

TRANSPORTATION FAQ'S

CANON CITY SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION OFFICE

Canon City Schools Transportation Office receives many phone calls each day. Here is a list of FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS to assist you with answers to the most commonly asked questions. If your question is not answered here, please do not hesitate to phone 276-5818 or 276-5817 and your question will be directed to the appropriate party.

Questions

Why does my child need to fill out an acknowledgement sheet (bus pass) at the beginning of each school year?

Why is my child's bus late?

Why can't you call when you know the bus will be late?

Why can't you come further into my subdivision or come closer to my home?

Why does my child have a seat assignment?

Why can't my child get off wherever they want in the afternoon?

How do you decide when it is too dangerous for school buses to transport students to school due to inclement weather? Who decides? How is the public notified?

Why are there only 30 students riding some buses and my child's bus is crowded?

How are the walking zones set, who sets them and why are they so far away?

What is a conditional school bus rider and how do I register my child/children for the program?

Special Needs Transportation

How can I receive transportation for my special needs child?

How long does it take to set up transportation for my special needs child?

What is the average time length of the ride for my special needs child?

Why can't last minute changes be granted?

Why can't my regular education child ride the same bus with my special needs child?

Can I reach someone in the Transportation Department before 8 am?

Answers

Why does my child need to fill out an acknowledge sheet (bus pass) at the beginning of each school year?

We strive to have the correct information on each of the student that we transport so that we can assign the student the correct bus stop, so that we can have information on file in case of an emergency situation, and so that we can have the correct number of students assigned to each bus. Some of the information may change over the course of the year due to the changes in the family structure. Each year at the time of registration, one or two bus drivers will be at each school location to help fill out the acknowledgement form and to answer any questions that may arise at that time.

Why is my child's bus late?

Weather, traffic, driver absenteeism, maintenance difficulties, and unforeseen incidents can be responsible for delays in the arrival of school buses in the morning and afternoon. The bus drivers are allowed 5 minutes before and 5 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time to compensate for these problems. That is why it is imperative that you have your child at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. Drivers do a comprehensive check on each bus before beginning each route and sometimes find mechanical problems that can cause delays and require another bus for that day. This can cause the bus to be unpunctual. Please know that we are doing everything possible to have all buses running on schedule each day. In the event that your bus does not arrive as scheduled, please allow ten to fifteen minutes before calling the transportation office or the school.

Why did you suspend my child from riding the bus?

Behavioral expectations on the school bus are much like those in the classroom. Then, factor in the mobility of that "classroom" and traffic, added noise and the size of the "classroom" and you have a potential catastrophe if there are not clear expectations and enforcement. The expectations on the bus revolve around the individual rights of every person on the bus, including the driver and the collective rights of students and driver as it pertains to SAFETY. Anything that jeopardizes the safety of individuals on the bus is viewed as serious.

Most drivers have Bus rules or Expectations posted on the bus and the rules and regulations for the students are handed out to the parents at the time of registration. When there is a serious infraction, a referral is turned in to the school administrators, who are responsible for contacting the student and parent to solve the lack of compliance with bus expectations. The school administrator is solely responsible for consequences based on the incident as described by the driver and the student. Problems of a less serious manner are usually handled by the driver with an assigned seat in the front of the bus and a possible phone call to the parents. Our goal is to never deny any student transportation to and from school, but we must maintain safety for all students and bus drivers.

Why can't you call when the bus will be late?

That is simply a numbers problem. There can be as many as 80 students on each bus. That is at least 80 phone calls in a short time to parents who are quite possibly already at the bus top with their children. It is just not feasible. Please know that there is a bus on the way and that we will do everything possible to transport your child to and from school in a timely manner each day.

Why can't you come further into my subdivision or closer to my home?

School buses come in various sizes. Our route buses average being 39 to 40 feet long and weigh over 30,000 pounds, they are 12-13 feet high and 8-9 feet wide. Some of our cul-de-sacs- and streets cannot accommodate the large buses. We have streets with no sidewalks, irrigation ditches, and poor visibility issues. We have many streets that are on hills and are not safe for the buses in inclement weather. All of these factors are taken into consideration when the bus stops are chosen. There is also a time factor. We cannot have a bus stop at each home and still get the students to school on time. Please know that we design school bus routes to be safe and as convenient as possible for the parents and students.

Why does my child have a seat assignment?

It is up to each individual driver whether or not to assign seats to each individual. Each driver usually does separate the students by age and grade. Seat assignments are a positive way for the ride to be consistent and safe. The front seats are usually reserved for the students with behavior problems and are assigned those seats for a period of time.

Why can't my child get off the bus wherever they want in the afternoon?

To avoid multiple problems, the driver requires a note, signed by the parent and school administrator to alter the destination of students. This allows the drivers to focus on safety and driving instead of having to decide whether the student should be allowed to get off the bus at a destination other than their own stop. This policy avoids confusion and the chance of students getting lost or running away.

How do you decide when it is too dangerous for school buses to transport students to school due to inclement weather? Who decides? How is the public notified?

