



# SCHOOL BUS & TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK



2023-2024

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## RESOURCES

Government of Alberta [Education Act](#)

Government of Alberta [School Transportation Regulation](#) (Alberta Regulation 96/2019)

Foothills School Division

[Administrative Procedure 181 – Electronic Surveillance](#)

[Administrative Procedure 550 - Student Transportation Services – General condition.](#)



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Thank you for taking the time to orient yourself and your family to the Foothills School Division transportation system. This handbook has the purpose of providing information about legislation, regulation, policies, and procedures as well as operational activities that are a part of the transportation experience with Foothills School Division (FSD).

Policies and procedures are developed around a safe and efficient transportation system. We strive to maintain a high level and standard of safety that we apply in general, with consideration of specific situations.

We aim to deliver a service as timely and conveniently as possible. All aspects of the bus experience should contribute to the overall education of our students. To accomplish this goal, it is necessary to integrate the efforts of bus drivers, supervisors, mechanics, teachers, principals, and parents. This Handbook has been developed to improve communications and expectations between the school, parents, and the Transportation Department.

## 1. TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Foothills School Division receives grants from the provincial government to provide for the transportation of students to and from their designated schools. Grants are only provided for students who are eligible for bussing. These grants only cover a portion of the cost of providing transportation. Foothills School Division does not receive third-party funding for students who are ineligible for bussing.

## 2. ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION

### 2.1 Eligibility

Alberta Education's criteria for eligibility for bussing are set out in the [Education Act](#), the [School Transportation Regulation](#) (Alberta Regulation 96/2019), and [Administrative Procedure 550 - Student Transportation Services – General condition](#).

The transportation eligibility is based on the residential address. The residential address is defined as:

#### Residence

##### *Section 4.1*

*For the purposes of this Act, the place of residence of a person is governed by the following:*

*(a) a person is deemed to have only one place of residence.*

*(b) a person's residence is the place where that person ordinarily lives and sleeps and to which, when absent from the residence, that person intends to return.*

The Act does not allow for shared custody arrangements. Parents must choose only one residence as the student's primary residence for the records of the school as well as

transportation. The address at the school must be the same as the address at transportation. Proof of residence may be required by the schools.

In terms of these regulations there are two criteria for eligibility:

1. Students attend their designated school. This designation is in terms of:
  - a. Established school boundaries; or
  - b. The division directs a student to an out-of-boundary school for specific specialized programming.
2. The student must live 2.4km or more away from the designated school.

The distance from the designated school is calculated using an approved Alberta Education Logistics program, not Google or other publicly accessible programs. The maps used are the municipal and county maps provided by these authorities. This distance is the final determination.

The distance is the walking distance not driving. Distance is measured by the most direct route on a highway as defined in the *Traffic Safety Act*. The *Traffic Safety Act* defines "highway" as: ...any thoroughfare, street, road, trail, avenue, parkway, driveway, viaduct (pedway), lane, alley, square, bridge, causeway, trestle way or other places, whether publicly or privately owned, any part of which the public is ordinarily entitled or permitted to use for the passage or parking of vehicles..."

### 3. APPLY FOR BUSSING

**To be considered for bus routing for the 2023-2024 school year and receive a bus pass, each student riding the bus must be registered before June 30, 2023, and June 30 of the years following that.** We heard your suggestions during our Ideas that Make Cents engagement and agree that we can refine our bus routes to eliminate empty runs. As such, we will require registration for each student who will utilize the bus service. This includes both 'Eligible Riders' who are outside the 2.4km walk limit from their designated school as well as 'Ineligible Riders' who are within the limit or attend an out-of-boundary school. Eligible Riders will be given priority and those considered Ineligible will be granted a bus pass if space is available on the route. **Applications received after June 30 will be processed in the order received and passes may not be issued until after the school year start.**

#### 3.1 Daycare, After-School Care, and After-School Activities

Transportation services can be provided if your daycare is along your designated bus route. Transportation routes are developed based on a student's residence (home address), which is also used to determine their designated school. To accommodate a daycare request your child's care provider must meet your child's assigned bus at a scheduled stop. It is not possible to provide alternate stops dependent on daycare service days.

