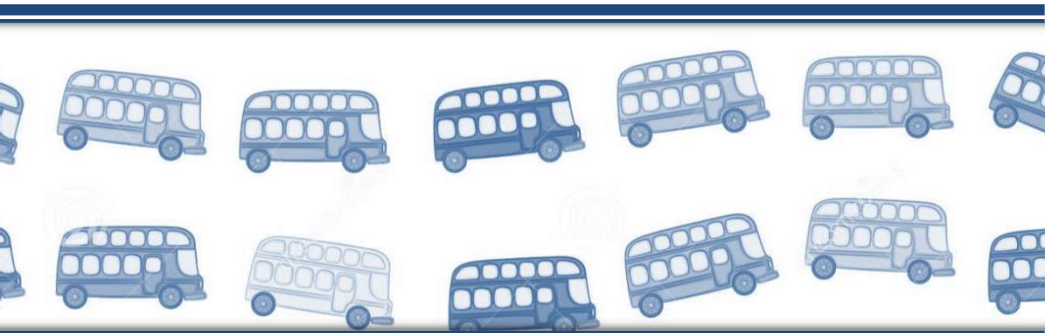




*SD#61 Transportation
Information and Guidelines*



Transportation Information and Guidelines

This document is a reference to assist with our goal to provide effective, safe, efficient and reliable bus transportation services for SD#61 students and schools, at no cost to families.

For more information please visit our webpage at:

<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/departments-services/facilities-department/student-transportation/>

All email inquiries to: Transportation@sd61.bc.ca



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Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians can assist in our efforts to maintain the highest standards of safety and acceptable student behavior on SD#61 school buses by adhering to the following general use guidelines:

All Parents:

1. Communication to parents will be primarily via email, so please ensure the Transportation Dept. has your current email address, as well as any changes to home address or contact info.
2. School bus drivers can only pick up and drop off approved riders at an authorized regular daily stop. Drivers cannot make changes to these stops without authorization from the Transportation Dept.
3. Transportation for non-school related functions are the parent's responsibility. Only those students eligible for transportation are entitled to ride a bus that has been assigned to them.
4. Regular program bussing students must have their GVSD Bus Pass on them at all times when they are riding the school bus.
5. All students must apply for bussing each and every year regardless of previous service. Applications are to be made during designated dates using the On-Line Registration portal on the website.
6. New Students can apply for Transportation throughout the year via email.
7. Students must reside within the established English school catchment area to be eligible for bussing. Please refer to the **School Locator**: <https://www.sd61.bc.ca>.
8. All primary and alternate address changes must be received by the Transportation Dept. immediately. All changes require a minimum of one week's notice.

9. Please contact the Transportation Dept. if your child no longer requires bussing.
10. If your child leaves any belongings on the bus, please contact the appropriate bus company. It is recommended that student's name be written on belongings.
11. Be aware of your child's bus company name, route #, and driver name to make addressing any issues easier.

Additional Information regarding Regular Program Bussing

1. Students must be approved to ride the bus and show their GVSD bus pass on every trip.
2. If your child loses their GVSD bus pass, please contact the Transportation Dept.
3. GVSD Bus Passes are not transferrable to other students.
4. Only approved riders are permitted on the bus (eg friends coming over for a visit after school are not permitted on bus).
5. Inappropriate behavior on the bus can result in temporary or permanent suspension of bussing.

Additional Information re Inclusive Learning (Special Needs) Bussing

1. The GVSD Transportation Dept. will do our best to ensure Inclusive Learning riders are serviced within one hour. This is not guaranteed due to door to door service which can experience scheduling issues due to traffic, loading, student absences etc.
2. Parents/Guardians are to be home to escort/receive student to/from the bus (unless indicated on application form).
3. If a parent/guardian is not home to receive the student after school, the bus company will phone the parent and emergency contact. If neither is immediately available, the driver will return student to the school for the parent to pick up. Parents could be invoiced for any overtime charges.
4. One alternate address (after school care, respite) can be requested for approval by the Transportation Department.

