

Bus Stop and Route Assignment Guidelines

The primary goal of the Transportation Department is to safely transport students to and from school. The following information is being provided to acquaint you with the guidelines, procedures, and reasoning related to bus routes and bus stops. Please keep in mind that parents are responsible for getting children safely to and from the bus stops.

Bus routes will be planned to achieve maximum safety of operation with maximum economy within the limitations of rules and regulations governing transportation.

1. Bus routes will not be extended nor stops scheduled unless an eligible pupil would otherwise be required to walk an excessive distance to the bus stop, or there is an overriding safety concern.
 - a. There is not a specific distance standard each student walks to the bus stop. Circumstances such as the geography of the bus stop area, the number of children in the area, specific traffic or safety issues related to the bus stop, and the effect of that stop of the bus stop in the time and distance of the route, are the determining factors in the placement of the bus stop. The transportation department attempts to limit that distance to approximately eight houses between stops for elementary, twelve house for middle school, and sixteen houses for HS. This does not include cul-de-sacs (see cul-de-sac policy document).
 - b. Due to the changing nature of the population in the district a number of bus stops will change every year. That may mean the bus stop could be closer or farther away depending how many students and their locations, of the appropriate grade group, are still in the area of the bus stop. **As children move in or out, as they advance to the next grade, or as circumstances change in policy and/or procedure, your child's bus stop may change - do not assume your child will have the same bus stop as the previous year.**
 - c. Consideration is given to the age of the student (i.e. middle school students can be expected to walk farther than elementary students, and high school students even farther than middle school students) but it is not absolute. Do not assume your child will have the same bus stop as the previous year, particularly as they advance in grade groups.
 - d. Consideration is also given to the circumstances of the walk to the bus stop (e.g. heavy traffic, sidewalks, aggressive pets, etc.). However, that does not mean that the lack of sidewalks will guarantee a home stop. There are a number of

subdivisions and areas without sidewalks and to accommodate home stops for every student in those areas could excessively lengthen route times.

2. Routes are planned to keep individual riding distance and time to the most realistic minimum possible. The current objective is no longer than 45 minutes if at possible
3. In establishing bus schedules, the objective is to arrange for buses to arrive at school no later than five to seven minutes before the scheduled dismissal from the buses (with the exception of the HS which does have a scheduled dismissal time, but buses are not scheduled to arrive before 7:10 in the morning). When taking students home, some buses may be picking up students at the HS and MSC. Departure from the last school serviced may be as much as 25 minutes later than the scheduled dismissal time of the first school served.

Bus Stop and Route Safety

Indiana laws have a significant impact on our operating procedures. These regulations include distance requirements that are intended to assure that buses operate in a safe manner and can be easily seen by approaching motorists. The two fundamental criteria used in determining bus routes and stops are safety and efficiency of scheduling.

Safety of routes/stops

- State laws related to school bus transportation must be met.
- Students are not scheduled to cross main roads to reach their bus stop (Smith Valley Road, Fairview Road, County Line Road, State Road 135, State Road 37, Main Street are the primary examples).
- Consistent pick-up and drop-off locations are required. There may be a different pick-up location than drop-off, but each must be the same every day.
- Bus stops will be permanent whenever practical, allowing the public to become familiar with stop locations.
- Unless it is a group bus stop, a designated person should meet all students at their stop. A group bus stop serves more than one family. There should be at least one designated person present or visible at the stop.

Parents Responsibility

- Parents/guardians are responsible to make sure their children get to and from the designated stop safely.

- Parents/guardians are responsible for selecting their children's walking routes to and from bus stops, schools and home.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for providing supervision that is appropriate to the student's age, maturity, and conditions that exist on the walk route.
- Parents/guardians should know their children's bus number and stop location.
- Parents/guardians shall know the bus rules and review them with their children.
- Parents/guardians should direct walk route safety concerns to the association or law enforcement agency responsible for the specific location/area.

WHEN BUS CHANGES ARE NEEDED

Bus transportation is primarily designed for the transport of students from home to school and school to home. Stops should be at the same location every morning and the same location every afternoon. If permanent changes are needed (a different day care for example) parents must submit a request, in writing or e-mail, to the Transportation Department. The request will be reviewed and notification will be made if a change can be accommodated. This process can take up to two weeks to complete. Any change requiring a different pickup stop from drop-off stop, or different stop than the closest stop to the home address would be required to be the same for every day of the week. Emergency accommodation requests must be done in writing to the school and are just that, emergencies; excessive requests for emergency accommodations will result in the review of transportation arrangements for the child.

Generally speaking changes can be accommodated if the change is within the boundary for the school assigned. A change requiring transportation outside of the boundary for the school will not be approved.

Students are not allowed to ride a bus other than their assigned bus. Assigned students have priority for transportation. If a child needs to go to a friend's house, parents shall make alternate transportation arrangements.

Bus Stop Guidelines

MEETING THE BUS - STUDENTS SHALL

- ✓ Be on time. Be at their bus stop at least five minutes before the regular pickup time.
- ✓ Not stand on the traveled portion of the roadway while waiting for the bus.
- ✓ Not engage in play or other activities that will endanger themselves or their companions while waiting at the bus stop.
- ✓ Not run beside a moving bus, but wait until it has stopped, then walk to the front door.
- ✓ Board bus in an orderly fashion.
- ✓ Report immediately to the driver any illness or injury sustained or around the bus.
- ✓ Parents or designee are requested (required for kindergarten students) to accompany their young children to and from the bus stop.

LEAVING THE BUS - STUDENTS SHALL

- ✓ Remain seated until the bus comes to a full stop.
- ✓ Leave bus in an orderly manner, pupils in the front should discharge last.
- ✓ Leave bus stop area when safety permits as soon as discharged from bus, and not loiter around bus.
- ✓ If crossing a road do so at the front of bus, at a distance of at least ten feet from the bus or further if you cannot see the driver and the driver cannot see you.
- ✓ Be aware that if a disciplinary problem should occur in the afternoon, the student will be delivered to his or her destination.

DANGER ZONE

- ✓ Take 10 giant steps away from the bus when getting off.
- ✓ Always cross in front of the bus.
- ✓ If you drop anything outside the bus leave it. Get permission from the driver before picking it up.
- ✓ **If you cannot see the driver then the driver cannot see you!**