



studentTRANSPORTATION



# Parents' Guide to Yellow Bus Service



EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Bright futures  
begin here*

# Welcome to Yellow Bus Service with Edmonton Public Schools Student Transportation

Edmonton Public Schools is committed to providing safe and efficient transportation for students who depend on buses to get to school each day. To do this, Student Transportation works closely with schools to provide students and their parents with the services they need.

Student Transportation supports schools in their instructional focus by ensuring that our students are transported in a safe and timely manner and arrive ready to learn.

Edmonton Public Schools exceeds the guidelines set out by Alberta Education in the provision of its transportation services for students. The transportation costs which exceed the allocation provided by the province will result in transportation fees being charged to riders. Edmonton Public Schools does not own or operate yellow school buses and instead contracts with private yellow bus operators to provide these services.

This guide provides parents with basic information about yellow school busing. More detailed information can be found at **[www.transportation.epsb.net](http://www.transportation.epsb.net)**.



## Yellow Bus Passes

Yellow bus passes may only be purchased at your child's school throughout the school year. Every student registered to ride yellow bus transportation should carry a yellow bus pass with them at all times. Your child will be asked to show his or her pass to the driver before getting on the bus. Please fill in the back of your child's pass completely and legibly. In the event of an emergency, this information may be used to identify your child's school and contact person. Bus pass prices are adjusted yearly and the current prices can be found at [www.transportation.epsb.net](http://www.transportation.epsb.net) under Fees.

Yellow bus passes are also valid for use on Edmonton Transit System (ETS) buses and LRT up to **six** boardings each month.





## Route Design

Student Transportation staff design yellow bus routes for regular, alternative program and Kindergarten routes. Drivers and carriers (bus companies) are not allowed to make changes to these routes. Drivers and carrier company staff design yellow bus routes for special education needs riders. Arterial, collector and major roadways are preferred because of the reduced ride-times and delays. Buses will not normally be routed on cul-de-sacs, dead-end streets or onto private property or apartment/condominium complexes. A yellow school bus may travel in either direction past the stop location and crossing roadways may be necessary to get to the bus stop. Routes are designed under the assumption that students will have adequate supervision to and from the bus stop.

# Making Changes to Bus Routes

During the school year, changes must be provided to your child's school office as bus drivers are not authorized to take changes. Requests to change fixed routes will be considered by Student Transportation and if feasible, will be implemented on the next posted change date listed on our Transportation Calendar for Parents. Our current calendar is posted on our website under Publications. Changes for special education curb service should take place within five to seven working days. Only changes which will be in effect for a minimum of 10 school days are possible. Pick-up and drop-off locations need to be consistent five days per week.

If there are changes to your child's bus service requirements over the summer months, please call **Student Transportation at 780.429.8585**.



# School Bus Safety

Our top priority is student safety. Students are expected to behave in a responsible manner at the bus stop, during loading and unloading, and while riding the bus. Students are responsible to the bus driver and principal for their behaviour.

You can help us ensure the safety of all riders by teaching your child the importance of following pedestrian and bus safety rules at all times. All Edmonton Public Schools' yellow school buses are maintained to the highest standard and are equipped with two-way radios. All drivers have additional safety driving certification and first aid training. Schools also have access to safety education programs.

The principal of your child's school reserves the right to suspend busing privileges when he/she feels it is necessary.

It is your responsibility to ensure your child's safety traveling to and from the stop location. Edmonton Public Schools does not support the practice of students traveling to and from bus stops without an appropriate escort. We encourage you to discuss safety rules with your child prior to starting bus service, as well as reviewing them once or twice throughout the school year.

Drivers are instructed that curb service and Kindergarten students will not be unloaded from the bus without a guardian present to meet the child.

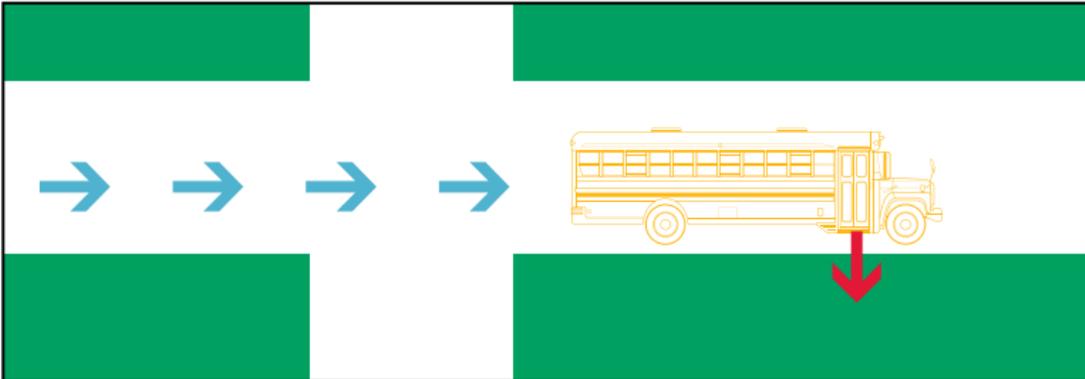
## Safe Stop Locations

Yellow buses may stop at any of these safe stop locations:

- ETS bus stops and future ETS bus stops.
- Far-side of intersections.
- Far-side of crosswalks.
- School bus loading zones.

*Parking in a school bus loading zone is illegal and creates a safety hazard.  
Unauthorized vehicles should expect traffic fines.*

*Bus stopping at the far side of an intersection*



## Danger Zone

The danger zone around the bus must be avoided at all times. This is the area where the driver cannot see or has limited vision. This danger zone includes the three metres all the way around the bus.

- If you can touch the bus while standing outside, you are much too close.
- If you cannot see the driver, the driver cannot see you.

- If you drop anything while getting on or off the bus, do not pick it up. Tell the driver or another adult.
- Take five giant steps away from the bus after getting off.
- Do not bend down or crouch near a bus.
- The emergency exit can only be used in an emergency situation. Only exit the bus through the front door.
- Under no circumstances should children in an urban area attempt to cross in front of the bus. If a child must cross a street after getting off the bus, he/she should wait until the bus pulls safely away, walk to the nearest intersection and then cross the street following normal safety procedures.



## Non-Urban Area Considerations

- The City of Edmonton determines the acceptable roadways upon which the eight-light warning system may be used.
- On designated roads (generally these are non-urban roads), yellow bus drivers may use the eight-light warning system on the bus to stop traffic when loading or unloading students.
- In a situation where the eight-light warning system is used, students may cross in front of the bus. Upon the instruction of the bus driver, students should cross in front of the bus at least five metres (15 feet) from the front of the bus.

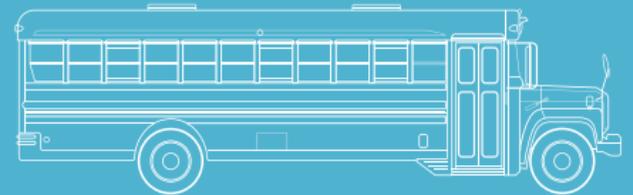




## When the Bus is Late or Doesn't Arrive

Many factors can affect yellow bus schedules, including:

- frequent changes to the route that the driver must learn;
- traffic disruptions;
- weather conditions;
- road construction and repair;
- unruly or unsafe behaviour by students that requires the driver to stop and correct; and
- original schedule not allowing sufficient time.



Our bus system is extremely reliable. However, given the many factors that can affect schedules, it is impossible for buses to be on time all of the time. In the event that the bus has not arrived at the scheduled time, wait at the stop with your child for about 10 minutes. If the bus hasn't arrived, call the carrier listed on your route schedule. Our buses contain two-way radios and they are in contact with their dispatcher. The carrier will be able to tell you approximately what time the bus is expected to arrive. You may, however, have to make other arrangements to get your child to school. Inform your school office if a bus is late or does not arrive.

Because of the possible delays during extreme weather, please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately and that he or she has a plan in place, as well as somewhere to go, if the bus does not arrive. In the case of bus cancellations due to bad weather, messages will be broadcasted on radio and TV. Day-to-day information on late buses is also available at [www.transportation.epsb.net](http://www.transportation.epsb.net).



