



701.14AP Route Planning

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LEGAL REFERENCE:

- Alberta Highway Traffic Act;
- Education Act
- School Transportation Regulation 96/2019
- National Safety Code (Transport Canada);
- Alberta Transportation & Infrastructure;
- Canadian Standards Association
- D250-D270

CROSS REFERENCE:

- [701BP Student Transportation Services](#)
 - [701.15AP Bus Route Amalgamation Admin Procedures](#)
 - [701.17AP Yard Service/Turnarounds Admin Procedures](#)
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PROCEDURES:

The following procedures are established to provide the Transportation Department with criteria for designing bus routes. Although service to our students is our prime concern, the realities of economics must be borne in mind. Due to the realities of our diverse jurisdiction, there may be some exceptions to the procedures.

1. The Director of Transportation shall review and determine all rural bus routes. The Bus Contractor will determine the in town bus routes with consideration of ride times, student safety and numbers in accordance with BTPS policies and procedures with final approval from the Director of Transportation. Contractor rates for rural and in town/CFB Wainwright, Denwood, AB bus routes are subject to the Rural/Intown Student Transportation Agreement "Schedule C".

2. The school bus routes shall be operated pursuant to provincial statutes or regulations and are subject to change.
3. Transportation service will be provided along routes on provincial highways and municipal roads, and bus stops will be located at safe points along designated routes. It will be parental responsibility to have their children meet the bus at one of these safe points.
4. Permission may be granted to use a turn around that is not part of the municipal road system as per Administrative Procedures 701.24AP Paid Yard Service and/or 701.25AP Turnaround – Essential Private Property Pick Up/Drop Off.
5. The safety of rural bus stop locations will be determined as per Administrative Procedure 701.26AP Rural School Bus Stop Assessment and the associated criteria (701.26AP Exhibit 1).
6. Bus routes shall be designed with the understanding that many factors such as population density, location of schools, geographic features and location, railway crossings, highway crossings, and condition of roads all impinge on route design and distance.
7. When a bus's capacity reaches less than 10 students the Director of Transportation will look at the possibility of amalgamating. (refer to Administrative Procedure 701.15AP Bus Route Amalgamation).
8. Bus routes are to follow the shortest practical distance with no backtracking if possible. Conditions of roads available for use will be an exception. Buses will transport the legal limit of students within their current capacity. For example, if a bus has a capacity of thirty-six (36), thirty-six (36) students regardless of age or size will be permitted to be transported on that bus. This is regardless of funding received or payment made to the contractor.
 - 8.1. Buses will transport the legal limit of students within their current capacity. For example, if a bus has a capacity of thirty-six (36), thirty-six (36) students will be permitted to be transported on that bus. Exceptions may be made where physical space is limited due to the size of students as emergency exits and aisles must not be blocked as per current legislation.
9. The determination of required bus capacity and/or the addition of bus routes shall be based on current enrolments and any pertinent available information regarding new enrolment and/or relocation of students, new subdivisions, population growth areas, etc. If enlarging bus capacity would accommodate the increase in student numbers, but contravene the other route planning guidelines/policies, consideration will be given to adding/changing a bus route instead of changing bus capacity, if economically feasible.
10. Information concerning bus routes will be communicated to parents/guardians by the school/contractor/central service administration prior to the commencement of the instructional year (there may be exceptions). Added or discontinued yard service and/or turnarounds are not considered route changes.
11. Where handicapped students, or students with medical problems are on a bus route they may receive privileges such as yard pickup or later pickup.
12. Students who are on temporary exceptional medical care may receive temporary yard/door service subject to a doctor's certificate requesting such service and the approval of the Director of Transportation.
13. Highway crossings along a double lane highway will be limited where possible.

