend.
2. Transportation may be provided to rural resident students who reside at a distance less than 2.4 kilometres from the school site to which the Board has directed the student to attend at the discretion of the Transportation Administrator or designate. There may be a surcharge to the parent for this service.
3. The Transportation Administrator or designate may, under special agreement, provide transportation services to non-resident students of the Division or may engage other authorities to transport resident students. The Transportation Administrator or designate will provide an annual report to the Board on this matter.
4. Children attending Kindergarten programs will be considered resident students for the purpose of this policy.
5. Students relocating from an attendance area to a new attendance area after the Easter break may be provided transportation to their prior school of attendance for the remainder of the school term providing there are no additional costs incurred by the Division for the provision of this service.

Eligibility for Transportation – In-town

The Division will provide school bus transportation for all resident in-town students equal to or in excess of 2.4 kilometers from their designated school in accordance with section 59 of the Education Act, the School Transportation Regulation and the policies as outlined herein.

1. In-town transportation is defined as transportation provided to students resident in Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Lac La Biche, and Waskatenau.
2. A transportation fee shall be established annually by the Board and shall apply to all ineligible students utilizing the in-town service.

3. Children attending Kindergarten programs will be considered resident students for the purpose of this policy.
4. Annual school bus passes will be made available, and are to be carried by all students utilizing this service.

School Bus Route Planning

1. All school bus routes will be designed and/or approved by the Transportation Administrator or designate.
2. The routes shall be designed in such a manner to ensure cost and time effectiveness as well as the comfort and safety of all students transported.
3. Under normal circumstances a school bus will not enter private property. In those situations, where it is necessary or desirable for a school bus to enter private property, good road conditions and a proper turn around area must exist as minimum requirements. A Private Property Permission and Waiver Form must be completed by the Landowner before bus service is allowed.

Subject to the above, the following situations are eligible for yard pick-up:

- 3.1 A student presenting a medical certificate that indicates the nature of the medical condition will be provided with yard pick-up when, in the opinion of the Transportation Administrator or designate, the nature of the illness or disability prohibits the student from meeting the school bus at a normal pick-up point. Application must be made through the office of the Transportation Administrator or designate.
4. The Board recognizes that in extenuating circumstances (blizzard conditions, etc.), school bus drivers may enter onto private property, make additional stops and/or extend bus routes to ensure that students are delivered safely.
5. In situations where it is not practical or possible to provide transportation on regular school bus routes, the Transportation Administrator or designate may provide alternate transportation arrangements.
6. Any changes to routes, whether increases or decreases in bus sizes or distances traveled after the original routes are established, shall be reflected on the appropriate form – “Changes to Existing Route” Form – and submitted by the School Bus Contractor at the end of the month that the change takes effect.
7. The Transportation Administrator or designate may retain up to four (4) vacant student places on each school bus to ensure there are sufficient seats available for new students transferring into the school system during the school year.

Operation of School Buses

1. School buses will not operate in the event of the following conditions, as measured at 6:00 A.M. at 4 Wing (Lakeland area), Lac La Biche Airport (Lac La Biche), or at Smoky Lake (Waskatenau area):

- 1.1 The wind chill is equivalent to or exceeds –45 degrees Celsius, or
 - 1.2 The outside air temperature is equivalent to or exceeds –40 degrees Celsius,
 - 1.3 Bus routes assigned as special needs routes with wheelchair capabilities will not operate with a wind chill that is equivalent to or exceeds -35 degrees Celsius or an outside air temperature that is equivalent to or exceeds -35 degrees Celsius.
 - 1.4 School bus routes within the Division will not necessarily be cancelled concurrently.
2. The Transportation Administrator or designate may cancel school buses either individually or collectively when weather conditions are so inclement as to constitute a safety hazard to the students being transported.
- 2.1 In the absence of a decision by the Transportation Administrator or designate, the Board recognizes that individual bus drivers may cancel or alter his/her route to ensure the safety of students being transported.
 - 2.2 Individual bus drivers canceling or altering their routes are responsible for notifying each student on that route of such cancellation. Individual bus drivers canceling or altering their routes are also responsible for notifying the Transportation Administrator or designate of such cancellation or alteration.
 - 2.3 In all situations where school buses are cancelled or routes altered, it is the responsibility of the person making that decision to advise the appropriate radio stations, and the Superintendent or designate when applicable. Radio stations to be contacted are:

Frequency	Station	Brand Name	Phone No.	Fax No. (if applicable)
630 AM	CHED Edmonton		780-440-6300	
840 AM	CFCW Camrose/Edmonton		780-672-8255 Camrose	780-435-0844 Edmonton
95.3 FM	CJXM Cold Lake	BOOM	780-594-2459	
97.7 FM	CHSP St. Paul	Real Country	780-645-4425	780-6452383
97.9 FM	CKWB Westlock	Real Country	780-349-4421	
99.7 FM	CFNA Bonnyville	Country 99	780-573-1745	780-573-1746
101.3 FM	CJEG Bonnyville	KOOL/HOT	780-812-3058	780-812-3363
103.5 FM	CILB Lac La Biche	BOOM	780-623-3744	780-623-3740

In addition, the Transportation Administrator or designate shall update the Division website bus APP called "LCSD Bus Status".

Contractor Driver Qualifications

The Contractor is responsible for the actions of his/her drivers and is required to ensure that the policy sections outlining Driver Qualifications, Driver Regulations, Driver Accident, Driver Suspension and Student Rules and Regulations are available on each and every school bus whether the school bus is used as a spare bus or on a regular route. Emergency telephone numbers must also be available.

1. Every school bus driver, whether employed or volunteer, whether regular or substitute, must meet the following criteria:
 - 1.1 Be in possession of a valid Class I or Class II Alberta Operator's License if operating a school bus over 24 passengers.
 - 1.2 As a minimum, be in possession of a valid Class IV Alberta Operator's License if operating a school bus 24 passengers or less.
 - 1.3 Annual approval from the Transportation Administrator or designate must be obtained prior to operating a school bus on a regular basis.
2. In order to receive the approval of the Transportation Administrator or designate, a potential and existing school bus driver must:
 - 2.1 Complete a Driver Abstract Consent form to obtain a current abstract of his/her driving record from the Alberta Motor Vehicles Division.
 - 2.2 Provide an acceptable Criminal Record Check. (Required every five (5) year period.)
 - 2.3 Satisfactorily complete an S-Endorsement program within six months from the commencement of employment.
 - 2.4 Complete a road test if requested by the Transportation Administrator or designate.
3. Notwithstanding (2) noted above, in the event of an emergency the Transportation Administrator or designate may approve an individual to substitute for a regular bus driver upon request from the contractor.

Contractor Driver Regulations

The Contractor is required to ensure each and every driver is aware of their responsibilities under the Traffic Safety Act and the Education Act and is responsible for how the bus is operated and how the driver follows regulations.

1. Drivers are to acquaint themselves with the statues and regulations of the aforementioned publications as well as the policies described within the Bus Drivers Handbook.
2. The Board requires that the Contractor ensure that the driver meets the following transportation requirements:
 - 2.1 Transport only those passengers approved by the Superintendent or designate.

- 2.2 Maintain a current copy of the list of all passengers transported in the form of a School Bus Seating Plan and that the seating plan and the "Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Students" be posted in the bus.
- 2.3 Keep the school bus in a clean and sanitary condition.
- 2.4 Ensure that all lights and markings identifying the school bus, in particular the rear of the bus, are clear of all dirt, mud or snow at the commencement of each trip.
- 2.5 Ensure that all safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, flares, first aid kit, etc., are in the school bus and in proper condition. (It should be noted that the school bus driver is liable for prosecution if the above are not maintained in operational condition).
- 2.6 All school bus drivers are required to make a thorough daily walk-around of their school bus to inspect the condition and operation of the following:
- 2.6.1 Warning flashers and all lights.
 - 2.6.2 Emergency door.
 - 2.6.3 Tail pipe and exhaust system.
 - 2.6.4 All signs.
 - 2.6.5 All signals.
 - 2.6.6 All tires and wheels.
 - 2.6.7 Mirrors.
 - 2.6.8 Service door.
 - 2.6.9 Engine compartment.
 - 2.6.10 Windshield and wipers.
 - 2.6.11 Side windows.
 - 2.6.12 All gauges.
 - 2.6.13 All safety equipment.
- 2.7 All school bus drivers must wear their seat belt while operating a school bus.
- 2.8 Drivers must not transport gasoline or any other type of fuel inside the school bus regardless whether the school bus is loaded with passengers or not.
- 2.9 "No Smoking" signs must be posted inside and outside the bus as per requirements of the Tobacco Reduction Act in Alberta.
- 2.10 Drivers must not be under the influence of hallucinogenic substances or alcoholic beverages.
- 2.11 Drivers must refrain from the use of profane language while on duty.
- 2.12 Drivers must have the school bus at the school boarding zone warmed and prepared for loading five (5) minutes prior to school dismissal time.
- 2.13 Drivers must bring the school bus to a full stop at a point not less than five (5) meters, no more than fifteen (15) meters from the nearest rail of an **uncontrolled** railway crossing, when the school bus is carrying passengers and shall not proceed until it is safe to do so. (The school bus driver shall activate the four way flashers during this procedure.)