# Regular Yellow Busing

Regular yellow bus routes (fixed routes) are designed to provide transportation options to students who do not have a neighbourhood school and students attending their designated alternative program school. These routes will require a short walk from home to a nearby ETS stop or intersection. Schedules and stop information is provided to parents in mid-August.

The route may require slight changes throughout the year for new or cancelled riders. A few days before the change takes effect, school staff will send home new schedules with the riders or notify parents via SchoolZone. Depending on the number of schools served and the distance from the schools, ride times can vary from a few minutes to up to 90 minutes.

Drivers cannot change stop locations, schedules or the direction of travel. Any requests for changes should be submitted to the school office.



# Kindergarten Busing

Edmonton Public Schools provides some Kindergarten noon busing based on available resources and demand for services.

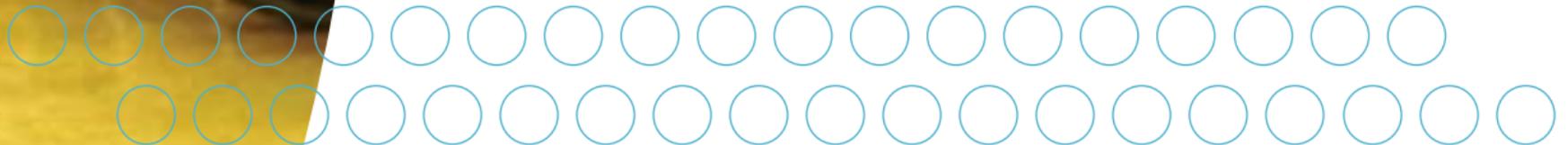
- Generally, we provide Kindergarten noon busing in neighbourhoods where there is no local neighbourhood school. It is also provided at most elementary sites where alternative program busing is available.
- Kindergarten noon busing is not offered in rural areas of Edmonton.
- Ride times on Kindergarten noon routes may be up to 60 minutes one-way. Our goal is to provide demand-based service while minimizing the ride times.
- Bus stop locations will be at the nearest accessible curb or corner to the requested address, with considerations given to safety and limitations to access (i.e., any obstacles that would impede the safe operation of the bus).





## Special Education Needs Busing

Edmonton Public Schools provides special education needs transportation to students with physical, mental or other disabilities who require a high level of care and attention, are unable to walk to school or use regular yellow bus routes, and who are attending their designated school.



- Special education needs busing may be provided by Edmonton Public Schools where the special education needs programming required by the student is not available at the neighbourhood school.
- Special education needs busing in rural areas of Edmonton is reviewed on an individual basis.
- A child's needs are determined by district assessments that result in the child receiving a coding that indicates the severity of the disability, the appropriate programming and other information.
- The less severe cases will be transported in accordance with available resources and the ability of the child to walk to school, or use ETS or regular yellow busing. When it is recommended by the district that the child attend a district special education needs site, transportation may be provided depending on the level of the child's needs.
- Seat restraints may be necessary. A variety of different options are available to ensure the child's safety.
- A variety of mobility aids can be accommodated, and will be secured during loading, traveling and unloading. For safety reasons, we are not able to transport students in strollers, buggies or tri-wheelers.
- Some of our special education needs school buses are equipped with electric loading and unloading ramps, as well as floor inserts to fasten wheelchairs securely to the bus. These means ensure your child is able to travel safely. Please ensure your child's wheelchair is in safe operating condition and equipped with a properly fitted lap belt that is securely fastened before boarding the bus. Bus drivers will advise the school principal of any safety concerns, with the possibility of suspending privileges until the issue is resolved.
- The bus company and driver are responsible for providing information to you about route design and schedules.