5. The order of student pickup and drop off is usually determined by rider address (but not always), so that the fastest and most efficient route can be designed and implemented.
6. Any special requests/route changes must be approved through the Transportation Dept. Please do not contact the contracted bus company.
7. Student behavior/safety concerns can result in the student being returned to the school and not transported home. In this case, it would be the parent's responsibility to pick up their child from the school.
8. Please disclose any medical information (not given on application form) pertinent to bussing that will assist with your child's transportation.
9. Assist your child to/from place of residence and the bus, This is not the bus driver's responsibility.
10. Have your child ready for pickup 5 minutes early. The bus waits approximately 3 minutes after the scheduled time before leaving.
11. Contact the Transportation Dept. for any approval regarding an adult or service animal that **must** travel on the bus with the student (eg nurse, educational assistant). These adults must have criminal record checks.
12. Please be aware Transportation will be arranged as efficiently as possible. Notify the Transportation Dept. as soon as possible of any changes to contact, address, and/or caregiver information.

Additional Info regarding BC Transit Passes

1. BC Transit passes are delivered to the schools prior to month end for the following month.
2. If your child qualifies for a free Victoria City BC Transit pass, they **do not** qualify for a GVSD funded BC Transit pass.
3. Passes are not transferrable to other students. Students are to fill out the back of their bus pass.
4. Lost or stolen passes will not be replaced by the school district. If your child loses their pass or other belongings, refer to:

<https://www.bctransit.com/contact/victoria/lost-and-found>

5. To report a BC Transit concern or general inquiry, refer to:
<https://www.bctransit.com/contact>
6. Please review BC Transit **Bus Etiquette** with your child:
<https://www.bctransit.com/victoria/riderinfo/etiquette>
7. **Special Needs** students may be eligible for BC Transit rider training through the Community Travel Training service (registration with HandyDART not required):
<https://www.bctransit.com/travel-training-victoria/riderinfo/accessibility/travel-training>

School Bus Safety

1. GVSD Transportation Dept. strives to ensure the safest possible bus transportation for all of our eligible students.
2. Ultimately, each parent has the right and legal obligation to protect their child. You may decide to keep your child at home, at any time, if you feel that conditions are not conducive to have him/her transported to school.
3. When buses are cancelled due to inclement weather, but the school remains open, it is your responsibility to either arrange your own transportation to and from school or to keep your child at home.
4. Please ensure that your child is at the bus stop a minimum of 5 minutes prior to the arrival of the bus. The bus will wait approximately 3 minutes after the scheduled time.
5. Ensure that you meet your child on the same side of the street where they exit the bus.
6. Parents/guardians should not attempt to stop or delay the bus at any time or board the bus without the driver's permission.
7. Remember you are responsible for your child's safety and conduct prior to boarding the bus and following drop-off at a designated stop.
8. Make sure that your child's belongings are securely packed in their school bag.
9. Objects that may interfere with student or vehicle safety cannot be permitted on the school bus.
10. Ensure that clothing toggles/drawstrings are not left dangling, as they can become snagged on school bus handrails, doors or other mechanical equipment which may result in injuries.

Rules for Riding the Bus Safely - Regular Bussing

Please share the following with your child:

1. Routes are designed for right side drop off/pickup to avoid students having to cross in front of bus.
2. Wait safely for bus, back from the side of the road.
3. No running to or from bus, and wait for bus to come to complete stop.
4. Hold handrails and no pushing others.
5. No cellphone use while boarding/disembarking.
6. Seated promptly and properly, facing forward at all times.
7. Remain in one seat during ride, and until bus comes to a complete stop.
8. Belongings placed under the seat or on lap.
9. Keep the aisle of the bus clear at all times.
10. No placing of items or body parts out of the window, at any time for any reason.
11. Throwing objects inside or outside of the bus is not permitted
12. Speak quietly, as the driver needs to concentrate on driving safely.
13. Fighting, shouting, or using obscene language is not permitted.
14. Students to be aware of all bus evacuation procedures.
15. Dangerous or distracting objects are not permitted on the bus.
16. Eating, gum chewing and drinking are not allowed on school bus at any time. This rule protects riders that have food allergies and anaphylaxis, prevents choking, and maintains bus cleanliness.
17. Be aware that other students and the bus driver may have sensitivities to scents such as perfume, etc.
18. Always follow the bus driver's instructions.
19. Exit the bus in a safe and orderly manner – single file.
20. Never stand in the danger zone below (close enough to touch the bus).



Transporting Articles on the School Bus

Due to limited storage, space on bus, and safety, parents will need to contact the bus companies directly if your child is transporting equipment other than a backpack and school supplies.

