

Bus Routes and Schedules

The Superintendent's designee shall be responsible for scheduling bus transportation, including determination of routes and bus stops. Such routes are subject to the approval of the county transportation committee. The purpose of bus scheduling and routing is to achieve maximum service with a minimum fleet of buses insofar as this is consistent with rendering safe and reasonably equal service to all bus students.

In order to operate the transportation system as safely and efficiently as possible, the following factors shall be considered in establishing bus routes:

1. A school bus route shall be established with due consideration of the sum total of local conditions affecting the safety, economic soundness, and convenience of its operation, including road conditions, condition of bridges and culverts, hazardous crossings, presence of railroad tracks and arterial highways, extreme weather conditions and variations, length of route, number of families and children to be serviced, availability of turn-around points, capacity of bus, and related factors.
2. No school child attending an elementary school shall be required to ride the school bus under average road conditions more than one (1) hour without consent of the child's parent or guardian.
3. School bus drivers are encouraged to make recommendations in regard to establishing or changing routes.
4. Parents should be referred to the Superintendent or designee for any request of change in routes, stops, or schedules.

The trustees reserve the right to change, alter, add, or delete any route at such time that such changes are deemed in the best interest of the District, subject to approval by the county transportation committee.

Bus Stops

Buses should stop only at designated places approved by school authorities. Exceptions should be made only in cases of emergency and inclement weather conditions.

Bus stops shall be chosen with safety in mind. Points shall be selected where motorists approaching from either direction will have a clear view of the bus for a distance of at least three hundred (300) to five hundred (500) feet.

School loading and unloading zones are to be established and marked to provide safe and orderly loading and unloading of students. The principal of each building is responsible for the conduct of students waiting in loading zones.

Delay in Schedule

The driver is to notify the administration of a delay in schedule. The administration will notify parents on routes and radio stations, if necessary.

Responsibilities - Pupils

Pupils must realize that safety is based on group conduct. Talk should be in conversational tones at all times. There should be no shouting or loud talking which may distract the bus driver. There should be no shouting at passersby. Pupils should instantly obey any command or suggestions from the driver and/or his/her assistants.

Responsibilities - Parents

The interest and assistance of each parent is a valued asset to the transportation program. Parents' efforts toward making each bus trip a safe and pleasant experience are requested and appreciated. The following suggestions are only three of the many ways parents can assist:

1. Ensure that students are at the bus stop in sufficient time to efficiently meet the bus.
2. Properly prepare children for weather conditions.
3. Encourage school bus safety at home. Caution children regarding safe behavior and conduct while riding the school bus.

Safety

The Superintendent shall develop written rules establishing the procedures for bus safety and emergency exit drills, and for student conduct while riding buses.

If the bus and driver are present, the driver is responsible for the safety of his/her passengers, particularly for those who must cross a roadway prior to loading or after leaving the bus. Except in emergencies, no bus driver shall order or allow a student to board or disembark at other than his/her assigned stop unless so authorized by the Superintendent. In order to assure the safety of all, the bus driver may hold students accountable for their conduct during the course of transportation and may recommend corrective action against a student. Bus drivers are expressly prohibited from using corporal punishment.

The bus driver is responsible for the use of the warning and stop signaling systems and the consequent protection of his/her passengers. Failure to use the system constitutes negligence on the part of the driver. See Lewistown Public Schools Transportation Handbook.

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Inclement Weather

The Board recognizes the unpredictability and resulting dangers associated with the weather in Montana. To achieve the maximum safety for children and efficiency of operation, the Superintendent is empowered to make decisions as to the emergency operation of buses, the cancellation of bus routes, and the closing of school, in accordance with his/her best judgment. The Board may develop guidelines in cooperation with the Superintendent to assist him/her in making such decisions. Information on route changes will be announced as soon as possible on KXLO-KLCM Radio.

NOTE: To receive full state/county reimbursement, budgets must have enough funds to cover the costs of any changes to the route.

NOTE: The county transportation committee has authority to establish transportation service areas, should circumstances and/or geography (demographics) warrant.

Legal Reference:	20-10-106, MCA	Determination of mileage distances
	20-10-132, MCA	Duties of county transportation committee
	20-10-121, MCA	Duty of trustees to provide transportation - types of transportation - bus riding time limitation

Policy History:

Adopted on: June 28, 2004

Revised on: