

Aspen View Public Schools Transportation Handbook



August 2023

Welcome to Aspen View Public Schools Transportation Department

Aspen View Public Schools' Transportation Department is dedicated to ensuring our students are safely transported to and from school each day. We work closely with school bus contractors, drivers, schools, parents/caregivers and students, as each have an important role in helping our transportation system run safely and efficiently.

Aspen View Public Schools transports more than 1,700 students each day to 10 different schools. Our 62 bus routes, operated by 16 different bus contractors, travel more than 10,000 km each day.

This Transportation Handbook was developed to assist students and their parents/caregivers in understanding Aspen View Public Schools' busing system. Your assistance in reviewing this handbook with your student(s) is appreciated.

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Legislation, Policies & Definitions

This Transportation Handbook frequently refers to provincial legislation and Aspen View Public Schools policies and procedures that govern our student transportation system. We encourage you to review these if you require more information.

The [Education Act](#) and the [School Transportation regulation](#) define school divisions' obligations regarding student transportation.

Aspen View Policy and Procedures regarding student transportation include:

[Policy 18: Student Transportation Procedures](#)

[Administrative Procedure 131: Inclement Weather/Hazardous Road Conditions](#)

[Administrative Procedure 181: Video Surveillance](#)

[Administrative Procedure 260: Educational Field Trips](#)

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[Administrative Procedure 555: Bus Driver Qualifications](#)

[Administrative Procedure 556: Activity Bus](#)

Definitions of Commonly-Used Terms

Alternate Transportation: Transportation of students to an approved location other than their residence or designated bus stop. This is an optional service, available to both Eligible and Ineligible Students, subject to approval by the Transportation Coordinator

Attendance Area: Geographic boundaries within a school division, determined by the Board of Trustees, that fully and efficiently utilize the resources, programs and transportation systems of each school for the utmost benefit of students.

Designated Bus Stop: In towns, villages, summer villages and country residential areas, designated locations established by the Transportation Coordinator for the pick-up/drop-off of groups of students.

Designated School: The school a student is directed to attend, based on their grade level and the location of their residence within established attendance areas.

Eligible Students: Students entitled to division-provided transportation under the Education Act.

The Education Act states a school board shall, in accordance with the regulation, provide transportation to and from school to any student who:

- Resides within the division boundary; and
- Resides within the attendance area of the school in which the student is enrolled; and
- Resides at a distance greater than 1 km from that school for K-6 students; and greater than 2 km from that school for Grade 7-12 students.

Ineligible Students: Students who are not entitled to division-provided transportation under the Education Act, as they reside less than 1 km from their Designated School if they are in K-6, or 2 km from their Designated School if they are in Grade 7-12;

School boards may, however, choose to offer optional Alternate Transportation services to Ineligible Students, and may charge a fee for the providing these services.

Non-Resident Students: Students who reside outside the division boundaries.

School of Choice: A school that parents/caregivers choose to have their children attend, other than their Designated School.

System Administration

School Attendance Area Boundaries

School attendance area boundaries are established by the Board as required under the Education Act. Eligible student passengers are transported to their Designated School within the attendance area boundaries. [Aspen View Public School Attendance Area Map](#)

School of Choice

Under the Education Act, parents/guardians may choose to enroll their child(ren) in a school other than the Designated School of attendance. If parents/guardians decides to have their children attend a school other than their Designated School, transportation to the School of Choice becomes the responsibility of parents/guardians. However, School of Choice students may access Aspen View Public School Division buses, subject to the following conditions:

1. The student must be accepted for enrolment at their School of Choice.
2. There must be room on the bus.
3. They must meet the school bus at a Designated Bus Stop within the attendance area for the chosen school.
4. They must apply to the Transportation Department for School of Choice transportation each year.
5. Fees, as determined by the Board, must be paid before service is accessed.

How Are Bus Routes Determined?

Bus routes are determined by the Aspen View Public Schools Transportation Coordinator. In an effort to provide safe and efficient bus routes, the following principles are followed when designing routes:

- Student safety;
- Minimizing ride times for the majority of students, while considering the realities of fiscal constraints, a geographically dispersed division and student population;
- Considering the shortest practical distance and minimizing backtracking when possible;
- Understanding that factors such as population, density, location of schools and condition of roads may impact the route design and distance.

