

## MEMO

To: NLESD West Region Central Zone Parents/Legal Guardians

From: Ian Sinclair, Manager of Student Transportation

Date: May 26, 2014

TOPIC: Bus Route Planning / Courtesy Seating

With the school year coming to an end in the near future and the 2014-2015 school year vast approaching, preparations have begun with respect to bus route planning for September. I want to take this opportunity to reiterate this planning process, as per the Department of Education Guidelines, so parents are fully aware of what to expect for the upcoming year.

Walk Zone: Less than 1.6 kilometres (1 mile) from school. The distance to a school is defined as the shortest route by a publicly maintained roadway from the driveway of the student's residence to the nearest accessible entrance to school property.

A student is eligible for transportation if his/her civic address is:

1. outside of the walk zone; and
2. within the boundary of the school's catchment area

Bus routes are determined/designed by the District based on the geographic location of all eligible students' civic addresses. Eligible students are then assigned to a specific route, as determined by the District, based on their civic address. A student is therefore only eligible for transportation on their assigned route.

A courtesy seat is a seat on a bus route for a student who has **not** been assigned to this route based on his/her civic address i.e. not eligible for student transportation on that route.

Approval of courtesy seat requests is the school administrator's responsibility.

Schools are encouraged to accommodate students where possible by approving courtesy seat requests after all students who are eligible for transportation have been assigned to the appropriate route based on their civic address.

A parent/legal guardian seeking a courtesy seat or a change in bus stop along a student's assigned bus route is required to complete a Courtesy Seat Request Form and submit it to the school.

The school administrator should wait until October 1<sup>st</sup> before approving courtesy seats as the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the school year is filled with numerous late registrations and student transfers. However, if it is clearly evident that all courtesy seat requests can be accommodated, the school administrator can approve requests prior to this date.

The following criteria must be considered prior to authorizing a courtesy seat:

1. There must be capacity on the bus;
2. An existing bus stop (for the given school year) should be used as the pickup/drop-off location;
3. This change in bus stop must be on a continuous/regular basis (minimum one week); and
4. Courtesy Seat Request (in writing) must be provided by the parent/legal guardian to the school with adequate notice

### **DAYCARES**

The District can accommodate daycare providers (add a bus stop) provided the following conditions are met:

- a. The daycare center must be a licensed facility in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Province
- b. The daycare must be on an established school bus route for the school
- c. There has to be capacity on the school bus
- d. The daycare has to be outside of the Walk Zone

In **extenuating circumstances**, throughout the school year students can avail of a second/alternate stop on a bus route if it is on a continuous/regular basis. (i.e. switch in Kindergarten cycle from mornings to afternoons, parent works away for an extended period of time, split families).

### **BUS STOPS**

A student's civic address should not be any farther than 500 metres from a bus stop unless the safety of surrounding road(s) does not allow for it for various reasons such as:

1. Road(s) not publicly maintained
2. Road(s) not wide enough
3. Road(s) do not have the appropriate grade level
4. Road(s) are on a steep hill

Hopefully this clarifies some of the guidelines surrounding student transportation for everyone.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all parents and students a safe and happy conclusion to the school year and summer which is right around the corner.

Thank you



Ian Sinclair