The superintendant of schools is responsible for the final decision to close schools or delay the start of schools due to inclement weather. The decision is made after staff report from various positions in the township and rural areas regarding road conditions. Other factors considered are school facility information, (heat, water, power), temperature and wind chill, snow and ice buildup on main and secondary roads, and weather forecasts and predictions. A decision will be made and the public will be notified as soon as possible. The following media sites will carry that information to the public.

Radio: KRLN (1400)/am or 104.5/fm

TV: KOAA (channel 5), KKTU (channel 11), and KRDO (channel 13)

Why are there only 30 students riding some buses and my child's bus is crowded?

Decisions regarding each bus route are made by careful planning based on information from the school registration, previous similar routes, and Department of Transportation data. Most of our routes are fixed routes developed from the previous year and changes to them are made after the first few weeks of school, if not sooner. The more current information we are given, the better decisions regarding specific routes we can make. Distance from school, number of buses and drivers, and grouping of students and neighborhoods are factors considered also. Sometimes it is simply not possible to have the exact number of students on every run. We also consider the fact that many students who ride the bus also play on the sports teams for their schools. During the seasons that their sports are taking place, the students traditionally do not ride the bus because of before and after school practices for their teams.

How are the walking zones set, who sets them and why are they so far away?

For many years, the walk/ride boundaries of this district were 1 1/2 radial miles for High School and Middle School, and one mile for elementary schools. When the budget constraints hit this school district a few years ago, we were forced to change the boundaries to 2 radial miles for High School and Middle School students and 1 1/2 miles for elementary schools, in order to keep providing transportation to as many students as possible. Radial miles means that the boundary goes in a complete circle around the schools, so even though a parent may have to drive 2.1 miles to the school, they are still within the 2 mile radial walking boundary. At that time, we implemented what we call the "conditional rider" program.

What is a conditional school bus rider and how do I register my child/children for that program?

When this school district had to change the walk boundaries, it was decided to try to still provide bus service to as many of the students who are now inside the walk boundary as possible. We implemented what we call the "conditional rider" program. If after we get all the students who are going to ride the bus registered and there are some seats left on that particular bus, the students who reside inside the walk boundary are offered those seats. The students and parents would need to come to the transportation department and fill out the correct paperwork to sign up for it. Those students could then walk to the nearest established bus stop and get a ride to and from school. It is understood that if the bus fills with students that reside outside the walk boundary, the conditional rider would have to be removed from bus service until another seat on the bus becomes available.

Please find at the end of these questions an acknowledge form that can be filled out and faxed to our transportation department at 276-6943. There is also a copy enclosed of the general bus rules that we are asking you to read over with your student(s) before riding the bus and a copy of the incident report that is used for behaviors that need to be addressed.

CANON CITY SCHOOLS

GENERAL BUS RULES

Board Policy 813

Transportation is available to those pupils who live beyond a designated area from school. Rules and regulations governing transportation are established for the operation of the school buses. Transportation is considered a service by the school district, and all students must abide by all rules and regulations. Students who violate rules and regulations are subject to suspension of their bus riding privileges.

Bus Rules

1. Students are required to follow the bus driver's instructions at all times.
2. Students must be prompt at the bus stop. When crossing the roadway to meet or leave the bus, students must cross 10 feet in front of the bus. Students shall wait for a signal from the bus driver before crossing in front of the bus. (1CCR 301-26, 4204-R-255.01)
3. Students are to be seated, facing forward while riding the bus. Both feet shall be on the floor. Students shall not open or close windows without permission. Heads and arms must be kept inside the bus at all times. (1 CCR 301-26-4204-R-225.01)
4. Any behavior which jeopardizes the safety of the passengers or driver is prohibited. i.e., use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, exiting rear door, inflicting bodily harm, as well as vandalism and littering. (CCR-301-26-4204-R-223-01)
5. Respect the driver, others and yourself. B.A.G., (Community Based Standards)
6. Students may talk quietly while on the bus. Students must be quiet at railroad crossings. Foul language and/or obscene gestures will not be tolerated. (1CCR-301-26-4204-R-209.01(d))
7. Students should always be at the bus stop 5 minutes before designated pickup time. Each driver has a leeway time of 5 minutes before designated pickup time and 5 minutes after designated pickup time to compensate for circumstances that may arise, i.e., bad weather, road construction, etc.

A sample "School Bus Incident Report" is shown on the reverse side of this page.

SCHOOL BUS INCIDENT REPORT
CAÑON CITY SCHOOLS
CAÑON CITY, COLORADO 81212

DATE: _____, 200__

Student: _____

School: _____

Grade: _____

Driver: _____

Route: _____

A.M. _____

P.M. _____

Dear Parents:

The purpose of this report is to inform you of an incident involving your child on the school bus which is a violation of the rules listed below. Bus riding is a privilege which may be revoked. You are urged to support the disciplinary action/consequences taken and to discuss this with your child to prevent further reoccurrence.

