

TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

INTRODUCTION

Wolf Creek Public Schools recognizes that modifications to the general transportation structure are needed to ensure that students with special needs, who cannot, because of the nature and severity of their specific needs, use the regular transportation services - eligibility is based on their inability to ride a regular bus, and the determination of this inability is based on the process outlined in this procedure.

It is also important to recognize that this procedure should only be contemplated after all avenues for student transportation in Administrative Procedure 550 - (General Transportation of Students) have been considered and deemed inappropriate. That document also contemplates a modification to the transportation system as follows:

Administrative Procedure 550 - (General Transportation of Students) permits a modification of the pick up and drop off points within guidelines established by Wolf Creek Public Schools. In order to provide a similar framework of accommodation for students with special needs these same guidelines have been added to Administrative Procedure 550.2 effective for the 2015 – 2016 school year.

The attached appendix provides additional detail around the provision of transportation options for students with special needs.

Procedures

1. Special Transportation, when approved, is typically provided from the student's legal residence to school and back. This process can only be modified in accord with the guidelines laid out in the attached Waiver - Addendum A550.
2. Although not explicitly stated in *the School Act* or *Student Transportation Regulation*, jurisdictions are expected to provide "for" the transportation of students whose **significant needs** prevent them from getting safely to and from school, even if they reside less than 2.4 km.

This transportation service could be in the form of a regular bus, a special transportation bus or some other form of specialized transportation such as a local handi-bus service, taxi or parent-provided transportation agreement. Administrators must refer all cases requiring special consideration to the Coordinator/Directors of Inclusive Learning

Services to determine the most appropriate means of transportation for the students identified.

3. If a student with special needs is not capable of riding a regular bus the following process will apply:
 - 3.1. If the Administrator has reason to believe the student cannot ride the regular bus, they must contact a Coordinator/Director of Inclusive Learning Services to engage in a conversation about the student's needs and the most appropriate transportation service required. An administrator does not have the authority to determine if a student needs specialized transportation services.
 - 3.2. Inclusive Learning Services personnel will then determine whether the student can in fact ride the regular bus or needs another form of transportation. This determination also considers what transportation options are available to suit the student's needs.
 - 3.3. If it is determined that the student qualifies for an alternative form of transportation then Inclusive Learning Services will notify the Transportation Department of their decision and any needed accommodations.
 - 3.4. At this point Transportation Services will explore the proposed options and determine the most appropriate mode of transportation and start date for the service.
 - 3.5. Transportation notifies the School Administrator of the decision and indicates that the Transportation Department will contact the family with specifics around the transportation agreement including route structure.
 - 3.6. The School Administrator and/or Parents have the responsibility of contacting the Transportation Department regarding any students who transfer out of the Division or have a change in transportation requirements.
4. As noted in AP 550 (1.1), transportation service will only be provided from the residence of the Eligible Student to the designated school and back to the residence of the student **unless special application has been made by the parent or legal guardian under the guidelines of Addendum A550**. In these circumstances a student(s) can be picked up and dropped off at another location but only on the route established by the Wolf Creek Transportation Department. **This agreement must stand for the entire year** and no other pickup and drop off locations can be added to this process. In other words there cannot be alternating pick up/drop off points at the parent residence and the newly selected site. Once the form is filled out and delivered to the Transportation Manager the selected drop off/pick up location will be checked to ensure it is a safe location for students, the bus driver and other riders who may be on the bus at that time. Once the pick up/drop off site is deemed safe by the Transportation Manager the alternative location will be considered as an addition to the current route structure. As is noted in all

transportation guidelines the Transportation Manager has final discretion relative to approval of the alternative pick up/drop off site.

To ensure that our bus travel times do not unduly affect the pick up and drop off times for other students no more than five (5) alternate pick up/drop off locations per route can be authorized by the Transportation Department. These requests will be assessed and approved on a first come first served basis.