#### 4. INELIGIBLE STUDENTS

Students whose residence is closer to their designated school than the distances outlined in the previous section OR school families who decide to send their children to an FSD school of choice outside their designated boundary (subject to FSD approval) do not qualify for transportation. However, they may be provided with transportation subject to the following conditions:

- There is room on the bus after all students who qualify for transportation are accommodated.
- The route will not be changed to accommodate student pick up/drop off, including establishing new or re-establishing old stops. School families are required to meet the bus at a scheduled stop designated by Transportation Services.
- Students attending a school of choice are required to meet the bus at a scheduled stop inside the choice school boundary.
- The provision of transportation will be reviewed on an annual basis subject to the same conditions as outlined above. There is no guarantee that space will be available from one year to the next depending on the number of students who qualify for transportation and choose to use the service.

The applicants will only be informed of the approval/denial of their application as late as the beginning of October. Please make sure you have an alternative transportation plan in place as students may or may not be accommodated. **Accommodation into transportation is never guaranteed.**

#### 5. FEES

No Fees are scheduled to be charged in the 2023-2024 school year.

#### 6. THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

##### 6.1 Routes

Routes are designed taking the following aspects into consideration:

- Accessibility of roads even in severe weather conditions
- Where possible have right-hand pick-ups, to avoid students having to cross the roads to reach their homes. This cannot always be avoided, and some left-hand stops are put in place. Students are taught by the drivers how to cross the road safely at these left-hand stops.
- Efficiency and economics.
- Routes are only on legal municipal roadways.
- Routes are evaluated on an annual basis and any issues are addressed through moving the stop, training, assistance from the local authority, the province, etc.

Most routes are built to allow for student transfers between buses to take place. This method of operation is the most efficient service given the resources available.

Our buses are also used for multiple services every morning and evening. A route may collect high school students first and drop them off at school and then the same bus will collect elementary/junior high students and drop them off at school. Drivers then do the reverse in the afternoon. We cannot fit high school, junior high and elementary on one bus as there are too many students requiring service. This means that high school students may get to school early and wait at school for buses in the afternoon.

## 6.2 Stops

**It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the safety of the students to, at, and from the bus stop. Parents must make sure students know how to get to and from the stop from home.**

The provincial regulations require that a stop must be within 2.4km from the residence of the student.

Several factors determine bus stop locations including safety, road conditions, terrain and visibility, traffic volumes, roadway speed limits, and distance between stops.

A bus stop is evaluated with a standard quantitative method which is used as best practice in the school bus industry.

Student transportation services shall only be provided to and from bus stops designated by the Division.

Buses will not be going into cul-de-sacs and undeveloped No Exit Roads where the student lives less than 800m from the entrance to such a cul-de-sac or No Exit Road. Students will not have to walk more than 800m on municipal roadways. Safe and adequate turnaround areas as assessed by the Division must be available on the public roadway.

Stops in Foothills School Division are established dependent on the situation:

- **In-town stops are communal stops.** Students gather at a stop central to most of the students. These stops are most often established on the curb at a public area such as walk paths, parks, or communal post boxes. This is done with an eye on access and preventing vandalism of private property that becomes an issue if the communal stops are on or near private property.
- **Farm Stops.** The stops for rural students at farms or small holdings will be at the end of the driveway on the public road. For safety and scheduling purposes FSD buses remain on municipal roads and do not enter private property.
- Buses will not enter private property unless:
  - Providing service for physically disabled children subject to an individual case review

