

601 Transportation AP – Eligibility & Transportation Fees

General:

1. Transportation will be provided for resident students who reside at a distance greater than 2.4 kilometers from the site of the school within the student's attendance area that the Board has directed the student to attend, unless, in the opinion of the Superintendent, transportation is required to ensure student safety.
2. The Superintendent may approve transportation services for resident students to attend a Division school in another attendance area if, in the opinion of the Superintendent, student safety would be compromised due to unsafe or unreliable road conditions or because busing to a school within the attendance area is not feasible.
3. The Superintendent, under special agreement, may provide transportation services or may renew requests for non-resident board transportation services to resident students who choose to attend school in another jurisdiction.
4. Early entry (JK and younger) children because of their age, size and safety concerns, are not eligible to be transported on a regular school bus. Parents may be eligible for conveyance payments for transporting their own early-entry special needs child to a program approved by the Division.

Students Residing Outside Attendance Areas and Jurisdiction:

1. Non-resident students must receive written permission from their resident board prior to transportation services being provided from their resident jurisdiction to a Prairie Rose school.
2. Non-resident students who have not received written permission from their resident board or Prairie Rose students attending a school of choice and requiring transportation services must meet a Prairie Rose bus at a regular stop in the attendance area for the school they attend. Transportation will be provided only if there is available space on the bus after all resident students have been accommodated. This is also true of students who reside within the 2.4 km distance of their designated school.
3. Where students are transported out of their local attendance area to access a high school program, only high school students may be eligible for transportation.
4. In the event a student resides at a point in an attendance area where the physical distance to a school operated by the Board in another attendance area (school of choice) is the same or less as the school the student is directed to attend, the Superintendent or designate may authorize an extension of an existing route to pick up those students to attend the school of choice, provided the cost to do so is no more than an additional 10% of the government transportation grant for that student. This rate will be established from where the bus crosses the attendance boundary as determined by the Director of Transportation.

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5. A cross boundary approval should not lengthen the ride time for students currently riding the bus from within the boundary. Any cross-boundary application that results in ride times for these students in excess of 10 minutes shall not be considered.
6. Parents outside the 10% area (budget) may agree to pay the difference in cost to the board.
7. The board delegates final decisions related to this policy to the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent of Schools will keep the board informed of these situations, so trends can be established for considering boundary reviews.

Transportation Fees:

The Division may charge a fee for student transportation for the following:

1. Where bussing services are provided to students who live less than 2.4 km from their designated school. The fee for service shall be \$200 per year per student up to a maximum of \$450 per family.
2. Where the division must access more than one residence for transporting a student as determined by a specific family context. In this case, a fee may be charged to the families for a secondary residence to cover the cost of the distance off the regular route to the residence of the secondary family. The secondary residence shall be considered the newest route required for the family.
3. In the event of #4 and #6 above under Students Residing Outside Attendance Areas and Jurisdiction
4. The fee for students eligible for funding under the Education Grants Regulation (AR 120/2008) must not exceed the average difference per student between
 - a. The estimated costs to the board for transporting the students, and
 - b. The funding received by the board under the Education Grants Regulation (AR 120/2008) in respect of the transportation of the students.
5. The fee for students not eligible for funding under the Education Grants Regulation (AR 120/2008) must not exceed the estimated average cost per student to the board for transporting the students.
6. Before new transportation fees or a transportation fee increase/decrease is set, the division must demonstrate to parents a need to charge any fee or cost, including the amounts and purpose of the new or increase/decrease in transportation fees. This demonstration will be presented at a Council of School Council meeting and sent to parents through the division's messenger software.
7. The Director of Transportation Operations is responsible for providing all fee changes for the upcoming school year by April 15th of each year. This information will be provided in a fee schedule template, as provided by the Secretary-Treasurer. Any fee that is set in excess of 5% from the previous school year requires written rationale for the increase on the fee schedule template. Once the Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer review the fee

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schedule, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, it will be posted on the division's website along with this Transportation Procedure.

8. No transportation fees can be charged that were not included or exceed the amount set out in the division's reviewed fee schedule.

Transportation Fee Reduction/Waiver and Refund Process:

1. The Director of Transportation has the authority to reduce or waive transportation fees for families who encounter financial hardship. A payment plan can be agreed upon between the Director of Transportation and parents to assist with financial difficulties.
2. The transportation fees are subject to the following reduction/waiver and refund provisions:
 - a. Transportation Fees may be reduced or waived upon a parent's confidential application (Appendix Form) to the Director of Transportation Operations, with documentation demonstrating financial difficulty (i.e. recent tax return, T4's, pay stubs, loan documents etc.). When assessing reduction or waiver of transportation fees, the families' prior year taxable income will be compared to the Statistics Canada Low Income Cut-Off for five-person households in rural areas under 10,000 people, as provided by the Secretary-Treasurer.
 - b. When a student, who has paid a transportation fee, transfers to another school jurisdiction during the school year or no longer requires bussing services, a pro-rated refund per month shall be paid upon application for the refund.
3. Each year, the transportation fee reduction/waiver and refund process is required to be included in staff handbooks and communicated at the first staff meeting of the year for schools where a transportation fee is charged. Parents, who are charged transportation fees, shall be notified of this process each year through the division's messenger software.
4. With respect to transportation fees and costs, any disputes or concerns between the parents and the Director of Transportation, should be referred to an appeal committee, including the Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer, for a resolution. Both the Director of Transportation and parent will be communicated with before and after a decision is made.

Cross References:

Education Act, Section 59 – Transportation
Student Transportation Regulation

Updated: January 10, 2017

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