

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

TITLE: TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS

CATEGORY: FACILITIES

NUMBER: 4160

I. Rationale

Parents/guardians are responsible for getting their children to and from school. The Board of Education assists parents with this responsibility by offering school bus transportation, provided the student qualifies for services as defined in this administrative regulation.

Support for active student travel is an important part of a comprehensive approach to student transportation. Active travel has many benefits, including strengthening children's physical, mental, social and cognitive development, and shifting towards a sustainable future.

II. Active Travel

- a. Schools have an important role to play in encouraging and promoting active travel. Active travel benefits students and the community by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, reducing traffic congestion around school sites, improving student confidence, and support the health and fitness of students. Active transportation is any form of human-powered transportation (walking, cycling, scooting, skateboarding, etc.).
- b. School District No. 46 will promote active travel for students through a variety of initiatives such as, but not limited to:
 - i. Working with local governments, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Vancouver Coastal Health, the RCMP and others to increase road safety and help identify and improve safe routes to schools
 - ii. Active Transportation Planners
 - iii. Participation in Active Travel Month and other events
 - iv. Encourage regular communication and engagement with students and parents about active transportation throughout the school year
 - v. Educating students, parents, and the community in road safety
 - vi. Education and building student skills and capacity to utilize active travel modes to school
 - vii. Creating no-stopping zones around schools
 - viii. Establishing "walking school bus" type initiatives
 - ix. Reducing barriers to walking biking, scooting and other human-powered forms of transportation
 - x. Promoting Safe Walk to School programs

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- xi. Using active modes of travel for school field trips when possible, including public transit.
- c. Students residing within their schools walk limit, as defined in section III.A. below, are encouraged to take part in active travel opportunities wherever possible. Families outside of those limits are encouraged to build elements of active travel into their transportation plans.

III. School Bus Eligibility

a. Walk to School Limits:

- i. 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 if 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
- ii. Transportation for students residing within the above noted walk limits is the responsibility of the parent/guardians.

b. Registration for Ridership:

- i. In order to adhere to legislated requirements to maintain accurate bus lists, registration is required for bus riders. Registration must occur prior to July 15 of each year through an online request form on the district's website 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 20 of each year, at which point registration will be re-opened.
- ii. Registered rider bus lists will be made available to the school principal by the Contractor before September 1 of each year.

c. Bus Routes:

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

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- ii. 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.
- iii. 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.
- d. Walk to Stop Limits:
 - i. 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.
 - ii. 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. Courtesy Riders:
 - i. 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.
 - ii. 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. Guest Seats:
 - i. Occasionally, an unregistered student may require transportation to extra-curricular activities or social events. In these cases, parents/guardians must advise the school in written form in advance to request a guest seat. School

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administration will determine if a seat is available for the guest rider and advise the bus driver on the day of travel of the additional rider. Permission will only be granted if an empty seat is available on the desired route and may be revoked at any time to accommodate a registered rider.

g. Cross Boundary Transportation:

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

h. Priority:

- i. Priority for courtesy and cross boundary riders will be based on the following:
 1. Cross-boundary transportation to licensed after-school childcare, where none exists on site
 2. Cross-boundary students enrolled in Centralized District Programs (e.g. - Nature School)
 3. Other cross-boundary students, with priority going to the youngest students
 4. Students living within the walk limits, with priority going to the youngest students
- ii. 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.

i. Transportation Assistance:

- i. 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.
- ii. 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

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j. Transportation to Support Diversity and Inclusion:

- i. Transportation requirements for students with unique needs shall be reviewed with the principal on an individual basis. In collaboration with the principal, the secretary-treasurer may prioritize service for these students.

k. Summer School:

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

IV. 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 where active travel is not possible, 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 all vehicles transporting students (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-cigarettes and vapour products.
- i. The principal shall confirm 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

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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 confirm that each vehicle is insured for a minimum third-party liability of \$1,000,000.
- k. Schools shall not borrow a vehicle to be driven by anyone else but the owner.
- l. Drivers of school district owned vehicles must review and adhere to the stipulations of the *Fleet Safety and Maintenance Plan*.

V. 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, etc.).
- 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. Only students in grades K-4 may sit three to a seat, all other students may only sit two to a 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.
- j. When crossing a highway, before or after travel on buses, students shall cross only in front of the bus unless the stop is near a controlled crosswalk or controlled

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intersection.

- 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.

VI. Inappropriate Behaviour on School Buses

- a. The driver shall verbally inform the student that the behaviour is unacceptable.
- b. If there is no improvement, the bus company will file a written report to the principal 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.

Received: March 2022

References: Board Policy 12.7