



## TRANSPORTATION



## SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION

The transportation of school children has played an important role in the development of the American philosophy of universal education. More than a century ago, educational leaders recognized that adequate schools could not be provided within walking distance where all children live. School transportation at public expense thus evolved and made provisions for the following:

- Extension for equal educational opportunities to all children so they may attend school even though they live miles from school.
- Increased opportunities for communities to enrich the school program.
- Provisions by which pupils who live miles from school can reach school under safe and healthy conditions.
- Development of more adequate and satisfactory administrative school districts through unification.



## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- Iowa State Code 285 - Elementary students (K-8) are entitled to transportation only if they live more than 2 miles from their designated school – IC 285.1(1)(a)(1)

Our district utilizes the guidelines below:



- Elementary students (K-5) are entitled to transportation only if they live more than 1 1/2 miles from their designated school.
- Middle school students must live more than 2 miles from their designated school.
- High school students are entitled to transportation only if they live more than 3 miles from their designated school.

We have a new routing software, VersaTrans. VersaTrans and IC will communicate each night so that students can be routed more efficiently. In order to make this process run smoothly, **we need legal addresses entered in IC** to route the student properly.

All request for busing, other than eligible regular transportation requests, **must** be entered in IC under the “Transportation Request” tab every year. This includes all special requests, different pick-up and/or drop-off address other than home address, McKinney Vento, Foster, alternate building, etc. If the request is not in IC, we cannot route the student. We cannot route a student via email or phone call.

New addresses and requested changes to stops will be handled by the Transportation Department in the order they are received. Please allow 3-5 days for processing. This will allow our office time to receive the request (overnight), program the request into the routes, schedule the change, notify the bus driver, and notify the school offices with a start date.

Many requests for transportation are a Stop or an Alternate Address that may only be used once or twice during the school year. This requires a bus to stop at a non-existing stop daily.

To be more efficient, any bus stops that are not used during a two-week period will be taken off the route. This will not include student athletes on seasonal sports teams. A new request may be entered at any time to re-instate the stop when needed. However, we will still require 3-5 days to process this request.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**

The safety of our students is vital to the work we do and remains a shared responsibility for the district and parents/guardians. The parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their students are on the bus safely. The District's responsibility begins when the student boards the bus.

The school bus is an extension of the classroom and students are required to behave and follow the rules of the bus as they do in the classroom.

School officials, bus drivers, bus associates, parents, and students must work together to provide the safest form of transportation possible.

## **EVACUATION DRILLS**



State law requires that the school district conduct evacuation drills at least twice every school year. Drills will be held once each semester at all schools.

- The school principal or the designee must schedule the drills with the Transportation Department and certify that the drill was performed each semester. The actual evacuation drill is to be conducted by the school bus drivers.
- Please use [Versatrans Triptracker](#) for requests.

## **REQUESTING A FIELD TRIP BUS**

This "request" is only the first step in reserving a bus. A successful request means you have completed the request form correctly; it does not mean you have an approved trip. It is only the start of our process to determine if there are buses and drivers available for that date and time.



### **HOW TO REQUEST A FIELD TRIP:**

- To greatly reduce the amount of confusion and eliminate double bookings, missed trips, and any other miscommunication, we ask that there be only one person at your building requesting field trips.
- Please have the person assigned to request field trips submit a completed request form by entering in the request electronically through the field trip request form available on [Versatrans Triptracker](#). (This can be found in Staff Links under Transportation.)

- **ALL** trip requests will need to be done a minimum of two weeks prior to when the trip is scheduled. The system will not allow the request if less than 2 weeks. Call Transportation for any trips less than 14 days out.
- Return Time to School on the request form is the time due back to the school, not the re-load time at the field trip site.
- A coach/teacher will be required to sign the field trip form after completion and include the return time to school.
- No other methods of requesting a field trip will be accepted, nor will any requests be accepted without an appropriate account number.
- Requests should not be taken as a guarantee of a bus for your field trip.
- Reservations will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis.
- We have a very limited number of drivers and buses available, as the majority of our fleet is doing home to school routes. We will make every effort to accommodate your request.
- An estimate of the invoice for the trip can be viewed within [Triptracker](#).
- There is an easy way to verify your field trip and all the important information pertaining to your bus request.
  - You can look up your trip information using the same link for [Versatrans Triptracker](#) and viewing the calendar both before and after your trip is completed to review.
  - Changes can be made to your trip using this up to 14 days in advance.