☐ VERBAL WARNING(S)

☐ 1ST OFFENSE

☐ 2ND OFFENSE

☐ 3RD OFFENSE

MINOR VIOLATIONS

- ☐ Spitting
- ☐ Excessive noise
- ☐ Excessive horseplay
- ☐ False Identification
- ☐ Eating or drinking on the bus
- ☐ Leaving seat/standing while bus is in motion
- ☐ Squirt guns/liquid type containers in any form except those intended for lunch box use
- ☐ Profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, obscene gestures or possession of unacceptable material
- ☐ Riding or attempting to ride any bus while under suspension
- ☐ Riding unassigned bus without permission or using unassigned bus stop
- ☐ Other violations as reported by the driver or principal

MAJOR VIOLATIONS

- ☐ Hanging out windows
- ☐ Throwing/shooting of any object
- ☐ Physical and/or verbal aggression against any person
- ☐ Use of tobacco or any controlled substance
- ☐ Vandalism to bus (restitution will be made)
- ☐ Squirt guns/liquid containers in any form except those intended for lunch box
- ☐ Holding onto/or attempting to hold onto any portion of the exterior of the bus
- ☐ Lighting of matches, fireworks or any flammable object or substance
- ☐ Unauthorized entering or leaving bus through emergency door/tampering with bus equipment
- ☐ Any violation committed on any bus outside of regular transportation to and from school (activity, field trip, shuttles, etc.) a minimum penalty of a Major Violation 1st offense
- ☐ Other violations as reported by the driver or principal

SPECIFIC DETAILS: _____

Driver Signature

DISCIPLINARY ACTION/CONSEQUENCES TAKEN:

Elementary Schools

- ☐ Level I - Reported 1st Offense of Minor Violation
Written warning-Conference with student and phone call to parent.
- ☐ Level II - Reported 2nd Offense of Minor Violation
Conference with student, call to parents, suspension from bus 1-1.5 days.
- ☐ Level III - Reported 3rd Offense of Minor Violation or 2nd Offense of Major Violation
Conference with student, call to parents, suspension from bus 3-3.5 days.
- ☐ Level IV - Reported 4th Offense of Minor Violation or 3rd Offense of Major Violation
Conference with student, call to parents, 1 week suspension from the bus, follow-up letter to parents informing them that on the next report student will be suspended from the bus for 45 days.
- ☐ Level V - Reported 5th Offense of Minor Violation or 4th Offense of Major Violation
Conference with student, principal, parent(s), and bus driver present and suspension from bus for 45 days.

Secondary Schools

- ☐ Level I - Reported 1st Offense of Minor Violation
Conference with student, call to parents, suspension from bus 3-5 days.
- ☐ Level II - Reported 2nd Offense of Minor Violation or 1st Offense of Major Violation
Conference with student, call to parents, suspension from bus 10 days. Follow-up letter to parents informing them that on the next report student will be suspended from the bus for 45 days.
- ☐ Level III - Reported 3rd Offense of Minor Violation or 2nd Offense of Major Violation
Conference with student, principal, parent(s), and bus driver present and suspension from bus for 45 days.

COMMENTS: _____

Administrator Signature

Distribution: White-Parents Yellow-Transportation Pink-School Goldenrod-Bus Driver

FORM #B-039
11/01

Special needs transportation

How can I receive transportation for my special needs child?

A committee of people already involved in a student's education determines transportation needs for that student. After it has been determined that the student would benefit from being transported apart from mainstreamed students, the special services director and/or the case manager will complete and send a special needs transportation request to our office for processing.

How long does it take to set up transportation for my special needs child?

From the time we receive the information for a new student on our special needs buses until we can finally start picking them up is three days. The reasons we need that time is that we may need to change the pickup and dropoff times for other students to accommodate the new student, we will need to notify all the families of the new times. We also like to take the time to visit with the parent(s)/ caregiver to familiarize ourselves with any special things we may need to know to make the student more comfortable on the bus, and to meet the student.

What is the average length of the ride for special needs students?

Our goal for students within the Canon City School District is to have the students be on the bus less than one hour. So far, we have been able to meet that goal. We have two special needs routes that service that go to six different schools, and our drivers are very good about building their routes so that each student is on the bus no longer than absolutely necessary.

Why can't last minute changes be granted?

Many of our special needs students have a set time to be picked up and dropped off, some of these students need assistance when they get on and off the bus and must have a responsible party to help them load and unload. There are set times for these students each day and making last minute changes would interfere with the schedules for these people.

Why can't my regular education child-children ride the same bus with my special needs child?

Special needs transportation is granted in accordance with a student's needs as a related service to the IEP (individualized education plan). Students who receive an education without an IEP are provided transportation through conventional means if they reside within the busing area boundaries. We do try to accommodate the families by allowing some of the regular education students ride the bus with their siblings, but that is not always a possibility because we simply do not have the room on the buses.

Can I reach someone at the Transportation Department before 7:30 A. M.?

Yes, the bus garage is open at 5:00 A.M. during the days that school is in session and someone is here to answer questions until 4:45 P.M. You may call 276-5818 or 276-5817.