



**TRANSPORTATION  
PROCEDURES  
& GUIDELINES  
for Parents**



This manual was developed to assist in understanding the school transportation system throughout our division. It provides an overview of specific responsibilities within the system.

Within broad guidelines established by the Board, the responsibility for the school bus transportation system is delegated to the Manager of Transportation and the Transportation Department. The Board has also adopted several specific policies relating to school bus discipline, routing, and the like, but it is stressed that a safe and successful transportation operation requires the cooperation and understanding of students, parents, bus drivers, school administration and School Board administration.

This manual is published in order that students, parents and all others concerned with the safe operation of the transportation system have the opportunity to become aware of the major factors and responsibilities which provide a safe and efficient school bus service.

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## **Rural Bus Routes and Scheduling**

1. Bus routes shall be established to provide the most effective and efficient service to rural students.
2. Students living within the boundaries of towns, villages, or hamlets where a Division school is operated will not ordinarily be transported by bus.
3. Under normal circumstances, routes will be designed with a target maximum ride time of 75 minutes.
4. Pick-up will be at the driveway or at the nearest safe point to the driveway.
5. Yard service may be approved if the residence is at least 200 metres from the road allowance (fence line), the access road is of all-weather construction, and there is a clear area to enable the bus to turn around without backing up. Requests for yard service lying outside of these guidelines will be honored at the discretion of the bus driver in consultation with the Manager of Transportation. In the instances of severe weather, the bus driver may make an exception.
6. Buses are to be restricted to provincial highways, municipal roads, and approved yard service.
7. Students should only be loaded and unloaded at designated bus loading and unloading zones.
8. Time schedules are to be based on normal travel conditions. The schedule is to be communicated to parents with the directive that under normal conditions buses will wait no longer than **two** minutes at any one pickup point, nor will they leave any pickup point ahead of time, unless all students have been accounted for. Buses are to arrive at school no earlier than fifteen minutes prior to the usual commencement of classes, unless the bus or students must proceed to another school and the time is required for appropriate scheduling of arrival time.
9. Buses depart from the school five minutes after dismissal time.
10. From time to time, a request may be brought forward to the Transportation Department to allow a student that is not registered on a particular bus, to be transported on that bus. It will be subject to:
  - a. Room on the bus.
  - b. Regular bus schedule will be maintained.
  - c. No additional expense to the Board will be incurred.

\* All requests must be communicated with the bus driver and the school administrator by a parent or guardian.

11. The Board of Education will maintain its bus fleet in the best mechanical condition possible, and will retain several units for use as spare buses. However, if there is not a spare bus available when the regular bus experiences mechanical failure, it may be necessary for parents to transport their own children. Payment will be made to parents, upon request, who drive their children to school when there is no bus available due to mechanical failure or when there is no bus driver available. Payment will not be made if the bus is unable to operate due to weather or poor road conditions.
12. Only registered students and supervising personnel are eligible to ride on the bus during regular travel.

### **City of Swift Current Bus Routes and Scheduling**

1. Bus routes shall be established to provide the most effective and efficient service to city students.
2. Pick-ups and drop-offs will be at designated collector stops throughout the city.
3. Time schedules are to be based on normal travel conditions. The schedule is to be communicated to parents with the directive that the times indicated is the time that the bus **leaves the stop**. Buses depart from the city schools seven minutes after dismissal time.
4. Requests from parents for route changes shall be submitted on the Transportation Request Form (available on the Chinook website). The Transportation Department will determine eligibility and provide bus route information as required.

## **Inclement Weather**

The responsibility for the safety of children who are required to travel on school buses or other school provided transportation is shared by the Board, its staff, parents and students. The safety of these students shall not be placed at risk by the operation of school buses during inclement weather.

Given the geographic size of Chinook School Division, local discretion in dealing with weather conditions is both prudent and appropriate.

1. Buses are to be cancelled pending consideration of the following factors:
  - a) If the static temperature (the temperature which registers on the bus drivers home thermometer) at the time the bus driver would normally be leaving home is **-40 degrees Celsius or colder**.
  - b) If the temperature with wind chill factor for each of the respective school areas, as reported by Environment Canada, is **-45 degrees Celsius or colder**.
  - c) Adverse road conditions.
  - d) Limited visibility because of fog or blowing snow.
  - e) Watches and warnings as announced by Environment Canada.
2. **Each bus driver** is responsible for deciding to stop the operation of his/her bus to maintain the safety and well-being of his/her passengers. The bus driver will always decide on the side of caution. Having made such a decision, the bus driver is to inform:
  - a) Morning Run:
    - (i) the parents
    - (ii) school administrator
    - (iii) Transportation Department
  - b) Afternoon Run:
    - (i) school administrator
    - (ii) Transportation Department
3. It is extremely important that drivers follow this communication process.
4. If the decision to stop operation is made after students have been picked up, the bus driver is to arrange to deliver each student to a safe, supervised destination. drivers are to inform parents or guardians of the location of the students. The bus driver shall also inform the school administrator and the Transportation Department