### **TO CANCEL A CONFIRMED FIELD TRIP:**

- Trips can be canceled up to 14 days in advance via [Triptracker](#). For trips in less than 14 days, you will need to email [Carl.Swauger@dmschools.org](mailto:Carl.Swauger@dmschools.org) – you must include the confirmation number and date of the trip.

If cancelling a trip on the same day of the trip – you will need to call 242-7887 ASAP and send an email to [Carl.Swauger@dmschools.org](mailto:Carl.Swauger@dmschools.org) including the confirmation number and date of the trip.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT:**

In order to maintain a high caliber of service, pupils must be aware of the rules governing pupil behavior which are designed to regulate bus conduct with a minimum of restraint.

The Principal of each school will be responsible for enforcement of the discipline policy. The principal and his/her staff are instructed to give pupil-guidance and orientation regarding transportation. Pupils shall be informed that all DMPS policies apply while on the bus and transportation is provided for their convenience and safety, as well as service to the community.

- Students are expected to be at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled time.
- Students should line up in an orderly manner at the bus stop, keeping to the sidewalk, if available, and never on lawns or flowers.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR REPORT:**

All District students are required to follow the school bus rules which have been established to ensure safe transport to and from school and/or school sponsored activities. If repeated verbal warnings by the bus driver and/or associate have no effect on the student's behavior, bus drivers may request the assistance of the District's Transportation Department and follow the new student referral procedures. Student write-ups for behavior on buses will no longer be faxed or emailed to the buildings. The Transportation Department will enter referrals in Infinite Campus. Designated administrative staff listed for buildings in Infinite Campus will be notified of write ups through the Infinite Campus process.



## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE:**

DMPS and DART provide safe transportation for all students eligible for service within the district or as assigned. Students are required to know and follow bus rules and expectations. Failure to follow these rules and expectations may lead to temporary or permanent loss of bus privileges.

- **Masks must be worn on DART and DMPS yellow busses at all times.**
- **Obey and respect the driver and associate.**
- **Be on time for the bus, arrive five minutes before scheduled pick up time.**
- **Wait for the bus at a safe distance from the curb.**
- **Stay seated until the bus has come to a complete stop at your drop off location.**
- **Sit in assigned seat (and remain seated).**
- **Wear seat belts appropriately when available.**
- **Always keep the aisle clear.**
- **No carry-on items may be stored in the aisle.**
- **Keep your hands, arms, and head inside the bus.**
- **Noise level must be kept at a reasonable level – No yelling or screaming.**
- **Conversations with others on the bus should be at normal tones using inside voices.**
- **SILENCE must be observed while crossing railroad tracks.**
- **Use appropriate and respectful language.**
- **Stay seated while on the bus - changing seats while bus is in motion, wrestling, and other horseplay is not allowed.**
- **Damage to the bus and seat covers is not allowed.**
- **Matches, lighters, smoking, and any other controlled substances are not allowed on the bus.**
- **Maintain a tidy bus - no littering.**
- **No food or drink may be consumed on the bus. Items must remain in backpack.**
- **Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner - no pushing or shoving.**
- **Skateboards, scooters, in-line skates, or other items that could cause injury or harm in the event of an accident are not allowed on the bus.**
- **Headphones are required to listen to music on the bus.**
- **A valid student ID card is required for DART and may be requested for DMPS yellow bus. A photo of the ID card or a card with a scratched-out photo is not allowed on DART.**
- **Students must ride the bus assigned to them by DMPS unless they have prior authorization.**

## **MISCELLANEOUS:**

In an effort to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our students, it is vitally important that transportation respond to radio and phone issues for our normal required transportation needs. The phones at transportation are often jammed with calls during the year. We would appreciate any help from buildings with addressing parents' concerns related to busing information.

Office managers can use the new e-Link system to retrieve bus stop information for students and to answer questions about busing.

Also, please encourage your parents/guardians to register for the Here Comes The Bus App. The information can be found on our district's webpage.



### **Bus Pull-In**

In order to maintain safety for all students, parents must be made aware of the procedure for the bus lots. It is vitally important that parents refrain from using the bus lots at the posted times.