Safety of students is the primary concern and the principles of routing noted above can be altered if deemed necessary by the Transportation Department.

Some circumstances that may affect the design of a route are:

- Geographical circumstances (such as a lake, river, lack of passable road, etc.).
- Severe medical situations for a student(s) where it is necessary to alter the route in order to ensure their safety. (Medical documentation may be required.)
- Where, in an effort to avoid excessive risk including driver distraction, we may choose to alter a route to address pick up/drop off locations where larger numbers of students can embark or disembark in the shortest possible time. (i.e. villages, towns and subdivisions.)

Parents/guardians should be prepared for changes in buses, routes, stops and times of pick-up throughout the school year that result from adding or deleting students from the route. Overall travel time will vary from route to route depending on school and student home locations.

Registering for Busing

All students requiring bus transportation must annually complete and submit the [Student Bus Registration Form](#). Please do not assume that the Transportation Department knows that you require transportation; please register your student(s). Completed forms must be submitted annually by May 30 in order to ensure transportation for the start of the following school year.

[Alternative Transportation Request Forms](#) must also be completed annually.

Eligible Students

Students will be provided with transportation between their primary residence and their Designated School if they:

- Reside within the division boundary; and
- Reside within the attendance area of the school in which they are enrolled; and
- Reside at a distance greater than 1 km from that school if they are in K-6, or greater than 2 km from that school if they are in Grade 7-12.
- Any transportation fees determined by the Board and must be paid prior to accessing transportation services.

Transportation of Ineligible Students

Transportation may be offered to students who reside less than 1 km from their Designated School if they are in K-6, or less than 2 km from that school if they are in Grade 7-12, if:

- There is sufficient seating on the bus after all Eligible Students have been accommodated;
- It does not significantly impact the ride time of existing students on the route.
- Any transportation fees determined by the Board and must be paid prior to accessing transportation services.

Parents/caregivers may apply to the Transportation Coordinator if they feel that exceptional circumstances, such as medical conditions or safety concerns, do not fit the criteria noted above. Such requests will be considered on an individual basis.

School of Choice

Transportation may be offered to students attending a school other than their Designated School if:

- Enrolment in the School of Choice has been approved based on sufficient resources and facilities;
- There is sufficient seating on the bus after all Eligible and Ineligible Students have been accommodated;
- Transportation of School of Choice students does not affect the pick-up time or ride time or students normally assigned to that route;
- Parents/caregivers arrange to transport the student to a Designated Bus Stop within the school's Attendance Area, and meet the bus at the end of the day.
- Parents/caregivers pay transportation fees as determined by the Board prior to accessing the service.

Non-Resident Students

Transportation may be offered to students residing outside the division boundaries if:

- Parents/caregivers arrange to transport the student to a Designated Bus Stop within the Attendance Area of their school in which the student is enrolled, and meet the bus at the end of the day.
- There is sufficient seating on the bus after all Eligible, Ineligible and School of Choice Students have been accommodated;
- Parents/caregivers pay transportation fees as determined by the Board prior to accessing the service.

Alternate Transportation Requests

Requests for student pick-up/drop-off at a location other than their legal residence may be submitted annually to the Transportation Coordinator for approval. Alternate Transportation requests will be considered on a first come, first served basis, only if:

- There is sufficient seating on the bus;
- The Alternate Transportation request does not negatively impact the ride times of rural students on the route;
- The Alternate Transportation request delivers the student(s) to the care of a parent/caregiver or recognized childcare provider. Examples include parents' workplaces or babysitters.
- Parents/caregivers pay transportation fees as determined by the Board prior to accessing the service.

Occasional Transportation Requests

Occasional Student Transportation Requests will not be available at the start of the school year, until registration of full-time riders is complete (usually late September- mid October).

Private Property/Yard Entry

School buses will generally not enter private property for the purpose of student pick-up or drop-off. Pick-ups and drop-offs will take place at the residential gate immediately adjacent to the municipal road allowance or highway on the school bus route.

Exceptions to normal practice are:

1. There is no satisfactory/safe turnaround point on the municipal road allowance; or
2. The student is not capable of walking as evidenced by a medical certificate issued by a qualified physician.
3. Does not impact ride times

Whenever entry to private property is required, a Hold Harmless Agreement must be completed by the bus driver and submitted to the Transportation Department for approval.

