

Title: **Transportation of Students**
Category: **Facilities**
Number: **4160**

I. **Rationale**

Parents/guardians are responsible for getting their children to and from school. The board assists parents with this responsibility provided the student qualifies for transportation under the board's administrative regulation.

II. **Entitlement/Eligibility**

A. Walk to School Limits:

Students residing in the Sunshine Coast School Board's jurisdiction, who are enrolled in a school within their designated catchment area (home school) are eligible for bus transportation as long as they reside at greater than the following walking distances from that school:

1. Elementary Grades K-7: 2.0 km
2. Secondary Grades 8-12: 3.2 km

Transportation for students residing within the above noted walk limits is the responsibility of the parent/guardians

B. Registration for Ridership:

Registration must occur prior to June 15 of each year through an online request form on the districts website, in order to be considered during the bus routing process. A paper registration form will be made available upon request. Bus routes will be established based on registered riders, prior to August 15 of each year, at which point registration will be re-opened.

Registered rider bus lists will be made available to the school principal by the Contractor before September 1 of each year.

C. Bus Routes:

Bus routes will be established based on eligible registrations received prior to the June 15 deadline.

An extension of an established bus route will be considered if four or more students reside beyond the walk limits to the nearest stop on that route. Road conditions and the impact on the existing run shall be considered in such a situation.

New bus routes may be considered if ten or more students reside beyond walk limits to an existing stop and road conditions are sufficient for safe operation of a school bus.

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D. Walk to Stop Limits:

School bus stop locations shall generally be no further than a 1.0 km walk from an elementary student's residence and no further than a 1.6 km walk from a secondary student's residence. Special accommodations will be considered for hazards such as fast moving traffic, roads without a shoulder or poor visibility.

Parents/guardians are responsible for the safety and supervision of their children prior to pick-up by the bus and immediately after leaving the bus on their return trip home. Parents/guardians shall ensure the children are at the proper pick-up location five minutes prior to scheduled pick-up.

E. Empty Seat/Courtesy Riders:

When routes have been established and there are available seats on the bus, students not meeting the eligibility requirements to ride the bus may make application for use of an available seat on the appropriate bus serving their residential area and school of attendance. However, if a seat is granted, any such permission may be withdrawn at any time and should not be considered to constitute a precedent or establish a right.

Assignments of these ineligible students to available seats will be finalized at the discretion of the school district office in conjunction with the school bus operator. Existing bus routes shall not be altered in order to accommodate courtesy riders.

F. Cross Boundary Transportation:

The School Board is not obligated to provide transportation for students attending schools other than their designated home school.

G. Priority:

Priority for courtesy and cross boundary riders will be based on the following:

1. Transport to custodial care, including child care providers
2. Completion of school year due to a mid-year change in residential address
3. Enrolment in Centralized District Programs (e.g. – Nature School)
4. Age of students, with priority going to the youngest students

During the school year, courtesy and cross boundary transportation may be withdrawn at any time to accommodate an eligible student. Removal of courtesy and cross boundary riders will be made using reverse order of the list above.

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H. Transportation Assistance:

Transportation assistance may be provided where bus transportation is not practical and students are outside the walk limits. Assistance will be provided on an amount per kilometre to the nearest available bus stop. The amount will be determined annually by the Secretary Treasurer.

Transportation assistance is not provided to students who rely on the ferry service, as this service is free to students using the ferry to get to and from school

I. Special Transportation:

Transportation requirements for special needs students shall be dealt with on an individual basis. In special cases of ill health, the Secretary-Treasurer may waive the walk limits.

J. Summer School:

Transportation for students attending summer school shall be the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

III. Curricular and Extracurricular

A. Principals shall allocate funds in the annual operating budget of their schools for curricular and extracurricular activities.

B. Principals shall oversee transportation arrangements for curricular and extracurricular transportation.

C. For curricular and extracurricular trips, the preferred modes of transportation are: first, school buses, including multi-function activity buses; second, buses operated by transit companies; third, vehicles rented from a commercial operator; fourth, privately owned vehicles.

D. Drivers of privately owned vehicles must provide assurance to the principal that vehicles meet highway safety requirements.

E. In vehicles other than school buses which are not equipped with seat belts, only as many passengers as there are available seat belts shall be transported, and seat belts shall be worn at all times when the vehicle is operated.

F. Children under the age of thirteen should not be transported in the front passenger seat of a vehicle equipped with an air bag.

G. Booster seats must be used when applicable in accordance with the *Motor Vehicle Safety Act*.

H. Smoking in vehicles transporting students is not permitted, this includes e-

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cigarettes and vapour products.

I. The principal shall determine that each driver has a valid driver's license by obtaining a drivers abstract. The abstract will be reviewed for proper class and restrictions and scrutinized to determine if any violation is indicative of poor driving habits or if other critical violations exist (e.g. prohibition, suspension, etc.).

J. The principal shall determine that each vehicle is insured for a minimum third party liability of \$1,000,000.

K. If the vehicle is to be used for school activities in excess of 1,600 kms, the insurer shall be notified. If required by the insurer, the vehicle shall be rated and insured for business use.

L. Schools shall not borrow a vehicle to be driven by anyone else but the owner.

M. Drivers of school district owned vehicles must review and adhere to the stipulations of the *Fleet Safety and Maintenance Plan*.

IV. **Student Conduct on School Buses**

A. Students shall obey the driver promptly at all times and follow rules set out by the bus company and School Board.

B. Students shall remain properly seated while the bus is in motion and remain seated until the bus has come to a full stop.

C. Students are expected to be at their bus stop five (5) minutes prior to the pickup time.

D. Student belongings such as backpacks, books, purses, etc., shall be held securely on the student's lap. Any item that presents any hazard to other passengers or has the potential to damage the vehicle may not be carried on the bus (e.g. unguarded skates, hockey sticks, sharp objects, firearms).

E. At no time shall a student extend any part of his/her body out of a window. Nothing shall be thrown out of a bus window.

F. Students will assist in keeping buses clean and free from litter.

G. When required, students shall share seats to a maximum of three (3) per seat.

H. The same standard of behaviour that applies in a classroom shall apply on a bus.

I. Food or beverages shall not be consumed on buses during regular, scheduled runs. On extracurricular trips, at the driver's discretion, this regulation may be waived, but the bus must be parked at the time.

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J. When crossing a highway, before or after travel on buses, students shall cross only in front of the bus.

K. Students may board only the bus to which they have been assigned.

L. If a bus becomes disabled because of inclement weather, accident or mechanical failure, all students shall remain at the scene until alternate transportation has been provided. Senior students may be requested to assist the driver and/or other students.

V. Inappropriate Behaviour on School Buses

A. The driver shall warn the student that the behaviour is unacceptable.

B. If there is no improvement, the bus company will report at the earliest possible time the problem and the action taken to the student's principal.

C. The school principal will work with the bus company, the student and the student's family as appropriate to address the behavior.

D. The school principal will be responsible for disciplinary or corrective action, which may include the suspension of transportation privileges.

E. Student behaviour that puts the safety of students, staff or the public at risk may result in immediate suspension from travel on school buses until a safety plan has been implemented.

F. Appeals to disciplinary action may be made in accordance with the district's communication protocol.

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References: Board Policy 12.7