14. Turnarounds shall comply with Alberta Transportation S Endorsement and MELT 2S training programs.
15. Private lane use and turnarounds must be determined as being suitable for the safe operation of a school bus by the Director of Transportation.
16. A jurisdictional transportation system map and individual route maps shall be maintained by Student Transportation Services containing the following information:
 - 16.1. the first and all pick up points and times;
 - 16.2. number of students at each pick up point;
 - 16.3. the direction of travel;
 - 16.4. a list of names, grades and legal physical addresses of all eligible passengers.
17. Route Verification:
 - 17.1. The accuracy of all route distances shall be verified annually by the bus contractor and approved by the Director of Transportation.
 - 17.1.1 Route eligible distance (RED) should be calculated as follows:
 - a. Last School to First Pick Up (AM) - This is the distance from the last school in the morning to the first pickup (not ECS, unless they have siblings that ride) going the most direct/shortest route. Paved roads can be used if additional mileage does not exceed an additional 2 km per trip.
 - b. First Pick Up to Last School (AM) - This is the mileage from the first pickup (not ECS unless they have siblings that ride too) doing the entire route heading to the last school (if there is more than one school). Do not include mileage into yards, as per the Education Act and School Transportation Regulation 96/2019 transportation funding is calculated to the resident's gate/approach. The exception would be if the road into the yard is a forced MD/County township or range road and this would need to be verified by the Transportation Department with the County/MD or if a child has a physical disability. If it is a forced road, then mileage is calculated up to the residence gate/approach, not the house.
 - c. First School to Last Drop Off (PM) - This is the distance of the afternoon run starting with the first school students are picked up at, going to the other schools (if applicable), and then completing the afternoon route to the last drop off. Again, do not include mileage into yard or ECS unless they have siblings that ride too.
 - d. Last Drop Off to First School (PM) - This is the distance from the last stop in the afternoon (On non-ECS days unless they have siblings that ride) back to the first school you start at via the most direct/shortest distance. Again, paved roads can be used if additional mileage does not exceed an additional 2 km per trip.

- e. The total of these four mileage amounts (a.-d.) make up the regular Route Eligible Distance (RED).

 - f. Kilometres for ECS/kindergarten students who live “off route” will be added separately and will be paid based on the number of program days for that ECS/kindergarten program. “Off route” ECS mileage is when the bus must travel off the regular route to pick up an ECS student on ECS/kindergarten days only. The extra mileage is considered to be extra ECS kilometres.
- 17.2. The route eligible distance (RED) of all bus routes will be calculated using the transportation logistics software program based on the maps and student listings submitted by the contractor and verified by the SIS Department of Buffalo Trail Public Schools and/or its cooperative bussing partnering boards based on the September 30th student counts.
 - 17.3. The bus contractor will be expected to review their route and student listing using the logistics software program. Contractor payments will be based on the mileage and best weighted load verified to be true and correct as calculated above. If an agreement on RED cannot be reached using the logistics software the route will be driven using a certified vehicle.
 - 17.4. Any adjustments shall be retroactive to September 30th count date and the first day of school. Adjustments as required shall be reflected in the following month. If necessary, the adjustment may be deducted over a three-month period providing that the total amount owing is paid in full by the end of the current fiscal year (August 31).
 - 17.5 Eligible students (those living 2.4 km or more from their designated school) and those living on a road 80 km/hr. or greater in grades ECS to 6 are counted as 1 for best weighted load and Grades 7-12 are counted as 1.5 for best weighted load. Students in a wheel chair are weighted as 8 or the bus contractor will be paid for the size of the bus (whichever is greater) if they had to purchase a bus with a lift. Inclusive learning students and aides will be funded as per the funding manual. If the inclusive learning code is a 40, 41, 42, 44 or 46 the student will receive a BWL of 3.
 - 17.5.1 Best Weighted Load (BWL) for rural bus routes is calculated based on students verified to be funded by Alberta Education at September 30th of the current school year.
 - 17.5.2 Students must be funded for transportation by Alberta Education or have paid the Foreign/Out of Province Transportation Fee and registered on a bus in order for a bus contractor to be able to include them in their BWL.

- 17.5.3 BWL is not adjusted for after September 30th when students move in or off of the bus route. BWL may be adjusted if the student has been deemed by Alberta Education to be unfunded/funded after the September 30th deadline.
 - 17.5.4 Contractor mileage will be adjusted for those bus routes that increase 4km/day or more per new pick up after the September 30th deadline. The added kilometers will be calculated at their current kilometer rate and BWL will not be adjusted. The addition of kilometers will begin on the date that the students at the new pickup started riding. Mileage will be verified using the transportation logistics software program.
 - 17.5.5 A student who drives themselves to/from school, but is eligible for transportation funding and has registered for the bus will be included in the contractor's BWL and RED.
- 18. It is expected that school bus operators will provide information to the Director of Transportation with regard to designing more safe and efficient routes.
 - 19. The Director of Transportation will send out the Route Planning Questionnaire (701.14AP Exhibit 1) for bus contractors and drivers to complete in regards to new students or students that may have moved or graduated on their bus routes.
 - 20. BusPlanner Web login information will be sent annually to the municipal offices within the jurisdiction before the start of the new school year. Changes to existing routes will be forwarded to the municipal offices as they occur.
 - 21. When significant changes to bus routes are made, the Director of Transportation must contact the Trustee(s) from the impacted bussing area and inform them of the changes that will be occurring and the families that will be impacted by the changes.
 - 22. All proposed bus route amalgamations will be presented to the Board for approval as per Administrative Procedure 701.15AP Bus Route Amalgamation.