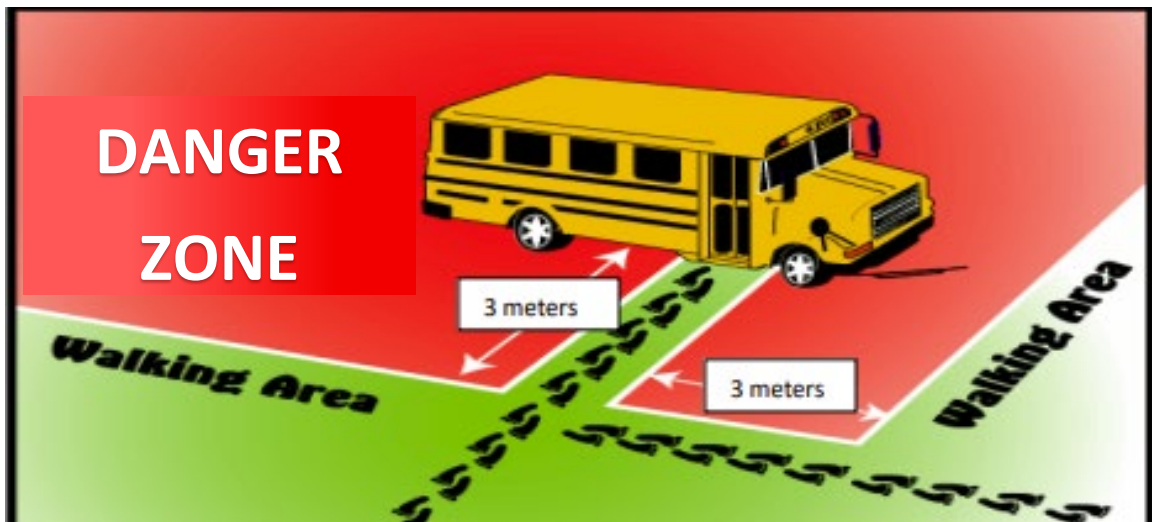
- Where stopping or turning the bus on a legal municipal roadway constitutes, in the opinion of the Division, a significant safety hazard to students.

### 6.3 School Bus Loading and Unloading

The most dangerous part of the school bus ride is getting on and off the school bus. The loading and unloading area is called the “Danger Zone”.

The “Danger Zone” is the area on all sides of the bus where children are in the most danger of not being seen by the driver (three meters in front, three meters on either side of the bus, and three meters behind are all areas where a child may be in the driver’s blind spot). **It only takes a second to lose sight of a student if a driver becomes distracted by students on board the bus.**

When training our bus drivers, we stress the importance of safe loading and unloading procedures.



This is where our drivers need to be fully focused and cannot be distracted by students or parents. This is not the time to have a conversation with the driver. If parents need to communicate with the driver, please do so at a different time. It is important to have parents understand that drivers need their cooperation to be fully focused during this time, by not parking in and staying away from the loading and unloading zones. Always park well away from loading zones at all times.

There are left-hand stops in our system. The driver will train your students on how to cross the road safely while they keep an eye out for other vehicles. The students must always listen to the driver. Please do not beckon your students to cross the road, they must always focus on the driver.

It is also important to instruct students in the proper procedure for loading and unloading.

- Be cautious when carrying loose papers or books which might drop near the bus – we encourage students to use a backpack.

- Be aware of the dangers of clothing, backpacks, and jacket strings/straps that could become tangled in the doorway of the school bus or footwear.
- Wait in an orderly fashion, safely back from the roadway or pick-up zone. Students need to be at their stop five minutes early. The time you have been given for departure is the time the bus departs from your stop.
- Board the bus in a single file; use the handrail to prevent tripping on the steps.
- Sit down immediately, to prevent falls when the bus starts moving.
- Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and for the doors to open before rising to exit your seat.
- After leaving the bus, take five giant steps away from the bus to be out of the **Danger Zone** and in a safe spot.
- When crossing in front of the bus look at the driver for a signal that it is okay to cross the roadway.

#### 6.4 Stop Times

The stop times provided will be the time the bus departs the stop. **Students are expected to be at the stop, ready to board the bus 5 minutes before their assigned departure time.** This does not mean being in or at the house or coming down the driveway when the bus must leave. **The driver will leave your stop at the assigned time, they cannot wait.**

Students and parents must be aware that buses must maintain a schedule to be on time to school. Part of this schedule may be making transfers between buses. Drivers cannot wait for students past their pick-up times, it has an influence on other students and services. If your student(s) are late, you must have a contingency plan to get them to school.

Have a contingency plan in place in case the bus does not arrive. For example, sometimes a bus may have a mechanical difficulty mid-route and cannot complete its pickups. Students should have a clear plan on what to do if the bus does not arrive.

**Never follow a school bus.** Never try to force a school bus to stop or force a school bus to pull over. The driver is responsible for the safety of bus occupants. The driver is trained to, and will, radio dispatch and we will call the RCMP to assist.