- 2.14 Drivers must not use electronic devices (cell phone, two-way radio, etc.) as it distracts from the safe operation of the school bus, as per requirements of the Traffic Safety Act in Alberta.
- 2.15 Drivers must not make any unscheduled stops, except in the case of an emergency or where such a stop has been requested in writing by a parent/guardian, or Principal for medical or dental appointments and providing the unscheduled stop lies on the regular bus route.
- 2.16 Drivers must report all discipline problems encountered, utilizing the "School Bus Misconduct" form, to the Principal of the school that the particular student attends.
- 2.17 After establishing the school bus route, the time of pick-up shall remain as consistent as possible on each day service is provided.
- 2.18 Drivers must ensure that students adhere to the established seating plan and check seats for damage after each run.
- 2.19 Drivers must allow only authorized persons to ride the school bus. Authorized persons include: a regular student passenger; any student approved by the Superintendent and/or designate.
- 2.20 Under no circumstances shall a bus driver refuse to transport a student back to his/her regular drop-off point unless the student is serving a suspension.
- 2.21 Drivers must not leave the school until five (5) minutes after the students have been dismissed unless **absolutely positive** that the load is complete.
- 2.22 Drivers must turn headlights and all running lights on when transporting passengers morning and evening.
- 2.23 Drivers must activate strobe lights where municipal bylaws allow while driving in inclement weather.
- 2.24 Drivers must walk through the aisle to the back of the bus after the final student disembarks and check each seat to ensure no more students are on board.
- 2.25 School bus drivers are required to report to the Transportation Administrator or designate, on copies of the appropriate RCMP forms, all accidents, moving violations, or any other traffic violations that have occurred while they were operating a motor vehicle (whether school bus or not).
- 2.26 Should a school bus catch fire or is suspected of being on fire, the first priority after safely parking the bus, is to evacuate all passengers through the safest exit and relocate them to a safe location at a minimum of 35 metres (115 feet) away from the school bus. Then proceed to extinguish the fire.
- 2.27 Drivers are to conform to all traffic bylaws duly passed by incorporated authorities within the Division boundaries.

Driver Pre-School Children on the Bus

It is recognized that a bus driver may require to have his/her own pre-school children on a bus. As such, the following must be adhered to:

1. The Driver must provide in writing to their bus Contractor or the Transportation Administrator or designate a request to allow their pre-school child(ren) to accompany them on the school bus.
2. No more than two pre-school children of the Driver will be allowed on a bus at one time.
3. The Driver must provide for and install a child safety seat and restraint for their child(ren).
4. The pre-school child must show on the student roster that accompanies the bus as an additional passenger.
5. The pre-school child must not take the seat place of regular students transported.

Contractor/Driver Accident Procedures

When a school bus is involved in an accident or when an emergency situation arises and the possibility of an accident exists, the Contractor will ensure his/her driver takes the following course of action, if physically possible:

NOTE: Items 1 through 3 are extracts from the School Bus Driver Improvement Program - Assessing Collision Scene and Bus Evacuation Procedures and are listed here for purposes of reinforcement.

1. Assess the Scene

In the event the bus can be moved and the possibility of a collision exists; move the bus off the roadway to a safe location and keep all the passengers seated and as comfortable as possible.