Fees & Collections

The Board of Trustees may annually set fees for transportation of:

- Eligible Students
- Ineligible Students
- Alternate Transportation Requests
- School of Choice Students
- Non-Resident Students

Invoicing and collection of transportation fees is the responsibility of Aspen View Public Schools Division Office. For the 2023-24 school year, all previous years' transportation fees must be paid or waived before service will be provided.

Bus drivers will be notified by the Transportation Department once registration and payment (if applicable) has been received. Once registration and payment has been confirmed, bus drivers will contact families to advise of pick-up times.

Waivers & Appeals

Waivers

In cases of financial hardship, parents/caregivers of students for whom a transportation fee has been levied may appeal for a fee waiver using Aspen View's [Application for Waiver of Fee\(s\)](#).

Appeals

The Board delegates to the Transportation Committee the power to make decisions with respect to transportation of students except where indicated in other policies such as Policy 23: School Attendance and Boundaries. The appeal decisions made by the Transportation Committee are final. Appeals can be made for the following items:

- Inclusive Education requests
- Transportation for Ineligible Students
- Temporary Transportation Requests
- Exceptional Circumstances regarding student safety

Responsibilities

Student Responsibilities

Students are accountable for their behavior on the bus. The bus driver is in control of the bus at all times, and passengers must obey the driver promptly and in a courteous manner. When a student's behavior is unacceptable or rules have been disobeyed, the driver will file a misconduct report with the school administrator. The school administrator will investigate the incident and take appropriate actions.

[Student Rules of Conduct on School Buses](#) - (Administrative Procedure 356)

- Students are expected to exhibit behavior that would be acceptable in the classroom.
- Students are accountable for their behavior on the bus.
- Students must obey the bus driver. The driver has full authority.
- Students have a right to ride on the bus to and from their school in a safe and quiet manner.
- Students will be assigned to a seat by the bus driver and will sit in their assigned seat when riding the bus.
- Students have a right to carry on quiet conversations with other students in their assigned seated area.
- Students may only eat on the bus with the driver's permission.
- Students are required to place garbage in the garbage basket.
- Students are expected to use earbuds or headphones when using electronic devices with sound.
- Students are expected to be on time for loading and discharge.
- Students must observe the directions of the bus driver when loading and unloading, and when crossing the road prior to loading and after unloading.
- Students must remain quiet while the bus is stopped at a railway crossing, and remain quiet while the bus is crossing.
- Students must not distract the driver.
- Possession and use of any banned substance (eg. tobacco, vaping, e-cigarettes, cannabis, alcohol, illicit drugs) and obscene language is prohibited.
- Students must enter and leave the bus in an orderly fashion, remain seated and facing the front while the bus is in motion, and not extend their arms or head out the bus windows.
- If students opened a window on the bus, students must close the window when leaving the bus.

Parent/Caregiver Responsibilities

Parents/Caregivers are responsible for:

- Providing their child with guidance, discipline and protection on their way to and from the bus, as well as while at the bus pick-up/drop-off location.
- Being aware of any communications regarding bus delays or cancellations, and maintaining contingency plans in the event that buses and/or schools are cancelled.
- Ensuring their child is at their designated pick-up location 5 minutes prior to their scheduled pick-up time.
- Ensuring that their child is appropriately dressed for weather conditions.
- Informing the bus driver if their child has any relevant medical conditions.
- Encouraging their child to obey all school bus regulations and directions from the driver.
- Working with the bus driver and school administration to resolve any discipline concerns.

- Reporting any safety concerns to the bus driver or Transportation Coordinator.
- Informing the bus driver when their child will not ride the bus.
- Arranging alternative shelter for their child if no one is home.
- Notifying, in writing, the transportation department when a Temporary Transportation Request (occasioned by family, medical or social circumstances) is required. These accommodations are subject to seat availability and appropriate permissions have been received.