The in-town stop departure times are published on the Foothills School Division website. The rural departure times are provided to parents by the driver of the route.

The services are planned to have students at the school about 10 minutes before the start of the instructional day or at a later time indicated by the school.

Buses will only wait 10 minutes after the afternoon dismissal time to depart from the school. Students must make their way to the buses without lingering. In the event a student misses the bus, parents will be called by the school to arrange an alternate pick-up.



Drop-off times need to be flexible. The routes can be shortened due to student absences in the afternoon. This may result in your student arriving home early. Decide or establish a safe plan for this situation.

Students at stops between the ages of kindergarten and grade 2:

- Should be accompanied/supervised to, at and from the stop by an authorized parent/caregiver/guardian or older sibling.
- The students will not be let off the bus if the authorized guardian is not there for the driver to hand over supervision.
  - If there is a person that normally receives the students, and that person is unable to be there, please inform your driver or the transportation office who will be authorized to receive your student. You will be asked to provide a brief description and name. Your children will not be given to just anybody – this is for the safety of the student.
  - If a parent cannot be reached the student will be taken back to the school to be supervised there.
  - If nobody can be reached at the school and all efforts have been made to find the student’s parents and emergency contacts without success, the students will be handed over to the RCMP at the nearest detachment.

Please check the Foothills School Division Website for any route delays or cancellations.

#### **6.5 Absences & Students Not on the Bus**

Parents are requested to notify their driver in advance if their students will not be riding the bus. Please make sure the notification for morning services is done by 7:00am and for the afternoon before 2:30pm. Texting is the preferred manner of communication with drivers. Parents can also reach out to the Transportation Office Absence Line to report students not being on the bus.

#### **6.6 Guest students**

Guest Students are *not* allowed on the buses. Only students registered to that bus are permitted. This ensures a seat for those who are registered on that bus route.

#### **6.7 Alternative Transportation**

Where a student has been directed to attend a school to which the student is unable to access regular transportation service, or where the provision of transportation service is not practical for the Division, arrangements will be made to enter into an agreement with the student's parent or legal guardian and receive an allowance in lieu of transportation.

#### **6.8 School Zones**

Each school has defined areas for buses and separate areas for parents to pick up and drop off their students. Ensure you are using the correct zone. Only buses are allowed in the bus area;

please do not drive through or walk through these areas. Do not create dangerous situations by being in the bus areas.

## 7. START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

### 7.1 Eligibility

To find your designated school and see whether you are eligible for bussing, visit the “[Apply for Transportation](#)” section on the Division website.

#### **Services in-town Okotoks and in-town High River:**

- Bus passes will be issued from the school the week before school. Please make sure your student has their pass to verify their ridership.
- If a student loses their bus pass, [contact Transportation](#) for a replacement.
- Transportation details such as bus number, stop location and stop times are provided when passes are issued.
- The stop times can also be found online at the [Foothills School Division Website](#).

#### **Services between Turner Valley and Black Diamond**

- Bus passes will be at the school the week before school begins ready for pick-up. Please make sure your student has their pass with them to verify their bussing by drivers.
- If a student has lost their bus pass, please contact Transportation for a replacement bus pass.
- Transportation details such as bus number, stop location and stop times are provided when passes are issued.

#### **Rural Services**

- Prior to the school start date, the driver will contact each family and inform them of their morning departure times.
- The bus routes will be reviewed for efficiencies throughout the month of September. The departure times will be finalized by the drivers as soon as possible.
- Adjustments can occur throughout the year if there are changes in the route or riders. The driver will notify the parents of any changes to the departure times.

## 8. SAFETY ON THE BUS

***These guidelines, rules, and responsibilities on the bus apply to all bus services including regular transportation and field trips.***

### 8.1 Proper Winter Attire

Parents are responsible to ensure children have dressed appropriately for the prevailing or potential weather conditions.

All students riding on a school bus during the winter months shall be required to be prepared for unexpected severe weather conditions and possible delays of buses. The student shall either wear or carry with them appropriate winter footwear, outerwear, headwear, and gloves or mitts.