5. The decision to cancel morning buses is to be made by 6:30 a.m.
6. The decision to cancel afternoon buses is to be made no later than 2:00 p.m.
7. The principal is to maintain a record of emergency residences for all rural bus students.
8. Under no circumstances should buses start on the route at the height of a winter storm.
9. Under no circumstances shall bus drivers commence their routes prior to normal departure time from school.
10. In the event that a bus does not run in the morning due to severe weather or road conditions, it will not operate in the afternoon.
11. In the event that students are billeted in town due to weather or road conditions, the bus will not operate the following morning.
12. Students boarding a bus are to be warmly dressed during the winter months. A school bus driver shall, at the time of the first occurrence, advise the principal that a student is not adequately clothed. The principal is then to advise the parent that the student will not be allowed on the bus when not clothed adequately. Thereafter, the bus driver shall refuse to admit the student, when inadequately clothed, unless doing so would place the student in greater danger.
13. Adequately clothed will be defined by the bus driver in consultation with the school administrator.

### **Student Conduct**

1. Chinook School Division requires that student conduct on school buses is consistent with that expected of the student in the classroom. The following are the recognized rules and regulations governing student conduct while riding a Chinook School Division school bus or a designated contracted school bus.
2. Certain safety rules must be followed:
  - a) When boarding the bus, students shall immediately and in an orderly manner, proceed to their seats. Students shall remain in their seats at all times unless asked to move by the bus driver.
  - b) Students shall be fully seated in the seat with bodies facing forward at all times.
  - c) Unnecessary use of doors and windows is forbidden.

- d) Objects shall not be thrown from or within the bus.
  - e) Students shall keep all parts of their body fully within the bus when the vehicle is in motion.
  - f) There shall be no smoking or chewing tobacco on the bus.
  - g) Eating and drinking on the bus shall be at the discretion of the bus driver.
  - h) Bags, sports equipment, band equipment and other miscellaneous items must be left at the front of the bus and stored in a safe manner.
  - i) The bus must be kept clean and sanitary.
  - j) Noise levels due to conversation or transportable music devices shall be at the discretion of the bus driver.
  - k) All students must be properly dressed for weather conditions and in complete readiness to board the school bus when it arrives at each pick up point.
  - l) Bus passengers are expected to be courteous and considerate of each other and the bus driver.
3. Passengers will be held financially liable for any willful damages to the bus or bus equipment caused by them. drivers shall notify the Manager of Transportation of any such damages.
  4. Students are asked to inform the bus driver with as much notice as possible (evening before is preferred) when they will not be riding the bus.
  5. If a seating plan has been created by the bus driver, students will be expected to follow this plan.



## **Parent (Guardian) Responsibilities**

1. Parents/Guardians are expected to cooperate with the school, the Board of Education, and the bus driver with regard to the safety and efficiency of the transportation system.
2. Parents/Guardians shall:
  - a) Have their child ready to leave on schedule.
  - b) Ensure their child is properly dressed.
  - c) Advise the child of the need to cooperate with the bus driver in all matters.
  - d) Support the school administrator in the maintenance of discipline.
  - e) Be financially liable for any willful damages to the bus or bus equipment caused by their child.
  - f) Notify the bus driver as soon as possible if a student is not going to be on the bus.
  - g) Report incidents of any serious nature to the manager of transportation.
  - h) Limit the amount of equipment a student transports on the bus. Check with the bus driver on eligibility.
3. Parents and guardians always have the right to keep their child at home during severe weather conditions, or when in the opinion of the parent or guardian, the safety of their child may be in jeopardy.
4. Parents can support their child by teaching them the following bus safety initiatives:
  - a) Always stand two arms lengths away from the pick-up point when waiting to be picked up. If they stand too close to the road, drivers may not be able to see them.
  - b) Approach the bus only when it has come to a complete stop and the bus driver has opened the door.
  - c) The bus has large blind spots behind, in front of and beside it. When getting off the bus, move quickly and safely through these areas, making sure they are visible to the bus driver. Always follow the instructions of the bus driver.

## **Sharing the Road with School Buses**

1. School bus drivers have a difficult job. There are plenty of distractions inside the bus. Knowing this, you should make extra allowances, and be aware of the possibility that the bus driver may not see you or your signals. Rear-end collisions are the most frequent type of crash involving school buses and are usually caused by another driver failing to stop while the bus is loading or unloading passengers.
2. **If you are approaching a school bus, once the red flashing lights are activated you must stop and may not pass.** The single greatest threat to the safety of children who ride school buses is motorists who pass the bus when children are loading or unloading.
3. When approaching a bus that has its stop arm out and its flashing lights activated, as a driver:
  - a) You must stop no closer than 5 m (15 ft) from the front or back of the bus.
  - b) You must not advance your vehicle until the bus driver turns off the flashing red stop lamps and deactivates the stop arm.
  - c) Before moving, check to see that all children have safely crossed the roadway.
4. **Passing a school bus with flashing lights is a serious offence and will result in a significant fine.**