Bus Driver Responsibilities

Bus drivers are responsible for:

- Orienting students on procedures and safety.
- Developing seating plans and assigning students seats.
- Following the route and schedule provided.
- Treating all students, staff and the public with respect and dignity.
- Maintaining discipline among students in accordance to guidelines set out by the Division.
- Reporting student misconduct to the school administrator as necessary
- Maintaining a clean and sanitary bus
- Remaining calm in stressful situations.
- Conduct school bus evacuation drills.
- Informing supervisor if changes should be made on a route (ex: not enough/too much time, no students at bus stop, etc.). Supervisor forwards information to Transportation Coordinator for review.

School Responsibilities

Schools are responsible for:

- Safety, welfare, behavior and conduct of students while participating in school programs, including students on their way to or from school on transportation provided by Aspen View Public Schools.
- Taking any disciplinary action (although bus drivers are responsible for maintaining order and discipline on the bus).
- Being the first point of contact for inquiries from parents, students, drivers and the Transportation Department.
- Sharing transportation information with staff.
- Ensuring that information received from the Transportation Department is forwarded to parents/students.
- Arranging supervision at the school bus loading/unloading zone to ensure student safety.
- Inform the Transportation Department of changes to student information.
- Work with bus drivers to arrange bus evacuation drills.
- Receive Student Misconduct Forms from bus drivers to address and resolve concerns.
- Work with bus drivers, if necessary, to develop seating plans.
- Ensuring that student transportation information is recorded and updated accurately within Aspen View Public Schools' student information system.
- Collecting any student transportation fees levied.

Before you ride

Pick-up/Drop-off Times

Pick-up times

Pick-up times are established by the drivers. The drivers determine a pick-up time based on their knowledge of the roads in your area and the required arrival time established at the schools.

At the start of the school year, the driver will contact each family and inform them of their morning pick-up times. The bus routes will be reviewed for efficiencies throughout the month of September. The pick-up times will be finalized by the drivers as soon as possible. However, adjustments can occur throughout the year if there are changes in the route or riders. The driver will notify the parents of any changes to the pick-up times.

Students are expected to be at the stop, ready to board the bus 5 minutes before their assigned pick-up time.

Late for the assigned pick-up

If your students are late, you must have a contingency plan to get them to school. If everyone on the bus was late by even one minute, the bus would arrive at school approximately 30 minutes late. Bus drivers are not required to wait beyond the scheduled pick-up time. **Please be on time.**

Drop-off times

Generally speaking, drop-off times need to be flexible. The routes can be shortened due to student absences in the afternoon. This may result in your student arriving home early. Make arrangements or establish a contingency plan for this situation.

Inclement Weather

Aspen View Public Schools endeavors to make well-informed, timely decisions regarding student transportation in the event of adverse weather conditions. **Parents hold the responsibility for deciding to send a child to their bus stop or to school even though buses and schools may be operational.**

School buses are to operate on all school instructional days except when inclement weather and/or hazardous road conditions or other emergency reasons constitute a significant hazard to the safety and wellbeing of school bus students. The decision to cancel student transportation across the entire division or for entire communities due to inclement weather lies with the Superintendent, in consultation with the Transportation Coordinator. The Superintendent is obligated to cancel student transportation, either across the division or for specific communities/schools, when the temperature is -40 C or below with or without the wind chill; however, he may also cancel student transportation at his discretion, either across the division or for specific communities/schools, based on hazardous conditions such as fog, freezing rain, wind chill, etc.

For consistency, the Transportation Coordinator annually chooses a weather information service used to determine -40 C conditions for each community. The service currently used is Weather Network.

Nevertheless, each school bus driver has the authority to cancel or alter their route in the event of adverse weather to ensure the safety of students.

In the event that weather conditions become adverse during the school day, subject to the approval of the Superintendent, bus drivers communicate with school principals and the Transportation Coordinator to facilitate the early departure of students. The school shall contact all parents/guardians to ensure that someone is home to receive the child. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the student will remain at the school until the parent has been contacted to make alternative arrangements. The parent/guardian shall pick the child up from the school no later than the normal bus drop-off time.

Notifications

If a bus does not operate, the driver is expected to contact the parents of students on their route, the Transportation Coordinator and the school in a timely fashion.

In addition, any bus route cancellations or delays will be noted on the [Aspen View Schools website](#), as well as on the websites of any Aspen View schools affected by the cancellation. Parents are encouraged to install the Bus Status app for notifications on bus delays and cancellations.

