

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **How do I get answers to school transportation questions?**

Contact the MSD Warren Transportation Department at 317-532-2820. A transportation employee will either answer your inquiry or direct your call to an individual who can best assist you.

## **Can I reach someone in the Transportation Department before 8:00 a.m.?**

Yes, our Transportation Department is available from 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. by phone at 317-532-2820. Email is also available at [transportation@warren.k12.in.us](mailto:transportation@warren.k12.in.us).

## **Can my child lose his/ her bus riding privileges?**

Yes. In Indiana, riding a school bus is a privilege and not a right. Each local school district has adopted rules of conduct for waiting at the bus stop and for riding the school bus. If your child does not follow the rules, your child could lose his/her privileges.

## **Why was my student suspended from riding the bus?**

Behavioral expectations on the school bus are much like those in the classroom. Then, factoring 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 behavioral 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. When there is an infraction, a referral is turned into a school administrator, who is 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 student.

## **Why does my child have a seat assignment?**

Seat assignments are a positive way for the ride to be consistent and safe. It is also our policy for all routes to have students be assigned to a specific seat. This aids the driver with discipline and learning each student's names at the beginning of the school year.

## **Why can't my child get off wherever he or she wants in the afternoon?**

Assigned stops allow the drivers to focus on driving and safety instead of having to decide whether the student should be allowed to change their routine and get off with a friend or ride to an entirely different neighborhood. This policy avoids confusion and the chance of students getting lost or running away.

## **How are bus stops and routes determined?**

Every student who is eligible for transportation is assigned a specific bus stop and route number. The Routing Specialists in the Department of Transportation use a routing software program to determine required bus stops. The routing software considers bus seating capacity, student data, zoning information and safety variables during processing to create the safest, most efficient bus routes possible.

## **I live in an apartment complex. Why does my child have to walk to the main road to catch the bus?**

Apartment and condominium complexes are considered private property; school buses may only travel on public roadways. Also, the roadways through many apartment complexes are too narrow to safely accommodate a large school bus.

### **My child transferred to a new school; how do I arrange transportation?**

Make sure your student has been properly registered at the new school. If the registration (transfer) has not been done, please contact the school to assure that the student has been properly registered. If this has been done and the student is a regular education student, the task is complete. If the student is a special education student, please contact the Special Education Office. Allow 3-5 days for new student bus assignments to be completed.

### **Who do I contact if I have a question about a bus stop or route?**

Contact the Transportation Department at 317-532-2820. They will submit a request to our routing team to review the stop. A representative of the Transportation Department will contact you once this review process has been completed.

### **How long will it take for my child to receive transportation?**

At peak times, under normal conditions, it may take up to 3 to 5 days from the time transportation receives the request for your child to be placed on a transportation route. Following the first few weeks of school and depending on the specific equipment needs of a special education student, it more typically takes up to 3-5 days from the time Transportation receives the request. The parent is expected to be responsible for their child's transportation during this period.

### **My child has special needs. Who do I contact to make transportation arrangements?**

If your child qualifies for Special Services, transportation arrangements must be made through the office from which your child receives these services. Please contact the Special Education office at 317-869-4300 to make these arrangements.

### **Why can't last minute changes be granted?**

Safety is our main goal and concern. Changes may be granted for consistent schedules within the child's regular route.

### **What if the bus doesn't show up on time?**

#### **Mornings**

We recommend students be at the bus stop by at least 10 minutes before their scheduled pickup time, and wait at least 10 minutes beyond the regularly scheduled time before assuming there is a delay. Then, call our Transportation Dept. at 317-532-2820. Our dispatch will contact the driver to find out the bus status. In the case of a mechanical breakdown, a backup bus will be dispatched. Students should remain at the bus stop until the backup bus arrives. Parents/students will be notified via an automated ParentSquare phone call/text/email.

#### **Afternoons**

If it is more than 15 minute past the scheduled drop-off time, you should contact your child's school to find out if the bus's departure from school was delayed for any reason. If there was no delay, or you are concerned you may have missed your child's drop-off, please contact the Transportation Department at 317-532-2820. Our dispatchers will check with the bus driver to see what is causing the delay.

### **Why is my child's bus late?**

- Weather, traffic, driver absenteeism, maintenance difficulties, and unforeseen incidents are responsible for delays in the arrival of school buses in the morning and afternoon.
- Sometimes the bus routes must be doubled or run as a go back route due to the regular driver being absent.
- Drivers check buses before their routes and sometimes find mechanical problems that can cause delays and require driving another bus that day.
- Please know that we are doing everything humanly possible to have all buses on schedule everyday. In the event that your bus does not arrive as scheduled, please allow ten to thirty minutes before calling the transportation office or the school.

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

Calls to parents/guardians are sent out as soon as the Transportation office becomes aware of any bus delays that will affect students. Estimates on the time delay will be included in the ParentSquare call.

**Will the bus leave the stop without my child if she/he is not waiting at the bus stop location?**

Yes! The student must be waiting at his/her stop at least ten minutes prior to the designated time, regardless of weather conditions.

**My child did not get off the bus at his/her stop. What do I do?**

You should contact your child's school immediately to make sure he or she got on the bus after school. If your child did get on the bus as usual, you or the school can contact our Transportation Department at 317-532-2820. Our dispatchers will immediately check with the bus driver to see if your child missed his or her stop, or got off at a different stop. Each driver has a list of students eligible to ride his or her route, and is expected to let students off only at their assigned stops. Please explain to your child that he or she is to get on and off the bus **ONLY** at the assigned stop.

**Should the bus wait until the student enters the home before the bus leaves?**

Regular education students are dropped off at the appropriate corner stops. Those students with an IEP *MAY* be provided curb-to-curb transportation and it is the parent's responsibility to both bring the student to and from the bus. Kindergarten students require an adult or sibling (3rd grade and above) to be present at the afternoon bus stop.

**My child is being threatened by another student on the bus. What do I do?**

All school bus discipline problems should be immediately reported to the driver/monitor and an Administrator of your child's school.

**I saw a bus traveling in an unsafe manner. Who do I call?**

You should call our Transportation Department at 317-532-2820 immediately. Please take note of the bus number and be prepared to give the exact location of the bus and the nature of the problem.