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## Vernon

## Need pass for school bus



Vernon and area students will soon need a pass to ride the school bus.

A letter sent home to parents from School District 22 on Jan. 29 says the measure is being brought in to "increase student safety and ensure students are riding the correct bus."

Students will be receiving the passes over the next week or so, and must show them to the bus driver whenever loading, says school district spokesperson Maritza Reilly.

Students must be registered to ride, and if parents have not already done so, they can register their child on the school district website. There will be a two-week grace period, Reilly adds.

Elementary students are to affix their bus pass to their backpacks with zip ties that will be provided. Secondary students can choose to carry them in their purse or wallet.

The school district says the passes will increase safety by helping to ensure students load the correct buses, provide staff with the ability to assist students, and ensure only school district students are riding the bus.

Reilly says the cards will include such information as the child's name, their route number and bus schedule.

She said they will also allow the district to track ridership, and also speed up response to potential cases of missing or unaccounted-for children.

A fee of \$10 will be charged for replacement of lost or damaged passes. And, if a child forgets their pass in the morning, the driver will note the child's name and advise the school district transportation office, which will confirm the details and issue a temporary pass for the ride home.

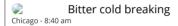
The passes will replace bag tags currently used by kindergarten students.

No immediate changes are in store for S.D. 22 bus routes, but Reilly said: "Every year, we evaluate our routes, and this is another way to ensure we have the right numbers."

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