When warranted, school bus cancellations will also be shared through [Aspen View's social media accounts](#) and/or with appropriate broadcast media outlets including:

94.1 FM Boom - Athabasca	630 AM CHED
97.9 FM Real Country - Westlock (for Rochester/Thorhild)	840 AM CFCW City TV Edmonton
92.7 FM Boom - Slave Lake (for Smith)	Global TV Edmonton
97.7 FM Real Country - St. Paul (for Vilna)	CFRN TV Edmonton

Proper Winter Attire

All students riding on a school bus during the winter months shall be required to be prepared for unexpected severe weather conditions. Parents are responsible to ensure that their child is properly dressed for the weather conditions. Bus drivers are to use their discretion in determining the suitability of the student's clothing for the weather conditions. If a student presents him/herself at a morning pick-up and is not properly dressed, the bus driver shall pick up the student and, upon arrival at the school, the driver will file a misconduct form with the school principal for follow-up action through contact with the parent.

Student Materials on the Bus

The division recognizes that students will occasionally have a need to transport additional educational materials on school buses. These materials will be necessary for the ongoing instructional component of their educational program, and as such, are legitimately inside our transportation mandate. However, there is a need to establish some guidelines in terms of what types of materials can be transported, what number should be allowed and the size of the materials themselves.

- Students are allowed to bring materials on the school bus that will fit comfortably onto their lap; this would include a reasonable amount of books, supplies or personal items. It is important to recognize that these materials should be contained in a backpack, but if that is not possible they should be limited to a number that the student can easily control.
- The backpack that the student brings on to the bus, and that sits on their lap, should be of a reasonable size. Our guidelines would require that it be a maximum size of 25.4 cm x 33 cm in length and width (10" by 13") and 55.88 cm (22") in height. The purpose of these measurements is to ensure that backpacks or "storage item" does not intrude on another student's space, extend into the aisle or go over the height of the seat in front of them.
- The student is also allowed to bring one additional item on to the bus that can fit comfortably under the seat that they occupy. This item cannot hinder another student's foot space, nor intrude into the aisle.
- There are some items that cannot be transported on buses. The following are examples only, and should not be viewed as the total list of those items;
 - Archery equipment
 - Hockey sticks
 - Hockey bags
 - Skateboards
 - Skis
 - Large band instruments
 - Large school projects
 - Curling brooms
 - Skates not secured in a closed bag (for example a duffle, sport or skate bag) cannot be transported on buses
 - Skate guards are strongly recommended
 - Skates are to be stored under the student's seat
 - Parents are to communicate with the bus driver when their child will be bringing skates on the bus
 - If the rules are not followed the rights to transport skates will be revoked
 - It should be recognized that the intent of restricting these items is directly related to safety concerns, as well as, the space and comfort of all students.

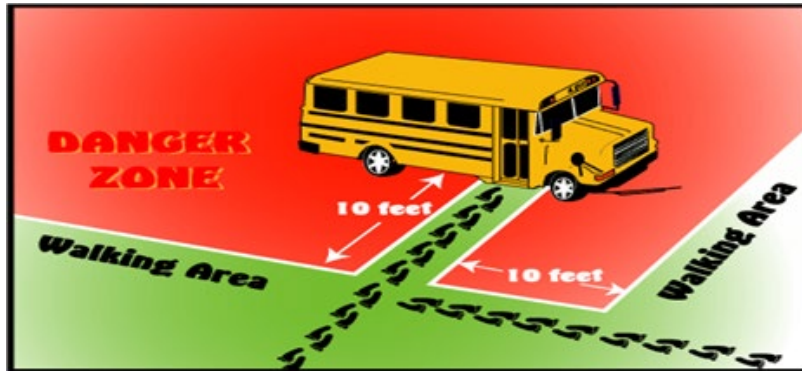
In the event that a student attempts to bring items that are too large, unsafe, or too many in number onto the bus, the driver will ask the student to return them to their place of origin; either the home or the school site.

- Certain items are prohibited on school buses by board policy as follows:
 - “No person shall, while transporting pupils on a school bus, convey in or on the school bus
 - Animals,
 - Firearms,
 - Explosives,
 - Flammable materials or substances,
 - Fuel other than in the fuel system and fuel tank of the bus,
 - Anything of a dangerous or objectionable nature, or
 - Anything that may endanger the lives or safety of persons in the bus.”
- Any exceptions and/or extenuating circumstances to any of the above requires approval from the Transportation Coordinator.