If a student presents at a morning pick-up and is not properly dressed, the bus driver shall pick up the student and upon arrival at the school, the driver will contact the parent and request proper winter clothing to be able to assist with transportation that afternoon. There are no blankets or extra clothes kept on the bus. In the event of a mechanical breakdown and the heaters fail, the students will only have access to the clothes they have with them. The temperature in a school bus can vary quickly.

## **8.2 Seat Assignments**

The driver shall develop a seating plan and each student shall sit in their assigned seat. Students have the responsibility of readily accepting the seat specifically assigned by the driver. Students will always sit in their assigned seats unless authorized by the driver. Drivers may change seat assignments as necessary to ensure the safety of all.

## **8.3 Behaviour on the Bus**

Unsafe actions on the bus will not be tolerated. The school bus is considered an extension of the classroom and, therefore, standard classroom conduct is to be observed.

The bus driver is responsible for the students on their bus and must, therefore, receive the respect, consideration, and cooperation of each student. Considering the hazardous nature of their job and the necessity of cooperation from the students in the performance of that job, it is imperative that the bus driver's directions are carried out. This cannot be accomplished if the students are allowed to make disparaging remarks/actions to or about the driver. Such remarks/actions undermine the authority of the driver which may cause the students to ignore his/her directives in the event of an emergency. Therefore, disrespectful comments and actions directed toward bus drivers must be dealt with.

The bus driver is required to implement the rules established by Foothills School Division, the Education Act and the transportation laws set by federal and provincial governments. Students riding on a school bus are under the immediate supervision and authority of the driver from the time they are loading until they are discharged at the school and, similarly, on the afternoon return trip.

The following highlight some of the common issues that pertain to the safe transportation of students. Your cooperation in reviewing these issues with your student(s) is appreciated:

- Students must not distract the driver.
- Noise is to be kept to an acceptable level. Shouting, fighting, harassment and/or disorderly conduct by students will not be tolerated.

- Students shall not stand, change seats, or move about the bus while the bus is in motion. They must stay seated in their assigned seat until their stop is reached and the bus is in park. (*Provincial Traffic Act*)
- The aisle must always be kept clear. (*Provincial Traffic Act*)
- Backpacks are to be removed and placed on the lap of the student or on the floor between the legs of the student.
- Students shall not extend any object or body, or body part out of the bus windows.
- Garbage must be placed in a receptacle designated by the driver or packed off the bus with the student. No garbage shall be thrown on the floor or out of the windows of the bus. Do not dispose of your garbage while the bus is in motion.
- Eating and drinking on the bus are at the discretion of the driver. Eating and drinking on the bus is a choking hazard. Water instead of juice or sugar drinks is greatly appreciated.
- No gum on the seats or the floors.
- Profane language will not be tolerated. Students shall not engage in behaviour that may be deemed vulgar, abusive and/or that constitutes harassment.
- The use or possession of intoxicants/other controlled substances is prohibited.
- Smoking, vaping, the use of other tobacco products, lighting matches or lighters is not permitted on the bus.
- Weapons of any kind are not allowed on the bus, this includes any form of a gun, knife, or another risk.

The safety of students is contingent, in large part, upon student behaviour.

**Note:** Operating a bus, like any other vehicle, requires focus and safe driving skills. Consider your own experience driving: behaviour that you may not allow in your own car is often seen as harmless on the bus. Not only is this behaviour unacceptable in a small passenger vehicle, but when this type of behaviour is multiplied by up to 72 kids on a bus it becomes an even greater distraction to the driver and a very real safety hazard.

#### **8.4 Misconduct**

Bus drivers are instructed to utilize a 4-step procedure in dealing with student misbehaviour. These steps, with consequences, are:

- Verbal Warning
- Change in Assigned Seat
- Bus Driver contacts the parent and provides information to the school that the student is on their third offence. We will only contact one person. It is the parent's responsibility to share the information with the other parent or responsible adult.
- Conduct Report sent to Principal (Bus Driver calls the parent to inform that Conduct Report has been sent)

Severe Clause: Drivers will immediately submit reports (write-ups) for students who severely misbehave, directly jeopardize the safe operation of the school bus, or directly challenge the authority of, or make disrespectful comments or actions toward the bus driver or other school officials. Principals may suspend bus riding privileges upon receiving this type of report. A partial list of severe violations includes, but is not limited to vandalism, fighting, gang-related involvement, failure to cooperate with driver or other officials, abusive or defiant language, threats, gestures, written words, or pictures directed toward the driver or other officials, and the possession or use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or weapons of any kind.

