



# BACKGROUND

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## COURTESY RIDER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES & FEE

School District 22 has adjusted bus routes and bus stops on an annual basis based on the Transportation Policy and Regulations developed in 2013.

School District 22 Regulation 10.1.0 states that 'students may be expected to walk up to 2.4 km to the nearest bus stop' and that 'a minimum of fourteen eligible students is required for the establishment of a bus route.'

Historically, the School District has provided a level of service that significantly exceeded this minimum. Funding reductions have led to the School District enforcing this regulation.

On April 25, 2018, the Board of Education approved the 2018/19 Budget Adjustment Plan. This plan:

- implements a fee of \$300 for every courtesy rider, commencing September 2018, and
- requires the elimination of routes which are not needed to service eligible riders, commencing September 2019. Eligible riders are those who attend their catchment area school and live further than 2.4 km away from that school.

Courtesy riders are defined as students attending their catchment school and live within the 2.4 km walking distance, or students not attending their catchment school including a student registered in a program of choice (including Montessori, French Immersion, Vernon Community School, and Academies). Seats that are not required for eligible riders will be made available to courtesy riders based on the criterion of youngest children first, and furthest home to school distance.

The School District does not receive any funding for courtesy riders, which results in an additional cost to the district to bus ineligible students. These are costs that could potentially be directed back into the classrooms.

**Parents/guardians are asked to re-register their child(ren) if they wish to maintain a courtesy ride.** By registering again, this will allow our transportation department to confirm number of riders on a particular run. Similar to previous years, space on a school bus for the 2018/19 school year will be allocated first to eligible riders. The district will then allocate the remaining spaces available to courtesy riders.

If space remains available for your child(ren), you will receive an invoice for the \$300 rider fee (AM & PM service) or \$150 for AM only or PM only service by late July.

Families who require financial support can apply for financial assistance by completing the Request for Financial Assistance form, available on the School District's website. Financial support can be requested in two ways:

- A. A payment plan that extends past mid-August, but no later than January 31.
  - \$75 or \$150 due by August 31.
  - \$75 or \$150 due by January 31.
- B. Full or partial fee waiver for families in extreme financial need.

Further information regarding the Transportation [Policy](#) and [Regulation](#) is available on the website.



# Frequently Asked Questions

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## TRANSPORTATION SERVICES & COURTESY RIDER FEE

### **Q1: Why do I have to pay a fee for my child to take the bus?**

**A1:** The School Act no longer requires Boards of Education to provide student transportation services. It is the parent's responsibility to determine how their children will safely travel to/from school or to/from the bus pick up and drop off locations. In accordance with School District 22's [Transportation Policy 10.1.0](#) and [Transportation Regulation 10.1.0](#), the Board of Education has committed to providing subsidized transportation services.

Historically, the School District has provided a level of service that significantly exceeded the level of services as mandated by the Transportation Policy and Regulations. The 2018/19 Budget Adjustment Plan that was presented to the board, revealed a deficit for the 2018/19 school year.

The School District does not receive funding for courtesy riders, which results in an additional cost to the district to bus ineligible students. These are funds that could potentially be directed back into the classroom.

The Board of Education has approved the 2018/19 Budget Adjustment Plan that implements a \$300 fee for every courtesy rider, commencing September 2018.

### **Q2: What is a courtesy rider?**

**A2:** Courtesy riders are defined as:

- students attending their catchment school and live within the 2.4 km walking distance, or
- students not attending their catchment school, including a student registered in a program of choice (such as Montessori, French Immersion, Vernon Community School, and Academies).

### **Q3: Who is eligible for the free busing service?**

**A3:** Currently, a student is considered eligible if they attend their catchment school **and** if his or her home address is at least 2.4 km from the school or schools designated for the catchment area.

### **Q4: Who is affected by this fee?**

**A4:** The fee will be charged to all courtesy riders. The School District currently has approximately 1600 courtesy riders that use the bus service who live within the 2.4 km walking distance, or attend a school outside of their catchment, including students registered in programs of choice (such as Montessori, French Immersion, Vernon Community School, and Academies).

### **Q5: How much is the fee for courtesy riders?**

**A5:** The annual courtesy rider fee is \$300 for each courtesy rider needing busing in the morning **AND** afternoon. Riders only requiring busing in the morning **OR** the afternoon will be charged \$150 for each courtesy rider.

### **Q6: I have three children in a program of choice. I can't afford the new fee?**

**A6:** Families who require financial support can apply for financial assistance by completing the Request for Financial Assistance form available on the School District's website.

### **Q7: How can you deny this service to my child? My child deserves an education.**

**A7:** The School Act no longer requires Boards of Education to provide student transportation service. It is the parent's responsibility to determine how their children will safely travel to/from school or to/from the bus pick up

and drop off locations. In accordance with SD22's Transportation Policy and Regulations, the Board of Education has committed to providing subsidized transportation to eligible students.

**Q8: How will you deal with the anticipated increased traffic in the Beirsto (or other school's) parking lot?**

**A8:** Our Transportation and Operations departments have been working with the City of Vernon to review the busing area at Beirsto. Over the course of the 2018/19 school year, we will monitor school parking lots for changes in traffic patterns. We do remind parents and guardians who drop off and/or pick up their children to be mindful of children in the area.

**Q9: What are the payment timelines?**

- A9:**
- **A letter has been sent out** to all parents/guardians of courtesy riders. Please contact the transportation department if you have not received your letter.
  - Parents/guardians are asked to visit the School District's website ([www.sd22.bc.ca](http://www.sd22.bc.ca)) and **re-register their child(ren)** if they wish to maintain a courtesy ride. By registering again, this will allow our transportation department to confirm number of riders on a particular run.
  - If space remains available for your child(ren), **you will receive an invoice for the full \$300 or \$150 by late July**, with payment instructions.
  - **Payment will be due by August 15.**
  - If you require financial assistance with for the courtesy rider fee, please complete the Request for Financial Assistance form, available on the School District's website.

**Q10: If my child only uses the bus one-way, do I still need to pay?**

**A10:** All courtesy riders, even part-time users, are required to pay the courtesy rider fee. If you only require a ride one-way, you will be charged \$150 per courtesy rider.

**Q11: I already re-registered, and selected AM and PM service because I was paying for it anyways, but only need busing in the afternoon. How can I ensure I don't get charged the full \$300?**

**A11:** We ask that you re-register your courtesy rider(s) again and be sure to select only the service you require (AM or PM). Our transportation department will look at the most recent registration form.

**Q12: My child only needs busing every other week.**

**My child only needs busing on certain days of the week. What are my options?**

**A12:** Eligible seats for courtesy riders will be allocated on a full year basis; either morning and afternoon busing, or just one-way. Our transportation department does not have the ability to allocate seats to children on an alternating schedule.

**Q13: What else do I need to know?**

**A13:** Further information regarding the Transportation [Policy](#) and [Regulation](#) is available on the School District's website or the district's [Transportation site](#).