

## *Student Transportation Information for Families*

### **Transportation Eligibility**

Alberta Education has changed transportation eligibility and effective **September 1, 2024** the eligibility distance requirement will be lowered to the following distance:



- 1.0 km for grades K-6
- 2.0 km for grades 7-12

Horizon School Division has opted to introduce the new distance eligibility for the **2023-24** school year. Currently Horizon School Division is only obligated to transport students to their designated school if they reside 2.4 km or more away.

- Please note that transportation requests will be reviewed beginning **September 15, 2023**.

### **School of Choice**

Parents are entitled to register their children at the school of their choice, provided that the school can accommodate them. Transportation to a non-designated school is not guaranteed.

# School Bus Rules of Conduct

**Student safety is our number one priority, and the reason for the rules of conduct on buses.**

- Students must listen and respond to the bus driver's directions promptly and respectfully.
- Parents are responsible for their child's(ren) conduct while at the bus stop.
- Students/parents should inform the driver when an absence is expected from school.
- Students must remain seated when the bus is in motion.
- Students must be on time and waiting at their designated stop, 5 minutes prior to the arrival of the bus.
- Students must refrain from disruptive behaviors which could distract the bus driver from safely operating the bus (yelling, screaming, fighting, throwing items, etc.)
- Students shall respect the driver and all other passengers on the bus. Disrespectful behaviors will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the bus (rude or disrespectful behavior, profane language, bullying, etc.)
- Students must not be in the possession of tobacco, vapes, drugs, or alcohol on the bus.
- Students must not bring items on the bus which may cause injury to others or damage to the bus.
- Students who vandalize a bus will be held responsible for the cost of repairs and may lose riding privileges.
- Students are prohibited from playing electronic audio equipment on a bus if it is audible to anyone other than the student.



- Students must be appropriately dressed for the weather. In the event of an emergency (during winter months) children should be dressed in winter coats, snow boots, gloves, etc.
- Students with special needs should have the parent and school administration working together to notify the Transportation Coordinator of special circumstances and/or concerns prior to the student's initial use of the bus.

## **Student Misconduct**

To ensure the safety of all persons on the bus, students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and adhere to the rules of the bus. Drivers will file a misconduct report on any student behavior that is disruptive to the safe operation of the bus. Parents will be contacted by their bus driver when a report has been submitted regarding their child's behavior. The Transportation Coordinator will then work with the School Principal to determine and document a suitable course of action.



Parents are asked to support their child's bus driver in teaching students appropriate conduct on the school bus.

## **Parents on the Bus**

Parents are not allowed on regularly scheduled school bus runs. If there is an issue that a parent would like to discuss with the bus driver, they are welcome to contact the driver by telephone either directly or through the


First Student Office – (403)-223-5670.

Harassing the bus driver or other bus students is a serious offense, which may be reported to the police and/or RCMP.

### **Bus Cancellation and/or Delay**

In the event of adverse weather or road conditions, your bus could be delayed. If the delay will be greater than 10 minutes parents will be contacted through SchoolMessenger. Please ensure you have signed up to receive messages. If the delay is less than 10 minutes no alert will be sent.



If individual bus routes are cancelled, parents will be contacted by their bus driver. Information on cancellations or delays may also be found by clicking on the  icon on Horizon School Division's website [www.horizon.ab.ca](http://www.horizon.ab.ca).

Bus routes will not run when the temperature reaches -40C with (or without) windchill. Parents will be contacted through SchoolMessenger. The Horizon School Division website will also be updated. Local Radio Stations also provide updates.

If schools are closed in the geographic area, **school bus drivers do not contact individual families**, parents will

need to:

- Check the Horizon School Division Website [www.horizon.ab.ca](http://www.horizon.ab.ca).
- Listen to local radio stations, as they will announce any cancellations.
- Check the Horizon School Division Facebook Page.
- If your bus route is cancelled due to weather in the morning, it will be cancelled for the afternoon.

### **Oversized or Personal Items**

According to the Alberta Traffic Safety Act (Standard 10 – Cargo Securement) students must be able to hold their school items on their laps, or securely wedge their belongings under their seat, without encroaching into another student’s space, protruding out of the seating area, into the aisle, or blocking the emergency exits. Large band or musical instruments, sports equipment, such as skateboards, baseball bats, lacrosse sticks, hockey bags, curling brooms, skis, hockey sticks, and toboggans are not allowed on the bus. Students are also not allowed to bring pets, or other animals/insects with them. Parents will have to arrange to transport these items for their children.



## Unauthorized Stops/Additional Riders

The Division **cannot** accommodate transportation requests related to babysitting arrangements, extra-curricular activities, lessons, sports, or after school jobs. Bus drivers may only provide service to and from the child's home address, once approved by the division office. If special circumstances arise that require special consideration you may contact the transportation coordinator at the division office. All requests should be made 48 hours in advance to ensure seat availability.

## Updating Information

**It is critical that your school and bus driver have your child's current contact information. Parents should contact their School Secretary immediately if a change occurs to contact information.**



This includes:

- Updates to your address, phone numbers, custody, etc.
- Medical information as needed
- Emergency contact information
- Information regarding changes to service (e.g. moving, vacation, absence, etc.)

## Contacting Your Driver

If you need to speak to your driver to notify them that your child will not be riding the bus or make any other arrangements, please call your driver **prior to 7:00 am**. If you are not able to contact the driver in advance, you will need to call the First Student office and they will relay the information to your driver when it is safe to do so.



***DO NOT text your driver with this information***, as the driver is not able to check their phone once they are on the road (**or after 7:00 am**). This also creates a distraction for the driver which is unsafe for your child(ren) and other passengers.

## Prior to Boarding the Bus

- If your child appears to be ill, please keep them home.

## While Riding

### LOADING PROCEDURES

- Students will load from the back of the bus to the front of the bus. Unloading students will start at the front of the bus and will proceed to the back of the bus.

## ASSIGNED SEATS

- All riders on all routes will be assigned seats.

## Important Information Regarding Your Child's Route

<b>Your Route Number:</b> _____	<b>Driver's Name:</b> _____
<b>Your Pick-Up Time:</b> _____	<b>Driver's Phone #:</b> _____

## Important Numbers for Contact

Regarding	Office to Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Changes to service related to a vacation or extended absence.</li> <li>- Items left on the bus</li> </ul>	<b>First Student Canada, Taber Branch:</b> (403) 223-5670 *First Student has a 24-hour answering machine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Changes to service related to a vacation or extended absence</li> <li>- Transportation questions or concerns related to a driver, route, other riders, etc.</li> </ul>	<b>Horizon School Division, Transportation Coordinator:</b>  Patricia Petronech  (403) 223-3547 ext. 10126
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Registration for Transportation Services</li> <li>- Address Changes</li> <li>- Updates to Emergency Contact Information</li> <li>- Updates to Medical</li> </ul>	<b>Your School Secretary:</b>  MRS. <span style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 2px;">Phyllis Loewen</span>  403-654-4654



Regarding	Office to Contact
Information	