

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES & ATTENDANCE AREAS

Background

The Division believes that it can provide each student with the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister by effectively utilizing the human and physical resources of the Division. In order to achieve this goal, the Division establishes attendance areas for each school in the Division.

Definition

1. Eligible student - those students that reside more than 2.4 kilometres from their designated school.
2. Ineligible student - those students that reside less than 2.4 kilometres from their designated school.
3. Residence – In the rural areas the attendance area shall be determined by the legal land survey where the residence is situated and in the urban areas by the street address.

For consistency, and in order to avoid the provision of duplicated bus service to a specific residence, if a residence is located along a road that coincides with an attendance area boundary line, the following principles will be applied to determine the attendance area in which that residence is deemed to be located:

- Residents whose main access road enters onto an east-west boundary road on the north side of the road will be deemed to reside in the attendance area which lies to the north of that road.
- Residents whose main access road enters onto an east-west boundary road on the south side of the road will be deemed to reside in the attendance area which lies to the south of that road.
- Residents whose main access road enters onto a north-south boundary road on the east side of the road will be deemed to reside in the attendance area which lies to the east of that road.
- Residents whose main access road enters onto a north-south boundary road on the west side of the road will be deemed to reside in the attendance area which lies to the west of that road.

Procedures

1. Regular Transportation
 - 1.1 The Board shall provide transportation to eligible students to and from school in a safe, effective and efficient manner if the student resides

within the attendance area established by the board as defined in Section 59 of the Education Act. In order to maximize the efficient use of school facilities, resources, and the bus fleet serving schools within the Division, and to allow for effective program planning, the Board will establish parameters for student transportation services:

- 1.1.1 All distance measurements shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the Student Transportation Regulation.
 - 1.1.2 Instead of providing transportation for an eligible student, the Board may enter into an agreement with the parent of the student within the provisions of Section 59.1 of the Education Act.
- 1.2 The Director of Transportation shall assign students to bus routes in accordance with the attendance boundaries unless otherwise determined by the Board or senior administrative personnel. Students will be designated to attend the school that serves the attendance area in which they reside.
- 1.3 In keeping with the spirit of parental choice and legislation, where feasible, the Board may accommodate a student who resides outside of the described attendance area set for a school within the Division.

2. Directed Transportation

- 2.1 Students may be directed by the Superintendent or designate to attend a school other than that to which they would normally be directed via attendance boundaries for any of the following reasons:
- 2.1.1 The student requires a specialized program located in another school, (i.e., Knowledge and Employability courses, Opportunity Room, etc.);
 - 2.1.2 The student requires placement in another school for emotional, social or security issues; or
 - 2.1.3 The student requires placement in another school for medical considerations.
- 2.2 Decisions regarding placement of students using the criteria noted in 2.1 above, shall be made by the Superintendent or designate following discussions with the affected school principal(s) and student parent(s). A requisition form for transportation service shall be provided to the Transportation Department.
- 2.3 Following receipt of a requisition form for transportation, the Director of Transportation shall arrange for transportation via the most practical method, (school bus, parent provided, etc.).
- 2.4 If a student is placed by the Superintendent or designate into a program using the above criteria, no fee for service will be levied for the transportation provided.

- 2.5 Students approved for Directed Transportation shall be served prior to those students who are attending a school of choice outside their normal attendance area. Note: Only students approved for “Directed Transportation” under this clause are eligible to ride designated “Special Education” buses. A Special Education Bus is a bus that may transport students across several attendance areas in order to accommodate coded students who require a special education program.

3. Ineligible Transportation

- 3.1 The Board may decide to provide transportation services for an ineligible student to and from the site of the school in which the Board has designated for the student. Ineligible student busing will be provided only if:
 - 3.1.1 All eligible students have been accommodated;
 - 3.1.2 There is sufficient seat room on the bus;
 - 3.1.3 They can be served without altering an established bus route;
 - 3.1.4 Payment of an annual fee to be determined from time to time by the Board, or prorated portion thereof, has been received;
 - 3.1.5 Eligibility for transportation is extended to those ineligible students who would otherwise have to walk along a road with posted speeds of 60 kilometres per hour or higher, without the benefit of sidewalks;
 - 3.1.6 If a parent feels they have exceptional circumstances that do not fit the criteria noted above, the Board will consider such requests on an individual basis;
 - 3.1.7 Requests for transportation for ineligible students will be dealt with on a first-come, first-served basis;
 - 3.1.8 A parent may be notified during the year that service is no longer available if the requirement to provide service to eligible students creates no seat room on the bus.

4. School of Choice

Students may attend a school of choice as long as the following criteria have been met:

- 4.1 There must be space available on the bus.
 - 4.1.1 For determining available space, students from within the attendance area will have priority over students from outside the attendance area.
 - 4.1.2 Requests for transportation to a school of choice will be dealt with on a first-come, first-served basis.

