

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **How do we establish routes?**

Routes are established based on regulations from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) as well as our school district Board of Education policies. Regular Education buses are not to enter cul-de-sacs, dead end and closed loop streets and typically only travel along main thoroughfares.

For the 2017-2018 School Year the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has **reduced** student transportation funding by over 69%. This results in classroom funds being diverted to cover transportation costs no longer covered by DESE. In order to continue providing transportation free of charge, each bus must be filled as close to capacity as possible. To do this, routes need to be structured to pick up as many students as possible in the shortest amount of time. To accomplish this, we have put in place the following routing guidelines:

- Stops will be spaced:
  - Elementary – minimum of 500'
  - Secondary – minimum of 1,000'
- Buses will travel along main roads when possible and avoid entering: cul-de-sac, dead end and closed loop streets.
- Stops will be placed at intersections and other easily identifiable locations when possible.

We appreciate your patience, flexibility and understanding as bus stops may not be as convenient as in the past as we strive to minimize transportation costs to focus more funding into the classroom.

## **How far are students expected to walk to a stop?**

The Lee's Summit School District in accordance with state regulation has a school walk-zone of a ½ mile. Meaning students residing within ½ mile of their school of attendance are not provided district transportation. Following these guidelines students may walk up to ½ mile to their bus stop. As students increase in grade level and maturity, stop distances increase.

## **What time will the bus pick up and drop off my child?**

Due to the bus operating in conditions beyond our control such as weather, traffic congestion, road blockages, and mechanical issues we ask parents:

- Morning Pick Up
  - Regular Education: Have their child at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to the scheduled time and stay until 5 minutes after the scheduled time.
  - Special Needs, Great Beginnings Programs, Summit Ridge and other Specialized Routes: to have their child at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled time and stay until 10 minutes after the scheduled time.
- Afternoon Drop Off
  - We do not post drop off times for the same reasons as stated above and due to various reasons the buses may leave the schools at inconsistent times.
  - We request parents to be ready for the child at school dismissal time. As the year goes on times will become more consistent.

**Can my child ride the bus to his or her daycare/sitter a couple of days a week and then to my home the other days?**

For the safety of students, the district requires consistent transportation schedules. Inconsistent schedules cause confusion for students and staff resulting in an increased risk to students. For this reason, students must have a consistent weekly schedule with each day of the week going to a consistent location. "A student can be assigned to ride to daycare provider versus home as long as it meets the requirement of a consistent schedule.

**The bus drives right past my house. Why can't the bus stop to pick up/drop off my child?**

If we stopped the bus at every home that we drive past that has students residing in it, the buses would never get to school in the time allowed. In addition, every stop location has been reviewed to ensure it is as safe as possible for the students who utilize the location. There are several factors that are considered when establishing a stop such as; Is the street safe for students to cross with good visibility in both directions? Do buses and motorists have a good view of the stop from both directions?

**Why doesn't the bus come into my court, Dead-End Street or Cul-Da-Sac?**

This is one of the recommendations from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Courts are dangerous because of the large number of small children that play in courts. If basketball goals or vehicles are parked in the courts, there may not be enough room for the bus to successfully turn around without having to back up. Backing up can be dangerous in a school bus, especially if a small child were to run into the court. Backing up often results in accidents causing damage to the bus, personal vehicles, mailboxes and basketball goals.

**When does the district change bus stops?**

Bus stops are changed regularly to provide the most efficient routes possible. Major changes are implemented during the summer. However, if a problem or safety issue arises during the school year, immediate changes may be necessary. Typically, no route/stop change requests are processed the first 15 days of school to allow time for route and ridership data to be reviewed.

**Can my child ride the bus to his or her daycare/sitter a couple of days a week and then to my home the other days?**

For the safety of the student, the Lee's Summit School District limits the number of buses a student can be assigned to bus and/or stop. Inconsistent schedules cause confusion for the student, drivers and the teachers who are assisting students to the bus. In special cases, "Yes" a student can be assigned to **one** alternate bus and/or bus stop to accommodate a daycare need. It is always best if students ride the same bus home **every day** with the exception of a family emergency. Every situation must be approved through the principal of the student's school.

**I live in a new subdivision, when will transportation come into my subdivision?**

Transportation is provided to new subdivisions when the construction has progressed enough to allow the buses to travel safely, consistently through the streets without blockage or having to maneuver through large construction equipment or tight spaces.

**My child says he can't eat/drink on the bus. Why?**

Eating or drinking is not permitted in accordance with Board Policy JHCF for two reasons. First eating on the bus creates a choking hazard for students. When a driver is focused on the road appropriately, it would be very difficult to notice if a child was choking in his or her seat. The second reason is that some students have very severe food allergies and we would not want to compromise their safety.

**How do I appeal my bus stop location?**

All appeals should be submitted to Assistant Director of Transportation William “Bill” Sharp for review. Bus stop appeal forms are accessible via the Transportation Department link on the district web site. Appeals are reviewed by the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC has been trained and is knowledgeable of State and District guidelines that govern bus stop locations. Appeal Forms should be mailed to 500 SE Transport Drive, Lee’s Summit, MO 64081. Parents will be notified after the monthly meeting of the TAC decision.

**I have a child in High School, how does transportation work for them?**

Transportation for High School students is arranged using the same process as the Elementary and Middle School levels with the exception of changes. Changes in arrangements or activation as a regular rider are handled through your student’s school. Your school has Transportation Request Forms in the office.

**Can my student be dropped from the school bus roster?**

Yes, in accordance with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) all school districts must maintain accurate, active ridership rosters. DESE defines an active rider as a student that rides at least one time a week. Based on this the district is required to remove students that are not active riders. When this occurs parents are notified as well as the school. If your student will start riding consistently, please contact your school to have them changed from “In-Active” to “Active”.

**I would like to leave my student on the bus roster just in case they need a ride, can I do this?**

No, as outlined above the district is required to maintain accurate bus ridership rosters and will need to remove students that do not ride consistently.

**My student only needs to ride the bus a few times a year or when their car breaks down?**

For these cases, the schools may be able to issue a “One-Day Ride Pass” to accommodate them. Please be sure to send notification of this with your student and have them take it to the front office before **noon** so there is time to process and issue the pass. In some cases, a “One-Day Ride Pass” may not be available due to, location requested not currently being serviced, bus is at capacity, etc. Please call your school or Transportation Department for more details. In some cases, it may take 24-72 business hours to make arrangements.

**We have a family emergency and I need to drop off my students with a friend in the morning. They need to ride with their children in the morning. Is this possible?**

Yes, the District realizes family situations will occur and for this reason drivers are instructed to pick up all age appropriate students on the morning routes. Students typically will be asked to sit in the front and the driver will need their information (name, grade). Please be sure to send a note with your student if they will need to ride to the friend's home that afternoon. Student should take the note to the school's office before noon to get a “One-Day Ride Pass”

**For more information please log on to: <http://www.lsr7.org/schools/bus-transportation/>**