

3.8 – Transportation to and from School

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Purpose

The Board believes that it has a role to play in safe and sustainable arrival and departure of students from school. It believes that a variety of tools are available to achieve this goal including providing affordable, equitable, accessible and sustainable bussing supports where appropriate, working with partners to enhance the safety of walking/biking routes to schools and to use resources in the most efficient way practicable.

Guidelines/Objectives

This Policy will address three Distinct areas associated with getting to and from school:

1. Bussing
2. Active Transportation
3. School Pick Up and Drop Off

It will highlight the Board's objective with respect to each area and layout the mechanisms to achieve these goals including what decisions are delegated to staff.

Definitions

Catchment School - A catchment school is an area consisting of a geographical area around the school that includes all or part of the school district.

Active Transportation - Active transportation is any type of human-powered transportation, including walking, cycling, scooting, skateboarding, or using a mobility device. Active transportation is any type of human-powered transportation, including walking, cycling, scooting, skateboarding, micromobility vehicles, or using a mobility device.

Courtesy Riders – A student who is not eligible for bussing based on Set Distance Criteria to their catchment school. This may be a student who is provided bussing due to space being available or alternatively a recognized safety concern or hazard with respect to walk routes to school.

District Program – A District Program is a program without a catchment including but not limited to the Career Technical Program, Skills for Life, French Immersion and Learning Alternatives.

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District-Provided Bussing – A bus provided to a student to access their catchment school.

Eligible Rider – An eligible rider is a rider who lives outside of the Set Distance Criteria from their catchment school.

Fees – Include both onetime administration fees and fees for eligible and/or ineligible riders as approved by the Board.

Transportation Assistance – A monthly stipend provided to families who are outside of Set Distance Criteria to their catchment but cannot access District Provided Bussing.

1. Bussing

The Board of Education believes in providing eligible students with safe and reliable transportation in a fiscally and environmentally responsible manner. The Board further believes that it may pay all or part of the conveyance of students by school bus or through transportation assistance.

The Board, while recognizing that it is not required to provide bus transportation to bring students to and from school, shall make provisions for school bus transportation as established by this Policy and its corresponding Administrative Procedure.

1.1 Transportation and/or transportation assistance to and from catchment schools and/or District programming is based on the following criteria:

- Ensuring equitable access to school for students with disabilities and diverse abilities
- Set Distance Criteria
- Commitments under the British Columbia Tri-Partite Agreement with Rights Holders
- Safety and Hazard concerns

1.1.1. Ensuring Equitable Access to School for Students with Disabilities and Diverse Abilities

Subject to available human and financial resources, and available infrastructure the Board shall ensure that students with diverse learning needs are provided transportation to school. Eligibility and service parameters shall be determined yearly by the Department of Learning Services and Transportation Department based on need and the availability of financial, human and physical resources.

Criteria shall be made publicly available.

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1.1.2. Set Distance Criteria

Kindergarten to Grade 3 students who live in a residence that is located more than 4 km from their catchment school.

Grades 4 to 12 students who live in a residence that is located more than 4.8 km from their catchment school.

Routing will be determined on sufficient ridership as well as financial, human and physical resource availability. Where a route is not provided for a student who live outside of the Distance Criteria, Transportation Assistance will be made available.

1.1.3. Commitments under the British Columbia Tri-Partite Agreement with Rights Holders

Students subject to BCTEA shall be provided transportation in line with agreement between local First Nations and the District approved by the Provincial and Federal Governments to support school attendance.

1.1.4. Safety and Hazard Concerns

Students within Set Distance Criteria may be provided access to District provided bussing where the walking route to school is unsafe or there is not appropriate public transit available. Areas where reliable public transit is unavailable shall be prioritized.

1.2 Yearly Route Review

District staff shall provide a yearly route review to the Board of Education that highlights ridership, costs and potential changes to routes. The Board of Education shall be required to make a motion for the following:

- a. The permanent addition and/or deletion of a route;
- b. The institution of fees and/or charges for ridership both eligible and courtesy riders.

Staff shall be empowered to:

- a. Make shifts to routes and/or pickup spots along routes;
- b. Temporarily combine or alter a route where ridership does not support the service or where human or physical resources are insufficient;
- c. Suspend a route on a one-off basis due to inclement weather; or
- d. Suspend a route on a one-off basis where human or physical resources are unavailable to provide the service.

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1.3 Collaboration with Regional Transit

The Board believes that public transit is a safe and appropriate way for students to access school where the service is reliable. Further, the Board is committed to ensuring the efficient and sustainable use of funding. The supports working closely with regional transit to ensure limiting any overlap of services in a manner that respects its obligations to our CUPE partners.

2. Active Transportation

The Board is committed to the support and promotion of active transportation options for students and staff to get to and from school.

The Board supports partnering with municipalities and regional districts for short and long term planning with respect to active transportation.

The Board supports the use of operational and capital funding, as available, to support active transportation including partnering with local jurisdictions in planning active transportation routes, the promotion of such routes among the school community and the expansion of bicycle parking and, as appropriate, staff showering facilities.

3. School Pick Up and Drop Off

While the Board believes that through a robust active transportation plan schools can limit traffic at sites it is also committed to ensuring safety during pick up and drop off.

The Board supports the use of operational and capital resources where available to ensure safety and accessibility at school sites. The Board also supports school-based administration working with their families and appropriate District based staff to review school sites where requested by the school community. It is recognized that appropriate planning processes are followed when considering the depth of review, staff resources and funding required. The Board also recognizes that there are limited resources and that overenrolled schools, where no plan is in place to remedy the over-enrollment in the short term, shall be considered when setting priorities.

The Board believes that schools should be idle-free and supports infrastructure to educate our community in meeting this goal.

Legal References:

Monitoring Method:	<i>Internal Reports and Direct Observation/Superintendent and Board</i>
Monitoring Frequency:	<i>Annual</i>
Adopted:	<i>2016.11.23</i>
Amended:	<i>2024.02.28</i>