



School District No. 54 *(Bulkley Valley)*

Transportation Department

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VOJ 2N0

September 2, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians of SD54 Bus Students (including field trips),

SD54 Transportation Department is busy preparing for the upcoming school year 2021/2022. Safety is always our foremost concern. Please read the following information carefully.

The District is planning on providing regular transportation to all regular bus students in September. However, In reference to BC's Ministry of Health COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 School settings, **students are encouraged, whenever possible, to travel in private vehicles or by active transportation (walking/biking etc.) in getting to and from school.** School District 54 will provide student transportation to families who are unable to follow these recommendations. Space on the bus may be limited, as per BC Ministry of Health recommendations, please only use this service if you are unable to provide your own transportation to get your child to school.

As well as all standard safety precautions, we ask you to follow the procedures below:

1. Monitor you children's health on a daily basis. If they have symptoms of cold or flu, please keep them home.
2. Students need to wash and or sanitize their hands prior to loading onto the bus. They should also wash or sanitize their hands once they get to school. Schools will have procedures in place where bus students will wash/sanitize hands before boarding the bus in the afternoon.
3. Students should practice physical distancing as much as possible at bus stops if not in family or cohort groups.
4. Grade 4-12 students will be required to wear non-medical masks or face coverings when on the school bus. Masks should be put on before loading and taken off after unloading.
5. Students will be seated with othet students from the same school. We will spread students out as much as possible.
6. As always, as per MVA regulations, we **will not be transporting any other items on the bus** except for items that can fit into a student's backpack. Where we have made some exceptions, we will not be able to do this this year. Underneath compartments can only be loaded/unloaded at school sites with prior authorization. If students bring items other than backpacks on the bus, parents will be called to come and pick up the items. This includes sports equipment and band instruments.

7. As it is important for the School District to minimize the number of new staff and student contacts, there will be very limited opportunity for requests for alternate transportation or adding students not eligible for transportation to routes. With a parental note, you may still request a child be dropped off at another stop on regular routes but students will not be granted permission to travel on other buses unless it is to a secondary address of another parent. Students not eligible for transportation will not be approved to take the bus for child care or play dates.

We look forward to resuming regular service in the future. The District appreciates your cooperation and understanding in these difficult times where we need to work together to keep each other safe. We have a detailed safety plan in place that includes working with all regulatory bodies including Northern Health, WSBC and the Ministry of Education. Our safety plan includes the following:

1. Buses have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected over the summer months and will be cleaned and disinfected daily after each run in accordance with BCCDC guidelines
2. Drivers are asked to self-monitor their health every morning and asked to stay home if they have any symptoms of cold or flu.
3. Drivers will be required to wear masks and/or face shields.
4. We have strict hand washing/sanitizing procedures in place for all staff.
5. We will be utilizing as many seats as necessary.
6. As it is not possible on a school bus to maintain physical distance, we expect that grade 4-12 students wear masks at all times.

As much as possible, our goal is to provide service on a daily basis. However, due to COVID-19 and possible staff shortages due to illness, runs may have to be cancelled on short notice. I will be putting cancellations on local radio stations and CBC. I will also be posting on the SD54 Facebook page. Please also monitor your emails for bus notifications. I will only have your email if you have included the information when you signed up your child for the bus. If you want email notifications, please ensure you provide that information to schools when registering your child.

Regards,

Cathy Whalen,
Transportation Supervisor SD54

cc: Dave Margerm
Tim Bancroft