If a fire has started on the bus or there is a possibility of a fire starting due to fuel leakage, etc.

OR

the bus is located in an unsafe position and cannot be moved; immediately evacuate the students to a safe location 35 metres (115 feet) or more from the bus.

Question all passengers as to injuries sustained. Treat the most seriously injured first within the scope of expertise.

2. Securing and Protecting the Collision Scene

When the bus has been located in the safest location (contingent on "1." above). Stop the bus completely; turn off the engine and remove the keys. Activate the 4-way hazard flashers. Set the parking brake. Set out flares, reflectors or warning devices in accordance with prescribed procedures.

3. Organize Bystanders/Passengers to Render Assistance

Contingent on the nature of the accident/collision utilization of bystanders and/or passengers may prove beneficial for the following purposes:

- ◆ rendering first aid assistance;
- ◆ directing traffic;
- ◆ notifying medical, police and school authorities, etc.

If physically able, the driver is in charge of the scene, and must take charge until proper authorities arrive and relieve him/her of this responsibility. Being calm, organized and confident will increase the chances that directives are followed.

4. Notification of Authorities

The order of notifying proper authorities for assistance is as follows:

- ◆ medical;
- ◆ police;
- ◆ school and/or Transportation Administrator or designate.

A listing of the pertinent phone numbers for the above noted is to be available in each school bus for easy reference, and provided to the individual sent for assistance.

The report given to the aforementioned authorities is to include:

- ◆ time and location of accident;
- ◆ severity of crash;
- ◆ number of persons injured.

5. Accident Reporting and Insurance Requirements

- 5.1 Gather all pertinent information pertaining to the accident.
- 5.2 Locate and identify witnesses and obtain their addresses. Obtain any remarks, admissions of fault, defective condition of other vehicle(s), extent of bodily injuries and property damage incurred.
- 5.3 Never attempt to settle any claims, nor sign any statements admitting to fault for the accident.
- 5.4 Remain at the scene until dismissed by the attending police officer.
- 5.5 Do not attempt to complete route if you are physically injured or under mental stress whereby your ability to continue operation of the school bus is in question.
- 5.6 Complete all necessary documentation including the "Accident Notification" Report and submit the same to the bus contractor; a copy of the accident report (RCMP) is also to be filed with the bus contractor.

Should a parked vehicle be hit, try and locate the owner of the vehicle. If unsuccessful, leave a note on the damaged vehicle, giving your name, where you can be contacted and a brief description of what happened. A police officer, preferably, or a bystander is to be asked to check the damage and his/her name and address is to be recorded.

NOTE: The above noted listing of procedures to follow may vary from the order listed contingent on the type of accident incurred. **REMEMBER STUDENT SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT; COMMON SENSE SHALL PREVAIL.**

Contract Driver Suspension

The Bus Contractor, in the event of an accident involving a school bus, may subject the school bus driver to a temporary suspension upon completion of the run whether morning or afternoon.

1. The Contractor will notify the Transportation Administrator or designate of all accidents and suspensions.
2. The suspension will remain in effect until such time as the Transportation Administrator or designate notifies the Bus Contractor in writing that the suspension is lifted.

The Transportation Administrator or designate may require a Bus Contractor to suspend a school bus driver when, in the opinion of the Transportation Administrator or designate, it is deemed in the best interests of the Division.

3. A Bus Contractor may request an appeal of such suspension.
4. Where such an appeal is requested, a meeting of the Transportation Appeal Committee will be held within ten (10) working days of the suspension, or as soon thereafter as mutually agreed.

Student Rules and Regulations

The "Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Students" refers to the conduct required through the Education Act, the Traffic Safety Act, and the Transportation policy, of students while being transported on a school bus.

1. A copy of this list shall be made available to all parents that require transportation for their child(ren).
2. Students in violation of these rules and regulations may be suspended from school bus privileges by the Principal of the school they attend.

Legal Reference: Section 3, 7, 11, 31, 32, 33, 52, 53, 59, 222, 225 Education Act
 Traffic Safety Act
 Tobacco Reduction Act
 Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation 121/2009
 School Transportation Regulation 96/2019
 Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation 304/2002
 Vehicle Equipment Regulation 122/2009
 Funding Manual for School Authorities