Seatbelt Cover/Vest for Inclusive Learning Students

1. Bus privileges may be suspended if a student won't remain seated for safety reasons.
2. If a student will not remain seated, the driver may use a "seatbelt cover" to safely transport the student. This cover is placed over the existing seatbelt, and can only be removed by the driver.
3. A vest may be ordered if the student can get out of the seatbelt cover or other issues.
4. Please contact the Transportation Dept. if you have any questions.



Disciplinary Action for Regular Bussing

Improper conduct by a student riding on the bus or waiting for the bus may result in temporary or permanent withdrawal of service.

1. School buses under contract with the GVSD are considered to be an extension of the school system. Consequently, the disciplinary standards set by your school; the GVSD Transportation Dept. and school board apply to all vehicle passengers.
2. Students whose behavior endangers the safety or interferes with the comfort of others may have their riding privileges revoked.
3. Students are accountable to their School Principal for their behavior on the school bus.
4. The bus driver acts on behalf of the GVSD. Students must obey instructions from the driver.
5. Compensation for damage of GVSD property by a student, may be the responsibility of the parents/guardian.

Process of Disciplinary Action for Regular Bussing

1. The driver is required to report inappropriate student behavior/ incidents to the GVSD Transportation Dept. in writing.
2. The Transportation Dept. will forward the incident report to the Principal.
3. The Principal will notify the parents/guardians of the incident.
4. With respect to major incidents, the Transportation Dept. and/or Principal may decide upon immediate withdrawal of bus service, either temporarily or permanent.
5. The Principal will notify the school Superintendent, as well as the parents/ guardians, of any bus suspensions.

Inclusive Learning - Bus Incidents

The Transportation Dept. will make every effort to problem solve any bus incidents with Principal's/school staff to ensure students are successful on the bus. The school Principal will communicate these issues to the parent/guardian.

School Bus Incident Reports

The drivers must issue a report to be received by the GVSD Transportation Dept. for the following:

1. Actions which significantly distract the driver
2. Actions which cause harm to other students/driver (verbal or physical)
3. Failure to remain safely seated while the bus is in motion
4. Safety concerns or medical issues
5. Actions causing damage to the bus
6. Any other conduct which would raise concern in the classroom



Inclement Weather Procedures

1. During an emergency or inclement weather, it is a priority to communicate effectively to parents, and students.
2. The GVSD works closely with local municipalities and emergency services to gather accurate information about road conditions and safety considerations.
3. The GVSD works quickly to determine impact to school so parents can adjust plans accordingly in the early morning hours. We try to determine school closures due to inclement weather by 6:30 am. If schools are closed, an alert will appear on the GVSD website.
4. The GVSD website should be used as the primary point of contact for accurate updates about inclement weather or emergencies.
5. Please use the GVSD website as your official source of information and current status of bussing across the District: www.sd61.bc.ca

Twitter and Facebook

Updates will also be posted on the Greater Victoria School District

 Twitter Account: [@sd61schools](https://twitter.com/sd61schools)

 Facebook page, [Greater Victoria School District](https://www.facebook.com/GreaterVictoriaSchoolDistrict).

Help us share updates by sharing posts with your friends and followers on Twitter and Facebook.

Local Media Outlets

1. To reach as many people as possible – as quickly as possible – the GVSD works closely with our local media to share information.
2. Listen to local radio stations and follow local news outlets for updates on the impact of severe weather on school schedules.

If schools are open, and weather conditions deteriorate during the morning, an early dismissal may be decided upon. If this happens, the Transportation Dept. will notify parents via email with the new dismissal time and other bussing information. Schools may also assist by phoning bussing parents. Please check your email on any days it is snowing and your child is at school.

Student Safety is a Shared Responsibility

Student safety is our first priority, and a shared responsibility. The GVSD is large and we understand that some areas are more difficult to travel than others. It is a parent's decision to choose to keep students home due to road conditions. Please call your child's school regarding absences. If your child uses Special Need bussing, please also call the contracted bus company regarding absences. The decision to attend school is the responsibility of each family.



For more information please visit our webpage at:

<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/departments-services/facilities-department/student-transportation/>

All email inquiries to: Transportation@sd61.bc.ca

Thank you for riding with the Greater Victoria School District