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- Door-to-door service is provided at the nearest curb to the destination address that is free of access limitations (i.e., obstacles that would impede the safe operation of the bus, weather conditions) with the exception of apartment buildings, condominiums and cul-de-sacs, which may have a common bus stop area.
- Non-special education needs riders are not allowed to ride on special education needs curb-service buses. The additional funding that is provided by the province for this high-level service is not available unless the bus is used exclusively for high-needs riders.
- Ride times:
  - In-zone ride times (where the school and home fall within the same zone of the city) may be up to 60 minutes one-way. Our goal is to provide demand-based service while minimizing the ride times.
  - Adjacent-zone ride times (where the school and home are not in the same zone of the city, but are in adjacent zones) may be up to 80 minutes one-way. Our goal is to provide demand-based service and minimize ride times while challenged by the greater distances involved.
  - Out-of-zone ride times (where the school and home are more than one full zone apart) have no set limits. Our goal is to provide demand-based service and maintain the best possible ride times while challenged by the long distances involved.

# Parent Responsibilities

- Escort your child on the way to and from the bus.
- Ensure that your child is aware of his/her responsibilities.
- Ensure that your child is aware of, and understands, safety on and around the bus.
- Ensure that alternate arrangements are in place for your child in the event that the bus is missed, is late or does not arrive.
- Ensure that your child is properly dressed for the weather conditions.
- Ensure that hazards such as loose clothing, scarves and drawstrings are avoided.
- Ensure that any changes in status (i.e., necessity for service, program attended, home address, pick-up and drop-off locations) are communicated to the school office with a minimum of eight school days notice.
- Ensure that bus passes are purchased at the beginning of the year (annual passes) or at the beginning of each month (monthly passes) and can be shown when your child gets on the bus.
- Ensure that applications for bus service are submitted annually to your child's school, as the service is not automatically renewed each year.
- Provide the school office with emergency contact names and phone numbers.





## Meeting Your Child at the Bus Stop

As a parent/caregiver, you are responsible for bringing your child to the bus and for taking custody of your child from the bus after the return trip home. A bus driver cannot leave the vehicle, nor is permitted to drop off a Kindergarten or special education needs student unless someone is present to receive custody.

If a parent/caregiver is not present to receive custody of a child upon drop-off on the return trip home, the bus operator will keep the student on the bus where he/she is safe. Attempts will be made to contact the principal and the parent/caregiver. However, in the extreme case that an alternative drop-off location cannot be found, the student will be taken to:

### **The Edmonton and Area Child and Family Services Crisis Unit**

9939-107 Street, Edmonton Alberta

780.422.2001 (before 4:30 p.m.)

780.427.3390 (after 4:30 p.m.)



# Student Responsibilities

- Arrive at the bus stop approximately five minutes prior to the scheduled bus arrival time.
- Wait in an orderly fashion, well back from the side of the road.
- Respect private property and keep noise to a minimum at the bus stop.
- Know and respect the danger zone around the bus - three metres in all directions.
- Step away from the danger zone after getting off the bus. When waiting for the bus, avoid the danger zone until the bus has come to a complete stop and the doors have been opened.
- Behave responsibly at the bus stop, while on the bus, and while getting on or off the bus.
- Get on and off the bus in single file and use the handrail.
- Show the bus driver your bus pass.
- Once on the bus, go directly to your seat, and remain seated and facing forward for the entire trip.
- Never stand while on the bus, unless the bus is at a complete stop.
- Keep body and baggage out of the aisle.
- Never put any object or body part out of a window.
- Obey the driver's instructions as you would obey the principal.
- Speak in a moderate and polite tone of voice. No yelling.
- Treat fellow riders with respect and courtesy.
- Never eat or drink on the bus.
- Never throw objects on the bus or at the bus.
- Never damage the bus.
- Never walk in front of the bus.

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- Keep personal items such as books, sports equipment, electronics, etc., enclosed within a backpack, athletic bag or other luggage container (no loose items).
- All luggage containers, such as backpacks and athletic bags, must be small enough to fit under the bus seat. Items that are too large to be safely transported on a yellow bus are the responsibility of the parents to transport to and from the school.
- Pets are not allowed on a yellow bus.

## Principal Responsibilities

- Safety, welfare, behaviour and conduct of students while participating in school programs, including students on their way to or from school on transportation provided by Edmonton Public Schools.
- Take any disciplinary action (although the bus driver is responsible for maintaining order and discipline on the bus).
- Designate a representative within the school who will be the first point of contact for inquiries from parents, students, drivers and Student Transportation.
- Consult with Student Transportation prior to changing school hours of operation.



