STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The *School Transportation Regulation* and the *Education* Act identify the transportation services that school divisions in Alberta are required and funded to provide. In addition, Grande Yellowhead Public School Division (GYPSD) provides fee-based options for families wishing for bus services that are not funded but are made available through a cost recovery model that is subsided by the Board.

GYPSD funds full day kindergarten programming and it is required that kindergarten students register at their attendance area school. Registration to attend non-attendance area school must be approved by principals at both the attendance area and non-attendance area schools See Administrative Procedures 300 and 305.

School registration is confirmed through PowerSchool before students are scheduled on a transportation service area route.

Definitions:

- **Attendance Area**: the attendance area established by the Board for a school.
- **Attendance Area School**: primary residence is within the established attendance area for a specific school.
- **Transportation Service Area:** the area surrounding a school in which the Board has established school bus routes.
- **Out of Area (School of Choice):** parent/guardian applies to send their child to a non-attendance area school within their ward.
- **Resident Student**: resides within the Alberta Education established attendance boundary for GYPSD.
- **Non-resident Student**: resides outside of the Alberta Education established attendance boundary for GYPSD.
- **Cooperative Busing**: GYPSD has an agreement to transport other school division students to their schools within GYPSD's Alberta Education determined attendance boundary.
- **Alternate** (Reserved Second Seat): parent/guardian requests a seat be held open on an additional bus to go to an alternate address – applies to both eligible and ineligible riders.
- **Emergency Ride Request**: parent/guardian requests transportation for a non-registered or registered rider to access a different bus for emergency childcare.
- **Parent Provided Transportation**: a Board may, instead of providing transportation under Section 59.1 (1) enter into an agreement with a parent/guardian.

Specifically

1. All riders must be registered by June 30th for the next school year. Kindergarten riders and students in Grades 1-12 will only be permitted access on a bus if they are registered and if any applicable fees and/or outstanding fees have been paid.
2. Eligible Students

   2.1 Alberta Education will provide funding for eligible students, defined as:

2.1.1 A student who resides 2.4 kilometers or more from their attending school as per the *School Transportation Regulation; and*

2.1.2 A student that has been assessed and identified as requiring specialized supports and services under Section 11(4) of the *Education Act* and requires transportation to and from school.

2.1.3 Beginning in September 2023, Boards who are able to accommodate new riders can implement the new eligible **distance** criteria, **not mandatory** until September 2025, which is:

2.1.3.1 A child in kindergarten and students in Grade 1 through 6 who reside 1.0 kilometer or more from their attending school*,* and;

2.1.3.2 A student in Grade 7 through 12 who resides 2.0 kilometres or more from their attending school.

2.2 The Board may enter a parent/guardian provided transportation agreement, consistent with the funding approved by Alberta Education, within the provisions of Section 59.1(1) of the *Education Act*.

3. Options for Fee-Based Bus Services (See Appendix A)

3.1 Ineligible Student Service

3.1.1 Due to the changes in eligibility criteria, there will be limited seats available for ineligible service: availability will not be known until after September 30th.

3.1.2 Ineligible students are:

3.1.2.1 Children in kindergarten and students in Grade 1 through 6 who reside less than 1.0 kilometer from their attending school.

3.1.2.2 Students in Grades 7 through 12 who reside less than 2.0 kilometres from their attending school.

3.1.3 Requests for ineligible ridership, as received by Transportation Services, will be determined at the end of September and families will be informed if there is a seat available in October.

3.1.4 Families must pay the ineligible service fee in full prior to the student boarding the bus.

3.2 Reserved Second Seat

3.2.1 Due to changes to eligibility, there is limited availability of extra seats.

3.2.1.1 Requests for a **second seat** to an additional address is an unfunded service.

3.2.1.2 Requests will be determined at the end of September and families will be informed **if** there is a seat available in October.

3.2.1.3 Families must pay the Reserved Second Seat Service fee **in full** before the student can access transportation on the bus.