Reference: Wolf Creek Inclusive Learning Services Transportation of Students with Special Needs Guidelines (Appendix A550.2)

Adopted: February 2015

Revised: September 2015

APPENDIX A550

WAIVER & RELEASE

STUDENT DROP OFF AT LOCATION OTHER THAN STUDENT'S HOME

IMPORTANT NOTICE

BY SIGNING THIS FORM YOU, THE NAMED STUDENT(S) AND OTHERS ARE GIVING UP THE RIGHT TO BRING LEGAL ACTION AGAINST THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF WOLF CREEK SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 72 AND ITS SERVANTS, AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, ELECTED OFFICIALS AND INSURERS.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND WAIVER OF RIGHT OF ACTION

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED RELEASORS, BEING THE PARENTS AND GUARDIANS OF THE STUDENT(S) NAMED HEREIN (Referred to in the signed portion of the agreement) AGREE TO BE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR AND WAIVE ANY RIGHT OF ACTION ON THE PART OF EITHER OF US OR THE NAMED STUDENT(S) against The Board of Trustees of Wolf Creek School Division No. 72 (WCPS) and its servants, agents, employees, elected officials and insurers (the RELEASES) in respect of any injury, death, loss or damage that either of us or the named Student(s) may sustain directly or indirectly as a result of the named Student(s) being dropped off at the location described in Schedule "A" to this Waiver and Release.

In consideration of WCPS acceding to the request in Schedule "A" the undersigned agree:

- TO ASSUME AND ACCEPT ALL RISKS, whether foreseeable or not, arising out of, associated with, or directly or indirectly arising from the drop of the named Student(s) at the location described in Schedule "A", even though such risks may have been caused by the negligence of the RELEASES or any of them;
- TO BE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY INJURY, DEATH, LOSS OF ANY KIND, OR DAMAGE TO ME OR MY PROPERTY OR FOR ANY INJURY, DEATH, LOSS OF ANY KIND OR DAMAGE TO THE PROPERTY OF THE NAMED STUDENT(S), whether foreseeable or not, arising out of, associated with, or directly or indirectly arising from the drop of the named Student(s) at the location described in Schedule "A", even though such risks may have been caused by the negligence of the RELEASES;
- TO RELEASE, for themselves and the named Student(s), the RELEASES and their respective successors, assigns, heirs, and personal representatives, of and from any liability in respect of any costs, demands, claims, actions or proceedings of any kind, including claims for injury, death, loss or damage, (each a "Claim") whether those Claims are foreseeable or not, even though such Claims may have been caused by or contributed to by the negligence of any of the RELEASES, which the undersigned and the named Student(s) or any personal representative, heir, executor or administrator of the undersigned or the named Student(s), now has, ever had, or can, shall or may have in the future, in law or in equity or under any contract or statute, arising from or relating to the drop of the named Student(s) at the location set out in Schedule "A", and the undersigned, for themselves and the named Student(s) completely absolve the RELEASES of all responsibility for such Claims even though such Claims may have been caused by or contributed to by the negligence of any of the RELEASES.

The undersigned agrees that they have read and understood this Waiver and Release and have signed this Waiver and Release freely and voluntarily after taking such independent advice as each may have considered necessary.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 201__ at _____ in the Province of Alberta.

Parent

Witness

(Print Name)

Parent

Witness

(Print Name)

Names of Student(s)

(Print Name) - **Student 1**

(Print Name) - **Student 2**

(Print Name) - **Student 3**

(Print Name) - **Student 4**

NOTE: If the named Student(s) are over the age of 18 years of age the named Student(s) must complete the form instead of the Parents / Guardians.

NOTE: If only one Parent and Guardian signature appears, by signing this section, that person represents to WCSD that the said person has the authority to bind the other Parent and all other Guardian(s) of the named Student(s).

SCHEDULE "A" to Appendix A550

DROP OFF LOCATION BY REFERENCE TO NAME OF LAND OWNER

Municipal address of DROP OFF location (including postal code):

Legal Description of DROP OFF location (if no municipal address):

Rural Address of DROP OFF location (Blue Sign):

Contact information for DROP OFF location owner:

Home phone: _____ **Work phone:** _____

NOTE: If a Parent or Guardian has signed above:

Name of Parent(s) / Guardian(s): (1) _____
(print)

(2) _____

Contact Telephone Number(s): (1) _____ / _____
(print) **Home Work**

(2) _____ / _____
Home Work

Address(es) of Parents / Guardians: (1) _____
(print)

