

Frequently Asked Questions about Transportation

Q. To whom does this program apply?

A. This program applies to all secondary students who live less than two miles from the school they attend, and your child was previously in the busing area. Both public and private schools are affected.

Q. I have younger students who ride the bus to the same school, why can't my student just ride along with them?

A. In order to apply this fairly, we need to treat all secondary students the same, this includes the middle school and high school as well as our K-8 schools in the district, Parkview, and the non public schools.

Q. Why do students who live more than two miles from school receive free bus service? Wouldn't it be fairer if everyone paid for service?

A. Schools districts are required by state law (MN 123B.88) to provide free transportation for all students who live more than two miles from their school. The district receives state funding for transportation based on the two-mile limit.

Q. Why does it cost more if I choose to pay my bus fee in four installments rather than one payment?

A. The added cost is necessary to cover the district's additional bookkeeping costs for handling multiple payments.

Q. I drive my children to school in the morning and they take the bus only in the afternoon. Why can't I pay half the fee?

A. We must purchase transportation services from our bus companies based on the bus use. Our costs do not go down for children who ride the bus only one way.

Q. Does the free/reduced cost lunch program (Educational Benefits Program) apply to transportation services?

A. Yes. State law requires school districts to make accommodations for families who cannot afford to pay the transportation fees in the same way they do for school meals. In order to qualify for free or reduced cost bus service, you must complete the "Application for Educational Benefits" form. The 2004-2005 "Application for Educational Benefits" form will be mailed by the Child Nutrition Department in July to every household in the district. If you believe your children are eligible for free or reduced cost meals and you have not received the application by the end of July, please call the **Nutrition Services Office at 651-628-6442** to request a form.

Q. My family receives free bus service because we are eligible for free lunch. Do I still have to apply for bus service?

A. Yes. You must submit the application. Circle Service Option C on the form.

Note: Depending on taxable family income, transportation fees may be tax deductible for some families. Please check with your tax advisor.

Q. Can students list more than one stop?

A. A student may have one pick up address, one drop off address and one alternate address. This allows parents to have their student ride the bus to an alternate (work) address on certain days and then ride to their home address on other days. If any of these addresses are less than two miles from school, there will be a fee. It will be the parent's responsibility to be sure the student knows which address to go to on which days. The bus drivers will not be able to maintain schedules for a student.

Q. How are the private schools affected by this change?

A. The law requires equal treatment in transportation service for private schools. Therefore, the private schools will have the same two-mile fee policy as the public schools.