### **School Bus Request Phone calls**

We are available to address late bus, estimated time of arrival, no rides, missed stops, and any concerns related to daily busing issues. All parents are referred to their school for the logistics of busing information. Due to confidentiality reasons, we do not provide parents with this information.



### **No Show, Canceling Door Stop Service, or New Stop**

Parents of all students with door-to-door stops are required to contact Transportation each day if their student does not need transportation, for any reason.

## WHERE'S THE BUS?



Des Moines Public Schools is happy to announce the adoption of an innovative mobile device app and website entitled *Here Comes the Bus*®.

*Here Comes the Bus* allows you to view the real-time location of your child's school bus on your smartphone, tablet or computer. With it, you will have the information you need to send your children to the bus stop at just the right time, helping

to protect them from inclement weather or other issues, and know when their bus is heading back at the end of the school day.

*Here Comes the Bus* is free to use, and enables you to:

- See the location of your child's bus both before and after school
- Confirm that your child's bus has arrived at the bus stop, at school or both
- Receive a push notification or email message when the bus is near your stop, has been substituted, or when we have important information to relay

You can use *Here Come the Bus* in one of two ways. First, either download the mobile app by visiting the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#) and searching for "Here Comes the Bus" (the app is available in English, Spanish and French). Second, simply visit [www.herecomesthebus.com](http://www.herecomesthebus.com) from your computer or tablet.

Once you have the app or web site open, follow the steps below to set up an account to track your child's school bus:

1. Click the "Sign Up" button
2. Enter the code for DMPS – **87641** – and click "Next" followed by "Confirm"
3. Complete the "User Profile" section, including setting up your password
4. Under "My Students" click "Add," and enter your child's last name and student ID #

Once you confirm your information your account is set, and you are ready to begin using *Here Comes the Bus*.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Transportation Dept. at 515-242-7887.

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If you need to contact *Here Comes the Bus* customer support, please go to:

<http://help.herecomesthebus.com/en/support/solutions/articles/22000203906-contact-support>

You will be asked to provide the following information:

- Your name
- School District Name or 87641
- Email address used for your *Here Comes the Bus* account
- Your child's first and last name, and student ID #
- Description of the question

*Here Comes the Bus* is powered by Synovia Solutions™, makers of the GPS-tracking technology used by Des Moines Public Schools to increase safety and cost savings as it relates to our school bus fleet.



## DART’s Partnership with DMPS

Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) participates in DART’s Unlimited Access Program for DMPS staff to ride DART. More information about this partnership is available at [ridedart.com/DMPS](http://ridedart.com/DMPS).

### Student service

DMPS assigns either yellow bus or DART transportation to students who qualify. The level of DART service assigned to students is shown on their student ID.

<p><b>Students with green on their ID</b> are assigned to DART for school transportation and can ride DART for free any time of day. Students should use their assigned bus to get to and from school.</p>	<p><b>Students with white on their ID</b> can ride DART for free in the evenings (after 4:30p.m.), anytime on weekends or on days that school is not in session (including summer break).</p>
	

Students who are not assigned to DART for school transportation can still ride DART to and from school by paying half fare when they board the bus.

Students or parents with questions about their transportation should reach out to staff at their school. **DART does not assign students’ school transportation and cannot change a student’s access.**

### How to ride:

Students need to scan the QR code on their student ID on the fareboxes on DART buses to ride for free. These QR codes correspond with the colors above and are programmed based on transportation assignments set by your school. Students must have their DMPS ID to be able to ride. **Students are not allowed to use an ID that is not their own or an image of an ID on a phone or other device.** Students who lose their ID should consult with school staff to get a new ID or temporary bus pass.

After boarding and scanning the QR code on the farebox, proceed to a seat on the bus. If seats are full, students can stand, and should fill the bus from back to front. Please pull the cord to signal at least half a block before the needed bus stop. There is no need to signal stops at schools or DART Central Station.

For more tips about how to ride DART, including online trip planning tools, visit [ridedart.com/how-to-ride](http://ridedart.com/how-to-ride).