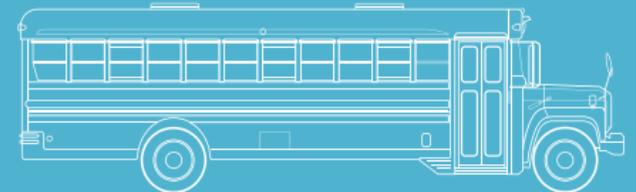
# School Responsibilities

- Serve as the contact for bus drivers, parents, students and Student Transportation.
- Stay informed about the types of service available and make recommendations to parents and students about the most appropriate type of service for them.
- Share transportation information with the principal and other staff.
- Ensure that information received from Student Transportation is forwarded to parents/students.
- Arrange supervision at the school bus loading/unloading zone to ensure student safety.
- Submit application forms to Student Transportation.
- Oversee the sale and distribution of bus passes, the collection of monthly fees and the submission of fees to the district.
- Inform Student Transportation of changes to student information.
- Collect and report transportation-related information (in compliance with Edmonton Public Schools and Alberta Education requirements).
- Work with bus drivers to arrange bus evacuation drills.
- Receive *School Bus Communication Reports* from bus drivers to address and resolve concerns.
- Work with bus drivers, if necessary, to develop seating plans.
- Inform Student Transportation well in advance of days that transportation services are not required (e.g., school PD and days in lieu).
- Provide information to parents regarding eligibility requirements, application forms, Student Transportation and ETS brochures, timelines for applications and changes, Route Summary Reports, and bus company phone numbers.



# Driver and Contract Carrier Responsibilities

- Operate routes according to the maps, schedules and guidelines provided by Edmonton Public Schools.
- Meet with principals to establish expectations for student behaviour on the bus.
- Remain calm in stressful situations.
- Treat students, staff and the public with dignity and respect at all times.
- Orient students on bus procedures and safety.
- Maintain order and discipline at all times in the bus, in accordance with established rules.
- Document and report to the principal, no later than the day after an occurrence, any safety concerns, incidents of improper conduct, improvements in behaviour or exceptional conduct on the part of any student, using the School Bus Communication Report.
- Meet with the principal and school staff (when requested by the principal) on matters pertaining to student safety and behaviour.
- Check bus passes every day when students get on the bus.
- Complete route and rider information forms as requested by Edmonton Public Schools.
- Provide statistical information as required by Edmonton Public Schools.
- Provide feedback on issues relating to the timing of the route and inaccessible stop locations or roadways.
- Conduct school bus evacuation drills.
- Direct parents to the school for change requests.



# Student Transportation Department Responsibilities

- Implement Edmonton Public Schools' student transportation policies.
- Provide input to ETS regarding the requirements of the student body.
- Contract yellow bus services, plan routes, develop schedules and design maps according to the needs of the District.
- Monitor performance of the bus carriers under contract to Edmonton Public Schools for safety, efficiency and reliability.
- Work with ETS to resolve concerns and issues regarding transportation for District students.
- Work and collaborate with Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation, ETS, Alberta Motor Association, Edmonton Police Service, Edmonton Safety Council, Edmonton Transportation & Public Works and other outside agencies.

# Planning Department Responsibilities

- Collaborate with Student Transportation.
- Designate receiving schools for children in developing neighbourhoods without a school.
- Identify attendance area boundaries.
- Designate schools to accommodate District alternative and special education needs programs.
- Identify new school sites in developing neighbourhoods.

# Student Transportation

## Office Hours

7:00 a.m. – 5:15 p.m. each school day  
(modified hours during the summer)

**Phone** 780.429.8585

**Web** <http://transportation.epsb.net>

## Bus Carrier Contact Information

**Cunningham:** 780.458.3255

**First Student:** 780.473.7670

**Golden Arrow:** 780.447.1538

**Southland:** 780.466.9696

**Stock:** 780.451.9536



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