School Bus Loading and Unloading

The most dangerous part of the school bus ride is getting on and off the school bus. The loading and unloading area is called the “Danger Zone”.

The “Danger Zone” is the area on all sides of the bus where children are in the most danger of not being seen by the driver (ten feet in front, ten feet on either side of the bus, and ten feet behind are all areas where a child may be in the driver’s blind spot). **It only takes a second to lose sight of a student if a driver becomes distracted by students on board the bus.**



When training our bus drivers we stress the importance of safe loading and unloading procedures. This is where our drivers need to be fully focused and cannot be distracted by students or parents.

It is important to have parents understand that drivers need their cooperation to be fully focused at this time, by not parking and staying away from the loading and unloading zones. **Please park well away from loading zones at all times.**

It is also important to instruct students in the proper procedure for loading and unloading.

1. Be cautious when carrying loose papers or books which might drop near the bus - we encourage students to use a book bag or backpack.
2. Be aware of the dangers of clothing, book bags, backpacks, and jacket strings/straps that could become entangled in the doorway of the school bus.
3. Wait in an orderly fashion safely back from roadway or pick-up zone. Students need to be at their stop 5 minutes early. **The time you have been given for pick-up is the time the bus departs from your stop.**
4. Board the bus in single file; use the handrail so you don't trip on the steps.
5. Sit down right away so you don't fall when the bus starts moving.
6. Sit back in your seat, face forward and keep your feet to the front.
7. Keep the aisle clear of feet, backpacks, books, etc.
8. Talk quietly in order that you do not distract the driver. Remember, it's the driver's responsibility to keep you safe!
9. Keep your head, arms, and hands inside the bus, not out the window.
10. Never throw things in the bus or out the window.
11. Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and the doors to open before you leave your seat.
12. After leaving the bus, take five giant steps away from the bus so you are out of the Danger Zone and in a safe spot.
13. If you need to cross in front of the bus, make sure you look at the driver for a signal that it is okay for you to cross the roadway.
14. It is the responsibility of the family to ensure that the family pet is kept away and clear of where the bus pulls up to load students.

On your ride

Seat Assignment

Mandatory seating plans will be developed by the driver. Students must sit in their assigned seat at all times.

Use of Personal Electronic Devices

Students are not permitted to play an electronic device that plays sound without earphones while on the bus. Any apparatus that is operated with the use of earphones shall be operated at a level that ensures that the sound does not affect other passengers nor interfere with the driver's ability to communicate with the students on the bus. Any of this type of equipment is under the immediate control of the driver.

Video Cameras on Buses

Aspen View Public Schools believes that the use of video cameras on school buses will help ensure the safety of passengers, prevent vandalism, and be a useful resource for school administrators when dealing with student discipline matters. Video monitoring of buses can either be conducted on a random basis or on selected routes at the discretion of the Transportation Coordinator in consultation with Aspen View Public Schools senior administration.

Recordings can only be viewed by the Transportation Coordinator, Division Personnel, School Administrator, and Bus Driver when there is a problem during a bus trip or when there is suspicion of inappropriate behavior. Parents will not have access to the videotapes unless it can be assured that the privacy of other students on the bus is protected, or unless permission from all parties is secured.

Issues on the Bus

Student Behavior

In the event of inappropriate student behavior on the bus the following process will be followed:

- the bus driver will attempt to resolve the problem verbally with the student(s) involved.
- the bus driver will communicate with the parents/caregivers of the student(s) involved to attempt to resolve the issue.
- the bus driver will report the matter to the school principal through a Student Misconduct Form (appendix to AP 356).
- The school principal will investigate the issue, take action as deemed appropriate, and complete the Student Misconduct Form, providing copies to the parent/caregiver, bus driver & contractor, and the Transportation Coordinator. Any student whose behaviour is inappropriate on a school bus or whose actions endanger the safety of other occupants may be recommended for suspension from riding on a bus. If inappropriate behavior leads to vandalism, the student(s) and their parents/guardians will be responsible for any damage caused.

