

*Welcome to the transportation guidelines for School District No. 6, British Columbia.*

### **Privilege of Transportation**

Transportation for students within the province of British Columbia is considered a privilege, granted in accordance with School District Policy 7000, which can be found on the [SD6 website](#). This policy ensures that transportation services are available exclusively for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 within School District No. 6.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

All students seeking to utilize school bus services must register annually as either eligible or courtesy riders. Eligibility is determined based on the distance of the student's home address from the nearest bus stop or school, with specific distances outlined for different grade levels (4 kilometers for those attending Kindergarten - Grade. 3 or 4.8 kilometers for those in Grade 4 – Grade 12).

### **Courtesy Riders**

Students who do not meet eligibility criteria may still be considered for transportation as courtesy riders under certain circumstances. To request courtesy rider status, parents/guardians must complete an annual online registration form. Approval for courtesy rider status may take time, and until confirmation is received, parents/guardians are responsible for providing transportation for their child.

### **Transportation Assistance**

Students residing beyond the specified distances from the nearest bus stop or school who cannot be serviced by a bus, may be eligible for transportation assistance. Applications for transportation assistance must be submitted annually.

### **Special Needs Students**

Students with special needs are eligible for transportation or transportation assistance, as approved by the Assistant Superintendent, irrespective of standard eligibility criteria as defined in board policy 7000.

### **Standards of Conduct**

Students utilizing school bus transportation are expected to adhere to the same standards of conduct as within the school premises. Respect for others' safety and property is paramount. The bus driver being responsible for the safety and well-being of all on board the bus has the authority to maintain order on the bus and to see that the regulations and policies regarding the safe transportation of his/her passengers are respected. Parents will be responsible for willful damage to school buses caused by their children.

## **Responsibilities of Students**

Students are reminded to behave responsibly while waiting for, riding, and getting off the bus. Specific guidelines are provided to ensure the safety and well-being of all passengers:

### **Waiting for the school bus:**

1. Stay at the edge of the road or on the sidewalk and remain still until the bus comes to a complete stop.
2. Wait in the proper loading zone.
3. Refrain from pushing, shoving, fighting or horseplay, and show respect to others.
4. Be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes ahead of the scheduled arrival of the bus.
5. Wear adequate clothing for the weather conditions.
6. Do not cross in front of the bus until the driver signals to cross.
7. Return home if the bus does not arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled time. If the bus is delayed by over fifteen minutes, we will update the website as soon as possible.

### **Riding the school bus:**

1. Remain properly seated during the entire journey and wait until the bus has come to a complete stop to rise.
2. Students are not to put their heads or arms out of the open windows.
3. Students will not throw articles inside of the bus and are not to throw anything from the bus windows.
4. Distracting the driver while the bus is in motion is not permitted.
5. Students are to behave respectfully on the bus. Shoving and pushing will not be tolerated.
6. Respect the bus driver and listen to their instructions in all situations.

### **Getting off the bus:**

1. Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
2. Get off the bus in a quiet and orderly manner.
3. Check to the right for vehicles passing on the right of the bus.
4. Students crossing the road will stand well in front and wait for drivers signal to cross.
5. Check in both directions for oncoming vehicles while crossing.
6. "FREEZE" if the driver blows the horn.
7. In any emergency, promptly follow the driver's instructions.

**Reasons for discipline:**

1. Fighting.
2. Eating or drinking on the bus.
3. Use of alcohol, vaping or consumption of other prohibited drugs.
4. Moving around or standing while bus is in motion.
5. Not remaining in assigned seat.
6. Spitting or foul language.
7. Weapons.
8. Playing with fire.
9. Throwing objects or garbage.
10. Vandalism.
11. Shouting and unnecessary noise.

It's important for all students to follow the guidelines for respectful behavior while riding the school bus. In cases where a student's conduct falls short despite prior warnings, their bus privileges may be temporarily suspended. However, it's essential to note that the student remains obligated to attend school during this period, although transportation on the bus will not be provided. At this point, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to provide transportation. Additionally, students are expected to use their designated bus and disembark at their usual stop.

**Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

Parents/guardians play a crucial role in promoting safety and ensuring compliance with transportation guidelines. Their cooperation is essential for the safe and efficient transportation of students. With that in mind please review the following:

1. Promote safety to their children concerning code of conduct.
2. May provide supervision at bus stops if issues are anticipated.
3. Report any safety concerns to the School Board Office.
4. Warn children that cars are required by law to stop for the school bus red lights, however, sometimes they are negligent and do not stop when they should. Therefore, children should proceed with caution when getting on/off the school bus and crossing the road.
5. Parents should have their children to the bus stop 5 minutes ahead of scheduled time of pick up.

**Items Permitted on the School Bus**

Any items carried on a school bus must meet all regulations set out in the motor vehicle act. The Association of School Transportation Services of BC provided the following guidelines for students traveling on school district buses.

**Musical Instruments:** Musical instruments will be carried on school district buses if the size does not exceed that of an alto saxophone. All musical instruments must fit comfortably in the passenger's space and be held in such a way as not to extend into the aisle or interfere with

other passengers. Oversized musical instruments such as guitars, trombones, etc. will not be carried.

**Personal Belongings:** Belongings carried on the bus must be contained in a **GEAR BAG**, easily managed and held by the student. All items must fit comfortably in the passenger's space without extending into the aisle or interfering with other passengers. Items of a size or nature considered to be hazardous to other passengers will not be permitted on the bus (i.e. hockey sticks, firearms, sharp objects, etc.).

**Driver's Authority:** At the driver's discretion students may be directed to designated seats to better accommodate the students' belongings. In accordance with MVA Regulations, School Bus Drivers CANNOT transport items other than a regular backpack which can fit comfortably on the student's lap without extending into another student's space (or into the aisle, or in front of the student).

The following items **CANNOT** be safely transported on a school bus:

- Guitars and Trombones
- Tenor and Bari Saxophones
- Ice Hockey Sticks
- Lacrosse Sticks
- Baseball Bats
- Drums, Cellos and other large instruments
- Large school projects that will not fit on the student's lap

Items which **CAN** be transported:

- A regular size backpack that sits comfortably on the student's lap
- Small band instruments such as flutes, trumpets - anything up to the size of, and including, an alto saxophone
- Recreational sports balls contained within the student's backpack.
- Skateboards completely enclosed in a zippered bag (no longboards)

### **Safety Measures and Compartmentalization**

School buses are engineered to provide the highest level of protection for a large group of passengers. They are not designed to safely carry cargo along with the passengers. The compromise is the backpack, with all items stored securely inside that can sit comfortably on a student's lap. Hard items sticking out of the backpack and/or strapped to the outside of the backpack compromise the safety provided by compartmentalization.

Under the compartmentalization concept seat backs in school buses are made higher, wider, and thicker than before and they are closer together. All metal surfaces are covered with energy absorbing padding. Today's bus seats must have a steel inner structure that bends forward to help absorb energy. When a child is thrown against the seat it must absorb the weight of the child in the seat behind. This protects the child in the event of a sudden stop or accident. Anything that is stored in front of a student's face or

between their legs prevents them from receiving the protection of the padded surface in front of them. Anything stored on the floor becomes a hazard that they or other students could trip on. The School District has a responsibility to transport students safely to and from school.

Allowing unsafe, insecure cargo is neglecting that responsibility. We appreciate your efforts and your support in maintaining a safe environment.

### **Under-carriage Compartments**

For regular routes, under-carriage compartments are not utilized to ensure the continuous presence of the driver for student safety. Regular routes require the driver to always be at the wheel when students are on the bus. This means they are unable to get off the bus to open, load and secure the compartment for regular runs. Students may not do this themselves as the location is within a blind spot and the driver cannot see the student.

Thank you for your cooperation in maintaining a safe transportation environment for all students. For further details, refer to School District Policy 7000 or contact the Operations Supervisor in your respective zone.