



Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year.

Ringwood will begin school the Week of September 5, 2023, please see the District Calendar on NJRPS.ORG for first day for students. Bussing will be provided to all eligible students beginning on the first scheduled day. The Transportation Department strives to transport your children to and from school safely. With your support, the children's cooperation and adherence to the following rules and important procedures, we can anticipate a successful school year.

- All bus information for your child will be uploaded to the Parent Portal listed in the menu on the left side under Transportation in Real Time at the end of August. This will include your child's bus route number, approximate pick up time, and bus stop location. Drop off times are not listed as our route system is tiered and it depends on what time drivers get to the lower schools for pick up. Only Ryerson and Lakeland are all dismissed at the same time. Before you are able to access this information for **all students grades K-5**, you are required to fill out the [Transportation Survey](#).
- For grades K-5 - complete the [Transportation Survey](#) in full **no later than AUGUST 15, 2023** as the information is needed and must be included in all bus routes before the start of school.
- Students in grades 6-8 will be recorded as driver release, no additional form is required. If you want your 6-8 grade student met at the bus, please submit your written request to the transportation department in writing no later than AUGUST 15, 2023. Email: guthried@njrps.org; webbg@njrps.org
- If you are choosing to have your child met at the bus stop, parents or their designees **must be out** at the bus stop **and be visible** to both the bus driver and your child. Afternoon bus drop-off schedules can vary; parents or designees should arrive at bus stops based on their child's school dismissal time.
- The New Jersey State Department of Education Office of Student Transportation mandates that all books, backpacks, large instruments, etc., must be placed on the lap of the student or on the floor between the student's legs, but **never** in the aisle. For the *safety of ALL bus passengers* we cannot allow oversized objects on the bus routes (see page 2 for guidelines for items allowed to be transported on the busses).
- Personal electronic devices-cell phones, tablets, and laptops, etc. **are not permitted to be used on the school buses.**
- The district utilizes camera systems with full audio and video capabilities in all school vehicles.
- Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying is considered any form of Sexual, Racial, Religious, Verbal, Physical, Electronic and or Internet based, including threats, which affects a student's learning process, disrupts the educational process of the school or classroom or on the bus and or endangers the Health, Safety and Welfare of others. Ringwood Board of Education Policy #5131.1 All the above incidents are subject to an HIB investigation through the school's Anti-Bully Specialist. Any type of physical sexual harassment is mandatory police notification.
- Children will be transported to a single destination after school. Parents can opt to select either an "on route" after- school facility/another caretaker, **or** the "home" bus stop as the designated "from school" destination.

Parents and guardians are reminded that an afternoon bus stop change must be a permanent 5-day-per week change, and can only be changed once per school year. This is subject to seat availability on the route for each bus.
PLEASE NOTE: ALL REQUESTS FOR TRANSPORTATION CHANGES MUST BE MADE IN WRITING AND RECEIVED NO LATER THAN AUGUST 15, 2023. NO REQUESTS WILL BE HONORED AFTER THIS DATE BEFORE THE START OF SCHOOL.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Transportation Department directly at (973) 962-7500.

- You will receive information regarding Ryerson Late Bus Stops if and when Ryerson schedules activities. The stops will be listed on the back of the permission form given out by the school.
- Emergency Bus Routes/Emergency Bus Stops due to inclement weather will also be placed in the Parent Portal listed in the menu on the left side under Transportation in Real Time.

GUIDELINES FOR ITEMS ALLOWED TO BE TRANSPORTED ON THE BUSES

Due to State Requirements, safety concerns, and space issues, it is not possible to allow students to bring certain items onto the busses. Safety and sufficient seating for the students assigned to our routes are the top priorities of the Transportation Department.

The model of the specially padded seats placed close together is designed to cushion students in the event of an accident. This feature results in minimal space available for large items. Furthermore, unnecessary items on the bus only increase the chances of the seats getting torn, which negatively affects the integrity of this safety feature.

Any item brought onto the bus cannot occupy space necessary for students and cannot be placed in the aisle, but rather must be maintained on the student's lap or on the floor of the bus between the student's legs. Furthermore, large items cannot protrude in to the aisles, above the seats or into another student's space.

To assist you in determining whether an item may be permitted on the bus, the following lists provide some examples of what is allowed and what is not.

Examples if items permitted on the school bus:

- Small instruments in cases, i.e. flute, piccolo, clarinet, oboe, trumpet, alto sax, bass clarinet, bassoon, trombone
- School backpacks, textbooks and school supplies
- Lunch boxes/sacks
- Small sports equipment, i.e. sports balls (must be maintained in sports bags), small pads such as elbow or shin pads, mouth guards, uniforms)

Examples of items NOT permitted on the school bus:

- Large instruments i.e. tuba, saxophone, baritone, guitars, drums, French horn, tenor sax, bass trombone
- Large/long sports equipment, i.e. hockey bags, hockey sticks, skis and ski poles, baseball bats
- Skateboards, hover boards
- Suitcases, instrument cases or **backpacks with handles and wheels**
- Exhibit boards, i.e. tri-fold displays

It will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to transport these items to and from schools.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS (GRADES 6-8) ARE CONSIDERED DRIVER RELEASE. no additional form is required. If you want your 6-8 grade student to be met at the bus, please submit your written request to the transportation department in writing **no later than AUGUST 15, 2023.** Email: guthried@njrps.org; webbg@njrps.org

STUDENT BUS/VAN RELEASE GUIDELINES AND PERMISSIONS

The safest practice is for a student's parent/guardian to pick that student up at the bus stop when he/she exits the bus or van. A parent/guardian may also choose to allow a designee to collect their student at the bus stop by providing digital permission through the Transportation Survey for up to four identified individuals to serve in that role.

In the event you give permission to allow your child to exit the bus/van by him/herself and walk home without adult supervision, the District requires that you provide digital permission through the Transportation Survey in the Parent Portal. Without this permission, students will not be permitted to exit the bus/van unless there is a parent/guardian or a designee **standing outside and visible at the bus stop** to meet them.

If there is no one present at the time of drop-off, the student will remain on the bus until a parent can be contacted or be returned to their school once the remainder of the afternoon bus route is completed. Arrangements will have to be made by the parent/guardian to have that students picked-up at the school location. Please understand that the District takes this precaution for the safety of its students and your understanding and cooperation is appreciated.

Sincerely

Mrs. Dawn Guthrie, Interim Transportation Supervisor

Transportation permission form can be accessed here: <https://forms.gle/j1zb8CLHGmPMJx7N6>