The following procedures for suspension will be followed:

- The driver must immediately make a recommendation to the principal of the school the student(s) attend by completing a Student Misconduct Form.
- Only the principal may suspend a student from riding on a school bus. The principal may suspend a student from bus service for up to five consecutive days.
- A recommendation by the principal for a suspension from riding the bus of over five days will be referred to the Superintendent.

To notify the Transportation Department of additional concerns after the process above has been completed, please fill out the online [Transportation Concerns form](#).

Student and Bus concerns

If a child complains to a parent/caregiver about another student or a situation on the bus:

- the first action should be to contact the driver and discuss the incident.
- The driver will involve the school at the appropriate time. The school will expect the driver to have tried solutions already and to have contacted the parents before the issue is brought forward.

To notify the Transportation Department of additional concerns after the process above has been completed, please fill out the online [Transportation Concerns form](#).

Bus Driver concerns

To notify the Transportation Department of a concern, please complete the online [Transportation Concerns form](#) so the Transportation Department can address your concern accurately and efficiently. Once you select SUBMIT, your complaint will be automatically sent to the members of our Transportation Team.

All issues are considered important and will be dealt with seriously and in a professional manner.

Frequently Asked Questions

Getting Started

How do I register for new bus service?

The Student Bus Registration Form can be completed and submitted online. Direct any questions to the Aspen View Public Schools Transportation Department at transportation@aspenschools.org

Is there a cost?

For the 2023-24 school year:

Busing of K-6 students who reside more than 1 km from their Designated School, or Grade 7-12 students who reside more than 2 km from their Designated School, is subject to an annual fee of \$75 per student, up to a maximum per family of \$187.50.

Busing of K-6 students who reside less than 1 km from their Designated School, or Grade 7-12 students who reside less than 2 km from their Designated School, is optional and must be approved by the Transportation Coordinator. It is subject to an annual fee of \$150 per student (no family maximum).

Busing of students to an alternate address, such as a babysitter or workplace, is optional and must be approved by the Transportation Coordinator. It is subject to an annual fee of \$150 per student, up to a family maximum of \$375.

Busing of students to a 'School of Choice' (a school other than their designated school) is subject to an annual fee of \$75 per student, up to a maximum per family of \$187.50. In those instances, parents/guardians are responsible for transporting those students to and from an assigned bus stop for that school.

Busing of non-resident students (students who reside outside the division boundaries) is subject to an annual fee of \$75 per student, up to a maximum per family of \$187.50. In those instances, parents/guardians are responsible for transporting those students to and from an assigned bus stop for that school.

What is School of Choice?

School of choice is the common term used to describe when a student chooses to attend a school other than designated school. [Policy 18](#) defines how attendance areas are determined and what rules are in place should you choose to attend a school outside that area.

What are Alternate Transportation Requests?

An Alternate Transportation Request is a request for a regular pick-up and/or drop-off for their child at a location other than their residence. These must be approved by the Transportation Coordinator. Fees of \$75 per student are assessed for approved Alternate Requests, up to a family maximum of \$375.

[Click for Alternate Transportation Request Form.](#)

What are Approved Yard Pick-Ups?

Yard pick-up is for special circumstances created by an unsafe school bus turnaround, unsafe bus stop or medical reasons. Yard pick-up must be approved by the superintendent or designate. Contact the Aspen View Public Schools Transportation Coordinator at 780-675-7080 Ext. 16 to request an Approved Yard Pick-Up.

I am coming from out of jurisdiction and have chosen to attend an Aspen View School. Is busing available?

You are considered a non-resident student and busing may be accessed from an existing bus stop within Aspen View Public Schools' boundaries. Parents/guardians are responsible for bringing students to the existing stop, and to be there at the end of the day to receive the student(s).

Fees

How will I know how much to pay?

You will be invoiced through PowerSchool and you can also contact your child's school.

If I have students attending more than one school in the division where do I pay the fee?

Fees can be paid online or at the school. If you reached the family maximum it will be reflected on your PowerSchool invoice.

Can I apply for transportation service at any time in the year and pay a pro-rated fee?

Transportation fees will be only be pro-rated if transportation service commences after the start of the second semester (February 1, 2024).

What can I do if I disagree with a Transportation fee charged to my child(ren)?