Students standing and moving around the bus. Drivers are trained to pull to the side of the road safely if any students are not seated and stay there until they are seated again and understand that the bus will not move if they do not stay seated. Staying seated is in the *Traffic Act* and must be complied with.

Parents are responsible for any damage caused to equipment, for example, seats by students. An invoice will be sent to the parent for the cost of replacing or repairing the equipment.

**NOTE: Complaints about student behaviour on the bus should be directed to the school. In terms of the *Alberta Education Act*, only the principal or designated vice-principal is allowed to suspend students from the bus. No transportation staff, including drivers, can suspend a student off the bus. Transportation staff can only coordinate solutions with the school administrators.**

## 8.5 Continued issues with student behaviour on the bus

Continued and long-term challenges with student behaviour may arise. The process to be implemented in such a case will be:

1. The school principal will inform parents and students. This will include an email to the school bus parents and addressing all the students on the bus in an age-appropriate manner that:
  - a. They are experiencing ongoing safety challenges on the bus and identify the specific behaviour(s) in question.
  - b. There are various possible resolutions to the situation that may occur should safety not be assured, these can include:
    - i. The bus will not leave the school until the student's behaviour is safe and will continue to be safe on the route.
    - ii. If there is a major disruption on the bus on the route, the driver will:
      1. Ask for help from the school through transportation dispatch
      2. Proceed directly back to the school
    - iii. Transportation dispatch will immediately inform parents that the bus route will be late, that the bus is returning to the school and that all students are safe

- iv. The driver will always keep the students on the bus and under supervision while the principal/vice principal deals with the issue
  - v. Once the situation has been normalized the driver will then return to drop the students off at their stops
  - vi. Transportation dispatch will advise parents that the bus is back on route and of approximate drop-off times.
- c. If it is an extremely severe disruption, the driver will pull over safely and radio for assistance. RCMP will be called to assist on the bus.

## **9. VIDEO AND AUDIO SURVEILLANCE**

Foothills School division believes that the use of video cameras on school buses will help protect the safety of passengers, prevent vandalism, and be a useful resource for school administrators when dealing with student discipline matters. The FSD insurance provider has strongly recommended video monitoring of buses. FSD is planning and starting the implementation of this equipment on all our buses. In the interim installation may either be on a random basis or on selected routes at the discretion of the Director of Transportation.

It is important for our school community to be aware that their child may at some point during the school year, ride a school bus that is equipped with Video and Audio Surveillance Cameras. This program adheres to privacy legislation and will follow FSD [\*Administrative Procedure 181\*](#) and [\*Administrative Procedure 550\*](#).

### **9.1 External Cameras**

Cameras are installed on the driver's side of the bus. The cameras have the ability to identify license plates when the stop arm is out. Information will be shared with law enforcement partners where those guilty of an offence may face fines up to \$567 and the loss of 6 demerit points.

### **9.2 Internal cameras**

All buses will have internal cameras installed. These cameras will be used to monitor activities occurring on the bus, including student and driver behaviour. Information collected may be shared with transportation staff for the purposes of training and also with school principals to address any student situations requiring attention (such as potential acts of vandalism, bullying, or other inappropriate or unsafe behaviour).

## **10. LUGGAGE ON BUSES**

The school bus is intended to transport students to and from school in a safe and efficient manner. FSD is not obligated to transport special equipment, tools or instruments that are required for activities outside of school (e.g., after-school jobs, tutoring, music lessons, sports, etc.).

Parents/guardians of students enrolled in these types of activities are ultimately responsible for the transportation of any items that may be required for extra-curricular activities.

Large Items - The transportation of large items or cargo on school buses is governed by various pieces of legislation that state the requirements for items to be transported safely on a school bus that is operated by or contracted to the Foothills School Division.