(2) _____

(Blue Sign) _____

Bus Route: _____

Student Name(s): _____

Appendix A550.2

Wolf Creek Inclusive Learning Services Transportation Guidelines



Wolf Creek Inclusive Transportation GUIDELINES

WCPS Transportation: Background and Legal Information

1. Bussing Guidelines for students living beyond 2.4 km from their home school:

- Section 51 of the School Act requires jurisdictions to provide “for” the transportation of students who reside beyond 2.4 km or greater from their designated school.
- Jurisdictions usually meet this requirement by providing regular bussing for all students.
- If a student is unable to ride the regular bus then special transportation service will be arranged for students who meet criteria.
- Special Transportation, when approved by Inclusive Learning Services, is typically provided from the student’s legal residence to school unless alternative provisions are deemed necessary under the waiver provision (addendum A550).

2. Bussing Guidelines for students living less than 2.4 km from their home school

- Wolf Creek Public Schools does not provide free busing for students who reside less than 2.4 km from their home school. Some communities in the division have worked with the school division to provide in-town busing, but that is a pay per use service arranged through the transportation department.
- Although not explicitly stated in the School Act or Student Transportation Regulation, jurisdictions are expected to provide “for” the transportation of students whose **significant needs** prevent them from getting safely to and from school, even if they reside less than 2.4 km.
- This transportation service could be in the form of a regular bus, a special transportation bus or some other form of specialized transportation such as a local handi-bus service, taxi or parent-provided transportation agreement.
- Alberta Education funding manual, Section 1.23, provides guidelines for special transportation funding for students with significant needs. These guidelines reinforce that special transportation funding is for students who **cannot, because of the severity of their disability, use regular transportation services**. A student is not entitled to this funding just because they are coded severe or have a specific diagnosis. Eligibility is based on their inability to ride a regular bus. Please note that a child’s young age is not considered to be a disability.

3. Important Dates for Students who Qualify for Specialized Transportation

- In order for Wolf Creek Public Schools to receive funding for the special transportation of students, the following dates and information are important:
 - Before September 30, Administrators must connect with the Directors of Inclusive Learning Services with any potential students who need special transportation.
 - These students will be discussed with the Assistant Superintendent of Inclusive Learning, or designate, and a determination will be made if they will qualify for special transportation.

4. If a child with significant needs cannot ride a regular bus or other transportation listed above?

- Administrators must connect with Coordinators/ Director of Inclusive Learning Services to establish if the best option is parent provided transportation.
- Parent provided transportation contracts are created by the transportation dept. in consultation with the family. Schools will be notified if there is a parent provided transportation agreement

Decision Making Process for ILS Transportation

The following process will be utilized to access busing for students with diverse needs who cannot ride the regular bus:

1. If a child with diverse learning needs can ride a regular bus the parent would follow regular transportation guidelines (as per Administrative Procedure 550 - (General Transportation of Students) If the Administrator of the school believes the child cannot ride the regular bus, they must contact a Coordinator/ Director of Inclusive Learning Services.
2. If a student is deemed to need specialized transportation then ILS will provide notification about the student's needs will be provided to transportation services. This may include additional Student Safety Restraints. Information on a variety of safety restraints can be accessed below. An example would be: E-Z-ON Vest that is used on the SN busses when the 4 point seat belt system is not adequate.

Additional Information below:

- i. <http://www.ezonpro.com/index.shtml>
 - ii. Wheelchair passengers use Q-Straint – Information below:
 - iii. http://www.gstraint.com/en_na/products/4-point-securement-systems
3. **If it is determined** that the Small Yellow Bus or other contracted services held by Wolf Creek Public Schools are required, then Transportation Services makes the appropriate arrangements
 4. Transportation Services notifies the Administrator and family of the decision relative to transportation method and route structure
 5. Bussing arrangements may take up to one week to process and arrange. In complex circumstances it could take longer.
 6. It is the responsibility of the School Administrator to contact Transportation Services regarding any students who transfer out of the division or have a change in transportation requirements.

Modes of Transportation Defined

1. Regular Bus

This form of transportation is provided by Wolf Creek Public Schools and is the first choice of bussing services for all students, including those with diverse and severe needs.

2. Small Yellow Bus (also referred to as the SN - 'Special Needs')

This form of transportation is provided by a contracted service called First Student Canada, Rimbey Division #34065. Wolf Creek Public Schools Transportation Department works with the Location Manager of First Student Canada to arrange bussing logistics for our families.