You can apply to Aspen View administration for the fee to be waived, using the Waiver Form.

How will the driver know if I have paid my fees?

Bus drivers will be notified by the Transportation Department once registration and payment (if applicable) has been received. All transportation fees must be paid before service will be provided. Once registration and payment has been confirmed, bus drivers will contact families to advise of pick-up times.

Safety

What happens if weather conditions, especially fog, create a unique situation in our division?

When conditions are such that the safety of students becomes jeopardized, Aspen View administration or individual school bus drivers may make the decision that it is safest not to do a pick-up or drop-off. The driver would call the parents so they know to make alternate arrangements.

Parents hold the responsibility for deciding to send a child to their bus stop or to school even though buses and schools may be operational.

How will I know if my child's bus has been delayed?

Bus delays and cancellations are reported through our division and school websites. You can also download the Bus Status mobile app to receive notifications of bus delays and cancellations.

What happens if the bus breaks down?

AVPSD contracts all bussing services to professional contractors who have excellent maintenance programs for their buses. However, there may be an occasion when a bus breaks down. All contractors help each other out in this event and will get your child to school and back home again. Parents may be required to drive their child in the event of a bus breakdown. Drivers are to remain with the students at all times until another bus or other safe alternative has been arranged. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately anytime they are on the bus.

What should I do if my child complains about another student or a situation on the bus?

As a parent, the first action should be to contact the driver and discuss what you know about the incident. The successful resolution of any busing problem will come from effective communication. The driver will involve the school at the appropriate time. The school will expect the driver to have tried solutions already and to have contacted the parents before the issue is brought forward.

To notify the Transportation Department of a concern, please complete the online [Transportation Concerns form](#) so the Transportation Department can address your concern accurately and efficiently. Once you select SUBMIT, your complaint will be automatically sent to the Transportation Department. All issues are considered important and will be dealt with seriously and in a professional manner.

What happens when there is no bus driver available to drive the bus?

If there is not a qualified driver available to drive, sometimes a run may have to be cancelled. If this were to happen you be notified. Parents are advised to have a contingency plan in place so that their students do not miss school.

Our Drivers

What special training do our drivers have?

All drivers must provide a valid current driver's abstract yearly as well as a clean criminal record check before they can be considered to drive for Aspen View Public School Division. All drivers must possess a valid Class 2S drivers license or equivalent. Drivers attend professional development seminars hosted by the Division.

How do I become a school bus driver for a contractor in Aspen View Public Schools?

Please contact the Transportation Department by calling 780-675-7080 Ext 16 or emailing transportation@asperview.org.

Other Questions

When should I be at my bus stop?

Students should be at the stop, ready to board the bus 3 to 5 minutes before their assigned pick-up time. Please remember that if everyone on the bus were late by even one minute, the bus would arrive at school approximately 30 minutes late. If your students are late, you must have a contingency plan to get them to school.

Can I bring a friend home on the bus?

This is a convenient practice that we try to accommodate. Cooperation from parents is necessary. Currently, any student registered with AVPSD can be transported on a one-time special occasion provided that there is:

- Room on the bus
- The online [Occasional Transportation Request Form](#) is filled out and submitted to the Transportation Coordinator by the parent approving the ride 24 hours prior to the required transportation.
- Notification to the school by the parent/guardian has been given.

What should I do if my child will not be riding the bus?

Inform your driver. Have your student tell the driver beforehand or phone the driver yourself. This is a courtesy that the drivers really appreciate. If your driver shows up at your pick-up location and you do not come out, they will only stay until your departure time and then leave.

Transportation Department Contact Information

Address: 3600 48th Avenue, Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8

Phone: 780-675-7080 Ext. 16

Toll Free: 1-888-488-0288 Ext. 16

Fax: 780-675-3660

Email: transportation@asperview.org

Coordinator: Terry Hersey

Email: terry.hersey@asperview.org

Secretary-Treasurer: Amber Oko

Email: amber.oko@asperview.org

Phone: 780-675-7080 Ext.04

Toll-Free: 1-888-488-0288

Appendix of Forms

[Student Bus Registration Form](#)

[Student Busing Opt-Out Form](#)

[Alternate Transportation Request Form](#)

[Transportation Concerns Form](#)

[Application for Waiver of Fees](#)