3.3 Out of Jurisdiction

3.3.1 GYPSD resident student is transported to a school outside of the Alberta Education established attendance boundary for Grande Yellowhead Public School Division;

3.3.2 Approved applications for bus service to an Out of Jurisdiction school, received by June 30th, will be assigned if:

3.3.2.1 there is seat space available on the route bus;

3.3.2.2 There is no significant diversion of the bus from the regular route, and

3.3.2.3 All applicable fees have been paid in full.

4. Out of Area Transportation Service is only provided within the ward.

   4.1 Following approval from the principals of both the attendance area and out of area school, the parent/guardian has the choice to:

      4.1.1 Provide the transportation for their child(ren) to and from the out of area school; or

      4.1.2 Apply for bus service:

         4.1.2.1 Priority will be given to eligible students attending their attendance area school.

         4.1.2.2 Approved applications for bus service to attend an out of area school, received by June 30th, will be assigned if:
            - There is seat space available on the transportation service area bus; and
            - There is no significant diversion from the regular route.

5. Access for **Emergency** Transportation Services

   5.1 Transportation Services does not provide busing for non-registered riders.

      5.1.1 Families may request a single ride for a non-registered student if there is an emergency with childcare.

   5.2 Families may request a single ride for a registered student on a different bus in the case of emergency childcare.

   5.3 The request will be considered:

      5.3.1 If seat space is available on the bus.

      5.3.2 Contact from either the parent/guardian or the principal to Transportation Services with information that includes:

         1. the student's name and school,
         2. emergency contact information,
         3. where they are going,
         4. name of the adult that will be receiving the child,
         5. which bus they are traveling on, and
         6. reason for emergency request.

   5.4 The driver will be informed by Transportation Services that the student has consent to ride the bus.

   5.5 The bus will not deviate from its normal route or time, nor will it make special stops for pick up or drop off.

6. **Fees** for transportation service options are determined each year by Board resolution prior to the commencement of the next school year as identified in Appendix A.

   6.1 All fees must be paid prior to any student accessing an unfunded bus service.

   6.2 Transportation fees are applicable to all students requesting unfunded services at any time between September 1 and June 30.

   6.3 To support GYPSD parent/guardians who encounter financial hardship, the Division may reduce the fee required.

6.3.1 Students will only be allowed on the bus if fees have been paid or a fee reduction/exemption has been approved.

6.3.1.1 Download and submit **Form 505-04** to the Secretary Treasurer, with documentation demonstrating financial difficulty. Confidentiality will be respected.

6.3.1.2 Reductions will be prorated based on the prior year's total taxable household income which falls within ten percent (±10%) of the Statistics Canada Low Income Cut-off for five (5) person households, in areas under thirty thousand (30,000) people.

6.3.1.3 Out-of-Division families must apply to their school division for fee support.

6.4 No refunds will be made except in cases where the student no longer rides the bus. The refund will be paid on a pro-rated basis until April 15, after which no refunds will be made.

6.5 Transportation fees will be collected by Transportation Services.

7. The School Principal is responsible for:

7.1 Ensuring that information on Transportation Services – including attendance area schools and unfunded services – is given to all families during pre-enrollment process;

7.2 Directing a non-attendance area registration request back to the attendance area school as per AP 305;

7.2.1 A conversation must take place between the attendance area school principal and the non-attendance area school principal regarding an out of area school request;

7.2.2 Registration requests from families outside of the school attendance area are only approved after all requirements have been met as per AP 305 (2.1);

7.2.3 The final decision will be submitted in writing to the Office of the Superintendent and Transportation Services.

7.3 The supervision of students loading and unloading at the school;

7.4 Student conduct on the bus;

7.4.1 Assigning consequences and communicating the behaviour plan with the family and Transportation Services; and

7.4.2 Informing families of suspended services for any applicable reason.

8. Appeals related to the provision of transportation services will be resolved as follows:

8.1 If issues or concerns are not resolved, a written request may be submitted to the Director of Transportation Services.

8.2 Parents/guardians can appeal, in writing, within 10 school days, the decision of the Director of Transportation Services, to the Assistant Superintendent responsible for Transportation.

8.3 The decision of the Assistant Superintendent will be communicated to the family in writing.

8.4 The parents/guardians can appeal, in writing, the Assistant Superintendent's decision to the Superintendent of Schools.

8.5 The Superintendent's decision will be final.

9. Cooperative Busing

9.1 The Board may enter into an agreement with another Board to provide transportation services for students who attend that school division.

Legal Reference: Section 3, 7, 11, 31, 32, 33, 51, 52, 53, 59, 59.1, 222 Education Act
Fees Regulation 95/2019
School Transportation Regulation 96/2019
Funding Manual for School Authorities 2023/24

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