

Bus Stop & Routing Criteria

Bus routes and stops are designed with consideration of safety, efficiency, cost, and shortest over-all ride times. Safety is always the first and foremost priority. Bus routing is designed with buses traveling main roads through neighborhoods and with students picked up and dropped off at central locations. Bus stops are located at corners or intersections whenever possible and are centrally located to where students are coming from. Some house stops may be made on very busy roads or midway on long streets, or if there are special needs requirements for a student.

Why are bus stops established at corners or intersections?

Safety:

- Students are taught to cross at corners rather than in the middle of the street.
- Traffic controls, such as stoplights or stop signs are located at corners. This slows down motorists at corners and they tend to be more cautious as they approach intersections. The motoring public generally expects school buses to be stopping at corners rather than individual houses. Impatient motorists are also less likely to pass buses at corners than along a street. Cars passing school buses create the greatest risk to students who are getting on or off the bus.
- In the winter, salting and sanding is usually done at corners, providing safer stopping for buses and cars.
- Buses use their eight-way light system and stop arm when picking up and dropping off students. Corner stops allow ample time for the driver to activate the yellow warning lights before getting to the stop.
- The visibility for bus drivers is better at corners. Searching for house numbers can be distracting for drivers.
- Apartment and condominium complexes are considered private property. School buses may only travel on public roadways. Also, many roadways through apartment complexes are too narrow to safely accommodate a large school bus.

Efficiency

- Ride times for students are shorter if buses are kept on main roads and are not sent down every street. Route changes for new students can be accommodated when stops are at corners. Less accidents occur at corner stops.

Other Factors Considered When Determining Stops

- Time of day students are at the stop.
- Traffic patterns and speed limits.
- Length of walk to the stop.
- Whether the student needs to cross a busy street to get to the bus stop.
- What is the age of the student.
- Is a turn around for the bus required and is a safe turnaround available.
- Buses are not allowed on private roads.

What Is Not Considered Necessary for Adding or Changing a Stop?

- It is not possible to provide bus stops that are within sight of all student homes or daycares. Most families that live one house from the corner cannot see the corner bus stop without coming out of their homes. We encourage parents to be out at bus stops to promote proper pedestrian and bus stop behavior.
- Routes travel past many students' houses; stopping at all would be inefficient and also make the overall student time on the bus longer. Other students may be assigned to the stop, but ride infrequently. Stops at corners accommodate other students who may also move into the neighborhood.
- Cul de sac turnaround. Cul de sacs do not provide enough room for safe access by school buses. Regular route buses should never be sent into cul de sacs or dead end roads. . A full-sized bus needs 115 feet to safely turn and most cul-de-sacs do not fit this criteria.

Bus Capacities/Loads

- Bus load capacities as stated by the manufacturer are based on 3 (three) students per seat at 12" seat width per student.
- Bus load capacities for middle school and high school students will generally be limited to two (2) students per seat. Three students to a seat may be permitted if the remaining distance to the school is ten (10) minutes or less and all students are properly seated.
- Bus load capacities for elementary school students will be allowed at three (3) students per seat for primary students (grades K-3), and providing all students are properly seated. Upper elementary students will be assigned at two (2) students per seat but may be assigned at three students to a seat if the remaining distance to the school is ten (10) minutes or less and all students are properly seated.
- Route capacities for high school buses will be calculated at up to 170% of capacity based on grade levels of assigned students. Experience indicates older students, 11th and 12th grades, tend to rely on other means of transportation to and from school.
- Actual rider loads will not exceed capacity as stated by the manufacturer.