

TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS

Background

Within British Columbia, transportation to and from school is the responsibility of parents and guardians. However, recognizing that school buses provide the safest way for students to attend school and reduce barriers for school attendance, School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) (the District) endeavours 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. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) school team through [BC School Sports](#).

Procedures

1. The Manager 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).
 - 1.1 The bus driver is responsible for the bus and safety of the passengers. As such, it is at the discretion of the driver to proceed with the bus route if the bus driver considers that travel is safe.
2. The District Transportation Department will determine if registered students' ridership needs to be adjusted and, if so, this would then be communicated to schools and parents through School Messenger or parent letter.
3. 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 determined by the Transportation Department. The transportation assistance will be \$0.40/km to a maximum of \$20.00/day per family. The distance eligible for this transportation assistance will be determined by the distance from the student's home to the nearest bus stop or school, whichever is less. The District will not pay transportation assistance for those families that have chosen to register their students outside of their catchment.
4. Kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2 students must be picked up from the bus stop by a parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian is not at the bus stop, the student will be returned to the student's school where they will be supervised until a parent or guardian arrives.
5. Parents must provide a signed note to allow grade 3 students to take younger siblings off the bus. Students in grade 4 or older may leave the bus on their own and may take younger siblings from the bus.
6. The District strongly recommends that parents have alternate transportation for circumstances such as the bus being late getting to the stop or the bus breaking down before the stop. This will ensure that students are not left at the stops unsupervised or left on their own in bad weather conditions.

7. 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:
 - 7.1 Elementary Out of Catchment Courtesy – students enrolled in district schools that attend a school other than the catchment school and that reside within a reasonable walking distance from an existing bus stop. (This distance will be assessed by the Transportation Department on a community-by-community basis.)
 - 7.2 Middle/Secondary Out of Catchment Courtesy – students enrolled in district schools (or programs) that attend a school other than the catchment school and that reside within a reasonable walking distance from an existing bus stop. (This distance will be assessed by the Transportation Department on a community-by-community basis.)
 - 7.3 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.
 - 7.4 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 extra-curricular activities. Abuse of this privilege may result in cancellation of this service by the Manager of Operations or designate.

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; and

The Manager of Operations or designate will determine the specific method to address these needs. This may require minor route extensions or the use of custom buses depending on availability of space and time.

8. Courtesy Rider Seat Assignment Priority

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:

- 8.1 Younger students will be given priority over older students.
 - 8.2 Students traveling greater distances will be given priority over those traveling lesser distances.
 - 8.3 Manager of Operations or designate will determine priority of courtesy riders depending on individual situations.
9. The bus routes will be reviewed throughout the year and adjusted accordingly.
 10. Students will only be dropped off at the school or pre-approved location. Students will not be dropped off at a student requested location.

11. Equipment on Buses

- 11.1 Equipment or items smaller than 76 centimetres (30 inches), 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.
- 11.2 Equipment such as hockey sticks, 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.

Reference: Sections 22, 23, 65, 85 School Act
[Policy 20](#)

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