## Transportation Contacts

The following transportation office staff are available to assist you. Please direct questions to the appropriate individual(s) listed below via e-mail or phone:

### **Main Dispatch Line – 242-7887**

Dispatch is typically staffed on regular school days from 5:00am – 5:00pm

### **Routing Specialists – See Route Specialist Assignment page**

Samantha Sonnichsen, Transportation Manager – 242-7994

Regular office hours: 8:00am – 5:00pm

Elizabeth Schroeder, Route Specialist – 242-8135

Regular office hours: 7:00am – 3:30 pm

Rosalie Ballard-Green, Route Specialist – 242-8133

Regular office hours: 9:30am – 6:00pm

### **Transportation Safety and Training Specialist**

Robin Witt – 242-8136

### **Transportation Specialist**

Mona Fiscus, Dispatch – 242-8253

Carl Swauger, Field Trip Coordinator– 242-7722

### **Executive Assistant**

Victoria Jones-Turnbow – 242-7903

### **Director of Transportation**

LaShone Mosley – 242-7887

## ROUTER'S ASSIGNED SCHOOLS

<b>Rose Ballard-Green</b>		<b>Liz Schroeder</b>
<b>242-8133</b>		<b>242-8135</b>
<b>Office Hours: 9:30 AM - 6:00 PM</b>		<b>Office Hours: 7:00 PM - 3:30 PM</b>
APA/STRIDE/STEP		Brubaker OM-Kathie Walker - 8405
Brody OM Stacey Edwards 8443 Bus-Julie		Capitol View OM-Logan Cardani -8402
Callanan OM - Wendy Hopwood - 8101		Cowles OM - Shannon Hines - 7818
Carver OM - Brooke Austin - 8418		Des Moines Alternative (DMAP)
Cattell OM - Ann Stewart - 8403		East OM - Vicki Tyler-McConnell-7788 #6
Downtown OM - Deb Van Waardhuizen -8422		Focus - Andrew Anderson - 3453
Edmunds OM - Erin Jenkins -8406		Focus High - Pat Glassell - 8159
Findley OM - Cindy Minor - 8407		Garton OM - Ronda Stuve - 8408
Greenwood - Niki Clearwater - 8410		Goodrell OM- Lauren Jacobs - 8444
Harding OM - Jenny Rink - 8445		Hanawalt OM- Christal Cataldo -8411
Howe OM - Ambreyana Jones - 8413		Hiatt OM- Suzi Bower - 7774
Jackson OM - Tracey Stevens - 8415		Hillis OM- Tia Johnson - 8412
Jefferson OM -Angela Boley - 2361 / 8416		Hoover OM- Kathleen Schmitt - 7300
Lincoln OM - Katie Mattiussi - 7515		Hoyt - Bambi Piper - 8446
Lovejoy OM - Merila Abild - 8419		Hubbell - Sheery Sauls - 8414
Madison OM - Claudia Sheesley - 8420		King - Lisa Fazio - 8417
McCombs OM - Kris Cooper - 8447		Moulton - Melody Sotelo Mata - 5427
McKinley OM - Vanessa Avalos -8423		Lutheran Hospital
Mitchell OM - Amber Slagter		MAC @ Taylor - Julie Wright - 8680
Morris OM - Stephaine Gomez - 8421		Meredith OM- Shelly Davis -7250
North OM - Ginny Krueger - 7297		McKee - Jessyca Wyant - 8434
Oak Park OM - Daniella Sergio - 8428		Merrill OM- Jane Schumann-8448
Park Ave OM - Sherida Kuehler - 8429		Monroe - Jose Houser - 8425
Riverwoods OM - Heather McClelland -8433		Moore - Beth Wallukait - 8426
Roosevelt OM - Dona Adcock - 7272		Perkins - Gail Kromrie- 8430
Ruby Van Meter -Celia Nelson -8220		Phillips - Katherine Bales - 8431
South Union OM - Ashley Snyder - 8409		Pleasant Hill - Stephanie Avery - 8432
Studebaker OM - Lorena Aranda - 8436		Samuelson - Tyne Christensen - 8441
Walnut Street OM - Tina Stifle - 8438		Stowe - Sara Cox - 8435
Weeks OM - Melissa Nevels - 8449		Taylor - Emily Dickinson - 8600
Woodward Day School		Willard - JoAnn DeHaan - 8439
Wright OM - Jennifer Russo - 8442		Windsor - Casey Brown - 8440
		Woodlawn - Angie Cumings - 8213
Late buses for these schools		Lates buses for these schools
Transportation Manager, Samantha Sonnichsen, is also available as a resource: 242-7994		

**Please e-mail the appropriate Route Specialist with any inquiries or follow-up request.**