



Student Transportation on Buses

The School District recognizes there are a number of challenges in safely operating a transit system in the context of COVID-19. The School District also recognizes that for many families the student transportation system is the only means with which to get their children to and from school each day.

The health and welfare of our students and staff is of utmost importance and as such, we will be considering mitigation strategies in the organization of our system for the upcoming school year.

Proposed Risk Mitigation Strategies for 2020-2021 Transportation Services

Illness and Self-Assessment

- Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, [COVID-19](#), or other infectious respiratory diseases before sending them to school. **If a child has any symptoms, they must not take the bus or go to school.**

Reduced Capacity

- At this time we are asking that only those families that require bussing [apply](#). Where possible we are encouraging private vehicle use. If you have already applied for a bus pass for the coming school year and you don't intend to use it please withdraw your application by emailing transportation@sd47.bc.ca
- Each year we construct our bus routes with [eligible riders](#) (those inside school [catchment areas](#) but outside established walk limits). We then consider [courtesy rider](#) applications for any routes with surplus capacity (room on the bus). For the time being, in an effort to reduce the number of students on each bus, we expect that the opportunities to add courtesy riders will be very limited.

Physical Distancing

- Where possible, bus line up areas will be set up to prevent crowding, and allow for physical distancing of 2m.
- In some instances there may be consideration for the installation of a physical barrier made of transparent materials between the driver and students.
- To reduce the number of close in-person interactions on school buses, the following strategies are being considered:
 - Use of consistent or assigned seating arrangements.
 - Up-to-date passenger and seating arrangement lists will be kept to share with public health should contact tracing need to occur.
 - The seating arrangement may be altered when necessary to support student health and safety (e.g. accommodating children with a physical disability, responding to behavioural issues, etc.)
 - Consideration for the order students typically load and offload to support buses being loaded from back to front and offloaded from front to back.
 - If space is available, students will each have their own seat (unless sharing with a member of their household or learning group) and sit separated side to side and front to back.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Buses used for transporting students will be cleaned and disinfected according to the guidance provided in the [BCCDC's Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings document](#). Additional guidance is available from [Transport Canada](#).
- Bus drivers should clean their hands often, including before and after completing trips. They are encouraged to regularly use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol during trips.
- Students should clean their hands before they leave home to take the bus, when they leave school prior to taking the bus, and when they get home.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Students in grades **5 to 12** are required to wear non-medical masks when they are on the bus. Re-useable masks will be made available. Exceptions will be made for students who cannot wear masks for medical reasons.
- Non-medical masks are **not recommended** for **younger students** due to the increased likelihood they will touch their face and eyes, as well as require assistance to properly put on and take off their mask (requiring increased close personal contact from school staff).
- Bus drivers are required to wear a non-medical mask, a face covering or a face shield (in which case a non-medical mask should be worn in addition to the face shield) when they cannot maintain physical distance or be behind a physical barrier in the course of their duties.