- 4.2 There is no diversion of the bus from the regular route.
 - 4.3 The students board the bus at a safe location.
 - 4.4 Parents have paid the appropriate fee for service, if applicable.
 - 4.4.1 If the parent drives to meet a bus bound for a school of choice on route, no fee for service will apply.
 - 4.4.2 If the student is able to board the bus for a school of choice without parents transporting the child in their private vehicle to meet the bus, there shall be a fee for service (i.e., meeting a bus at a feeder school within the village/town where the student resides, or a non-high school student boarding a high school bus at their gate to pick up older siblings).
 - 4.5 A student shall only be allowed to transfer to another school during the school year if the parents, the Principal of the sending school, and the Principal of the receiving school agree that it is in the best educational interests of the student to transfer the student.
 - 4.6 Students attending a school of choice may not meet a “special education bus”.
 - 4.7 Parents are to apply in writing to the Director of Transportation for transportation outside of the attendance area in which they reside. The Director of Transportation will provide a written reply to the request.
5. Early Learning and Program Unit Funded (PUF)
- 5.1 For children enrolled in Early Learning and Program Unit Funded Programs (PUF), the provision of transportation is not mandatory but may be provided if practical, and given the following considerations:
 - 5.1.1 Children younger than four years of age will not be transported to Early Learning Programs.
 - 5.1.2 Children aged four years and older may be accommodated where possible by using:
 - 5.1.2.1 Handivan, where possible;
 - 5.1.2.2 Parent provided transportation arrangement subject to the required paperwork being filed at the Transportation Department Office;
 - 5.1.2.3 Taxis with a Battle River School Division appointed aide accompanying the child.

6. Non-resident Students

Students who reside outside the jurisdiction and whose parents wish to register them at a school within the Division are eligible to attend the school provided that:

- 6.1 The Principal of the school at which the student wishes to register indicates there are sufficient resources and facilities at the school in the grade/program in which the student is to be enrolled;
 - 6.2 The parent accepts full responsibility, at no cost to the Division, for transporting the student to and from a safe stop point along a regular bus route which is bound for the school in question;
 - 6.2.1 If the non-resident parent transports the student to a boundary point along the attendance area for the school of choice, the Director of Transportation may, if feasible, alter the bus route to accommodate a pick up at the boundary.
 - 6.3 There is room on the bus;
 - 6.3.1 For determining available space, students from within the attendance area will have priority over students from outside the attendance areas.
 - 6.3.2 Requests for transportation to a school of choice will be dealt with on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - 6.4 Written permission is given annually by the Director of Transportation for the busing to be provided for a specified period, and
 - 6.5 Parents have paid an appropriate fee for service, if applicable.
 - 6.5.1 If the non-resident parent drives to meet a bus bound for a Division school on route, no fee for service will apply.
 - 6.5.2 If the non-resident student is able to board the bus for a Division school without parents transporting the child in their private vehicle to meet the bus, there shall be a fee for service (i.e., a bus passes by their residence to get from one eligible resident student to another eligible resident student).
7. Fee - The fees referred to in Procedures 3.1.4, 4.4, and 6.5 above, are levied because Alberta Education grants are not provided for transportation of students who reside less than 2.4 kilometres from the school to which they are directed or to those students attending a school other than the one they are directed to. The Board has established a common fee for any ineligible passengers who choose to avail themselves of the transportation services in exchange for payment of such a fee.

8. A student who is enrolled in one school will only be allowed to transfer to another school during the school year if the parents, the Principal of the sending school, and the Principal of the receiving school agree that it is in the best educational interests of the student to transfer the student. Refer to Administrative Procedure 306, *Special Placement*, for details.
9. Space requirements for students from within the attendance area will have priority over out-of-attendance area or out-of-jurisdiction students.
10. Under normal circumstances, busing will not be provided to students residing within the incorporated limits of a town/village/hamlet where a school is located unless the student is eligible for transportation by virtue of residing at a distance that is 2.4 kilometres or greater from the school.
 - 10.1 If parents feel exceptional circumstances require that transportation be provided to a student residing within the incorporated limits of a town/village/hamlet at less than 2.4 kilometres from the school, the Board will consider such requests on an individual basis and any such transportation approved by the Board shall be subject to payment of the fees established for ineligible riders, or prorated portion thereof, as outlined in Procedure 7.
11. The Board will not cross jurisdictional boundaries to transport students residing in another jurisdiction to a Battle River School Division school unless the provision to do so has been mutually agreed to in writing by both jurisdictions.
12. Approvals for transportation of ineligible and cross-boundary students need to be reassessed each year and the availability of continued service determined based on the criteria noted in the appropriate procedures. If it is determined at any point during the course of a school year that any one of the criteria can no longer be met, service may be revoked at that time, and a pro-rated refund of the fees, if any were assessed, will be processed.
13. Boundary Review

From time to time, the Board may determine that it is necessary to review established attendance area boundaries.

Reference: Section 10, 52, 59, 222 Education Act
Student Transportation Regulation (96/2019)
Administrative Procedure 306, Special Placement

Amended: June 11th, 2020