Items Eligible for Transportation - **Large items cannot protrude into the aisles or above the seats or into another student's space.** Bus seats are 39" wide and several buses are carrying three (3) students to a seat, which is the allowed maximum capacity. **Anything the students are carrying must be held on the student's lap or rested on the floor between the student's legs.** These rules will determine if an item is allowed on the bus.

The following items are allowable on school buses if they comply with the above rules:

- Flute, piccolo, clarinet, oboe, trumpet, alto sax, bass clarinet, trumpet, bassoon, trombone.
- Lunch pails, school backpacks.
- Textbooks and school supplies.
- Sports equipment in sports bags (large hockey bags not included).

The following items are a few examples of what is not allowed on school buses:

- Tuba, sousaphone, baritone, guitars, drums, French horn, tenor sax, bass trombone
- Hockey bags, hockey sticks, skis & poles, skateboards, golf clubs, and lacrosse sticks.
- Science boards and large art projects.

As many of the Division buses are at or near capacity, **students will only be allowed to take either a sports bag or a band instrument along with their schoolbooks/backpacks.**

## 11. SEVERE WEATHER & SERVICE CANCELLATIONS

When winter weather arrives in the Foothills region, we may decide to cancel buses (or more rarely, classes) for student safety.

### [How do you decide to cancel buses?](#)

Busing cancellations are a joint effort between our Superintendents, Transportation Department, and Drivers. When assessing whether it is safe to transport students on buses, we consider:

- Consultation with the County of Foothills regarding road conditions
- Outside temperature
- Wind chill factor
- Visibility (blowing snow, fog, etc.)

- RCMP travel advisories
- Weather warnings issued by Environment Canada.

Bus drivers also have the individual authority to cancel their route or decide not to stop at a particular pick-up site if they feel the weather/road conditions warrant such action.

Drivers may ask parents to transport their students to a safe spot designated by the driver to meet the bus if the roadways are deemed to be dangerous by said driver. The safety of all the students on the bus is paramount and will not be jeopardized by going onto roads that are dangerous in certain conditions.

Parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for the safety of their children, and has the discretion to determine whether or not they should send their students to school.

*What happens if the weather turns bad during the school day or while buses are running?*

When inclement weather conditions exist but buses are running or during the school day, bus drivers are granted the discretion to make alternate arrangements with parents to ensure that students remain safe. The expectation is that if buses are running in the morning that they will operate in the afternoon as well. If it is determined to take home students before the regular end of day then parents/guardians will be notified prior to students being taken home.

*If one bus route in my region is cancelled, is mine cancelled as well?*

Bus routes are assessed on a route-by-route basis. This means that we may determine that one route (Route A) is unsafe for bus operation, while others (Routes B and C) remain in acceptable driving conditions. Therefore, Route A would be cancelled while Routes B and C remain in operation.

*If buses are cancelled, does that mean the school is cancelled?*

Not necessarily. In almost all cases, schools remain open, and classes are still in session when buses are cancelled. We respect the decision of parents who may decide to keep their children at home when transportation circumstances make travel unsafe. When attendance is low due to winter weather, teachers are asked to provide meaningful instruction in the form of review, practice, and enrichment. Any essential learning or activities that occur will be replicated for absent students upon their return.

*If buses are cancelled but classes aren't, do I have to send my child to school?*

When inclement weather conditions exist and school closure has not been affected, parents must use their own discretion in sending their child to school. If your child will be absent due to bus cancellations, or for any other reason, please inform your school.

*How can I know when buses and/or classes are cancelled?*

Foothills School Division strives for excellent communication and has a large variety of tools available to families to ensure that they always have the latest information regarding cancellations.



Families can expect a call and email for any major busing cancellations affecting an entire region. All busing delays and cancellations will be posted on our website. You are also encouraged to follow us on social media for after-hours updates. The Division also uses AM1140 and FM 100.9 'The Eagle' to notify the public regarding restrictions or cancellations.

## **12. CONTACT**

### **12.1 Non-urgent Communications**

It is encouraged that all transportation requests, general enquiries, complaints, and praise be submitted by email to [transportation@fsd38.ab.ca](mailto:transportation@fsd38.ab.ca).

### **12.2 Attendance and Urgent Communications**

For transportation absences and other urgent communication please call the general line at (403) 652-6547. Listen to the menu options for the desired extension.