

Transportation Services Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are the school buses safe?

School buses are thoroughly inspected by the Washington State Patrol (WSP) twice a year. In addition, the buses are inspected by District personnel on a scheduled basis and serviced routinely. The school bus is the safest form of ground transportation in the world.

2. What kind of screening process do drivers go through to make certain they are qualified to be around children?

The school district requires employees to be fingerprinted and have a criminal background check. In addition a school bus driver is subject to driving record review, drug/alcohol tests (including pre-employment and random testing), and Department of Transportation (DOT) physicals.

3. How is a school bus stop established?

School bus stops are established using several factors including age of students, walking conditions, walking distance to the stop and road accessibility.

4. The school bus drives right past my house, why can't the school bus stop to pick up my child/children?

In areas where walking conditions are acceptable, students are required to be picked up at centralized stops. The centralized stop allows more students to be picked up at one time thereby being more efficient and less costly.

5. What can I do if I don't like the location of a bus stop?

You can submit a bus stop request online at <https://www.skschools.org/depts/transportation>. There are numerous factors to be considered in relocating a school bus stop, and we may not be able to meet all your request.

6. Can my child catch a school bus from day care?

To qualify for bus transportation, the day care provider's address must be within the boundary area and outside of the walking area for that school. Please coordinate with your day care provider to ensure that your child gets to or from the school bus stop.

7. Can you transport my child to a school outside our school boundary area?

Our District has been divided into school boundary areas for each school. Although you may choose to open enroll your child in another school, transportation outside of the school boundary area in which you live is a parent responsibility.

8. My child's bus is overcrowded. Can some children be placed on another bus?

A bus that has three elementary students to a seat or two middle or high school students to a seat may seem crowded. However, it will not be over capacity. Our goal is to fully utilize the seating capacity on all buses in our fleet.

9. Why are the buses not always full?

At some point in a school bus route, the school bus will be partially loaded or empty. The school bus must travel to the first stop empty, and from the last stop empty.

10. What do I do if my child does not arrive home on schedule?

Scheduled pick-up and drop-off times may vary by five or more minutes. If a delay exceeds this window, contact your school office for assistance. Bus delays can be attributable to mechanical problems, traffic, discipline problems and other unforeseen events. If the delay is caused by something other than bus problems, the school office will initiate appropriate action. In any case, the school office will work with Transportation Services to determine the location of your child's bus and/or your child, and will inform you about the reasons for the delay. If your child arrives home after you have alerted the office that he or she is late, please inform the transportation office so that our staff can discontinue follow-up efforts.

11. Who is responsible for my child while he or she is waiting at the bus stop?

Parents are responsible for the safety and behavior of their children at and to/from the bus stop.

12. Can my children sit together on the school bus?

This can be problematic due to how students are seated on the bus, i.e. kindergarteners' in the front seats, first through third grades in the front of the bus and fourth through fifth grades toward the back of the bus. If siblings are required to sit together the older sibling will need to sit with the younger sibling in the front seats.

13. My student needs to ride home on a different bus or be dropped off at a school bus stop other than their regular school bus stop. What do I need to do?

If your student, on occasion, will be riding home on a bus other than the one to which he/she is assigned (e.g., riding home with a friend or to an alternate stop), before the end of the school day the student must give the office a signed note from the parent(s)/guardian(s). The school will then issue a bus pass to the student which the student will give to the school bus driver.

14. Why did the school bus not stop when my student was running late or not wait for my student to get to the bus stop?

We make a concerted effort to be consistent on the time we start the route. After the first stop, many things can affect the arrival time at subsequent stops, so even the most conscientious driver will vary by a few minutes. If there is a substitute driver, the times may not be consistent with the regular time period. To allow for those variances, students are told to be at the bus stop five minutes prior to normal arrival and to be waiting where they are visible to the driver as the bus approaches the stop. Drivers are required by law to activate their yellow lights a minimum of 100 feet prior to stopping and turning on their red lights. Usually, drivers will not leave students if they are close to the stop and making an effort to get there as quickly as they can. The loading and unloading process is the most

dangerous part of the bus trip, and students are safest when they are at the stop before the bus arrives rather than running for it after it shows up.

15. My student is having a problem with the school bus driver. Should I go to the bus stop to talk with the driver?

No, instead we ask that you contact the administrator of your child's school. After gathering the necessary information, he or she will pursue the matter with Transportation Services, and we will work with you to resolve it.

16. What do I do if my child loses an item on the bus?

Lost articles are kept in the bus for a day or two and then returned to the school office. There is not a lost and found at transportation.

17. Can I ride my child's bus?

Parents and other adults are not generally allowed to ride school buses with the exception of field trips. The school buses are provided for the children to ride to and from school and not as a form of transportation for parents or the general public.

18. How do I become a school bus driver?

Our department offers training opportunities several times per school year and in the summer. If interested, please contact Transportation Services at 360.874.7090.

19. How do I contact Transportation Services with questions or concerns?

Email us at Transportationinfo@skschools.org or contact us at 360.874.7090