- a. For students approved for SN Bussing, **Administrators may Contact First Student Canada directly only in case of emergency or unexpected circumstances.**
- b. **DO NOT** call First Student Canada to arrange for transportation. Please use the process listed above to access services for students.
- c. There are approximately 7 Special Needs ("SN") busses provided by First Student Canada Rimbey Division #34065. If special circumstances arrive or parents need contact information it is as follows:

First Student Transportation

Tammy Freerksen (Location Manager)

Office – 403-843-6161

Cell – 403-704-9629

Fax – 403-843-6639

3. Other Wolf Creek Public Schools Contracted Transportation Services

This form of transportation is arranged by Wolf Creek Public Schools Transportation Department in consultation with Inclusive Learning Services. This type of transportation is community specific. Examples of this service, service providers are as follows.

Please note that we have included the contact information in case of emergency or special circumstances. These numbers are NOT to be used to arrange transportation for students, as this is done at a system level.

- a. Wheelchair Van servicing the City of Lacombe
Lacombe Connex: 403- 786-900 or 403-782-6637
- b. Wheelchair Van servicing the Town of Ponoka
Ponoka Wheelchair Society: 403-783-2258 or 403-783-0399
- c. Taxi Cabs servicing the Towns of Ponoka, Lacombe, Blackfalds
Blackfalds:
DnD Taxi: 403-600-3633

Lacombe:

Beck 'N' Call Cabs: 403-877-3357

Lacombe Taxi: 403-782-3448

Owen's Taxi: 403-782-0271

Seth Cabs: 403-782-9227

Ponoka:

A & B Royal Taxi: 403-783-2400

Aaron's Taxi: 403-783-6660

Deb's Taxi: 403-783-6700

Eagle Taxi: 403-783-4400

4. Parent or Contractor Provided Transportation

Jurisdictions can also meet the transportation requirement by offering a parent-provided transportation contract. For example, if the student resided in a remote area where bus service is not available, or it has been demonstrated that the student's needs prevents them from riding on a regular or special transportation route.

This is usually a last resort but it allows an alternative for the jurisdiction to meet their responsibilities according to the School Act.

If the parent is unable to drive, then the jurisdiction will be expected to find another method of transportation such as a handi-bus or taxi service. (Attached in Appendix C are the documents required for Parent Provided Transportation and Appendix Taxi Contact Agreement.)

5. Taxi Transportation Services

This form of transportation is provided by a contracted Taxi service that is available to Wolf Creek Public School communities. Taxi companies are contracted when no other form of transportation option is available to the student.

Discipline & Behaviour – Rules/Regulations for Buses

1. Drivers will follow the regular Discipline/Behavior protocols as outlined in WCPS School Busing – [Information for Parents Handbook](#) under the section “Rules for Riding a Bus.”
2. Additional supports and processes may be required. Those may include: involving the driver meeting and with the Administrator, Transportation Manager and/or Inclusive Learning Services in specific situations.

Medication Distribution on Busses and Medically Fragile Students

1. **Medication Distribution:** Bus drivers **do not** administer medication to students who ride the bus. Bus drivers may administer first aid in an emergency situation.

2. **Medically Fragile Students:** As outlined in the [WCPS Parent Transportation Handbook](#). “Parents of students with special requirements” need to inform the driver of the student’s needs. Medical conditions, allergies, or other concerns should be relayed directly to the driver. Parents should provide the driver with all relevant details that could affect the ride to and from school. Please do not assume that the driver has important information about your child unless you have instructed them yourself. This information about your child will be kept confidential and will only be used to inform the drivers of your child’s particular bus. In some situations a safety plan will be created by the school and communicated to the driver through transportation services.

Extra-Curricular Bussing for Diverse Students

1. WCPS has one bus, with wheelchair accessibility, available for extra-curricular events. If a student requires transportation for an extracurricular event, Administration must contact Transportation Services to book this bus in advance and this may be at an additional cost to the school, which is similar to the process for regular extra-curricular transportation.
2. If there are any difficulties in securing transportation for extracurricular transportation for diverse students then Transportation Services will inform the school administrator as to availability. In these circumstances the administrator will need to explore other options to provide the necessary transportation.