

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Transportation Department

Frequently Asked Questions Fall 2018



We hope this information is helpful in assisting our families as we transition into the new transportation system at the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (ABRSD). For further clarification on these topics, or any other questions, please call the Department at 978-264-3328 or go to the Transportation section of our school website at <https://www.abschools.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=216111&pageId=6075119>.

When will the school bus routes be posted?

We plan to post the new school bus routes on August 20th. Routes can be viewed using our infofinder tool (<http://www.infofinder.com/ifi/?cid=ARS5OMB7LJU3>), or on our school website (see above).

Will I have the same bus number and same bus driver as in past years?

Most families will experience a change in bus numbers and bus drivers. All routes have changed and these 40 new routes (a route consists of one HS/JrH run coupled with one elementary run) were put out to bid to all drivers using a seniority preference model to determine choice. It will be important that you review the new information for this school year.

Will the bus routes be longer?

Most students will experience more time on the bus, although we are still operating under a “not to exceed 45 minutes” bus ride time. In order to minimize bus ride time as much as possible, we have worked to create consolidated routes and bus stops that are safe and efficient. Please note bus ride time does not include the time it may take for a student to exit the school and load onto the bus.

Is there assigned seating on the school bus?

Seating on the bus is assigned by age / grade level with the youngest students taking the seats in the front of the bus and older students moving towards the rear of the bus. The seating is color coded to allow for simple visual recognition for all students.

What are the expectations for student behavior while riding the bus?

In general, all students are expected to board the bus and sit in an appropriate seat. Students are expected to remain seated at all times, facing forward and speaking quietly only to other

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students who are next to them. For a complete list of rider expectations please see our Transportation website at the address above.

Do I need to be at the bus stop with my Kindergarten student?

The expectation is that Kindergarten students will be escorted to and from the bus stop by a parent / guardian or other responsible party. For grades 1 and 2, bus drivers expect to see a responsible party within the line of sight of the driver. Grades 3-6 will be released at the appropriate stop by drivers at all times, unless parents / guardians express concerns to the Transportation Department regarding their individual situations. Parents / guardians of Grade 1 and 2 students can also send a request in writing to the Transportation Department authorizing the release of their students without having a responsible party in the driver's line of sight. Parents / guardians are responsible for students' behavior while waiting at the bus stop.

Will my bus stop change?

In order to reduce the total amount of time that students are on the bus, we have identified safe areas where school bus stop consolidation was feasible. There is a strong possibility that your school bus stop will change this year. This year there will be more safe bus stops that multiple families will walk to as a group to be picked up at one time.

How does the school district evaluate a school bus stop for safety?

The ABRSD Transportation Department evaluates every proposed school bus stop for safety. The Department considers if the bus stop needs to be driver door side or not. We evaluate the walk to the bus stop, and the proposed areas where students will stand and wait. The Department contacts the Acton Police Department Safety Officer or the Boxborough Police Department if there are any safety questions to get their professional opinion.

How do I request an evaluation if I do not agree that my bus stop is safe?

A request to re-evaluate your bus stop location may be emailed to us at ABRSDtransportationbusstopeval@abschools.org. ABRSD Transportation has a long standing practice working with the local police departments to provide independent 3rd party evaluation of a potential school bus stop. Your request will be reviewed as quickly as possible and an explanation of the process and determination will be provided to you.

Can I request a bus pass for my student to take an alternative bus?

We try our very best to accommodate parent / guardian requests for one day bus passes as well as permanent bus pass changes. Procedures can be found on the Transportation website (see above). Obviously, bus seats must be held for those students going from school to home on their own assigned bus. We cannot accept bus passes from students who do not live on the specific bus route if there are not enough safe seats.

Who do I contact if I have concerns about student behavior on the bus?

Please contact the Transportation Department at 978-264-3328 or the Principal of your school to voice your concerns.

Who do I contact if I have concerns about my school bus driver?

Please contact the Transportation Department at 978-264-3328.

My child said there are more students on the bus this year compared to past years. Is this true?

Bus routes have been safely created to maximize efficiency and bus capacity and utilization. The transportation department expects to see higher ridership counts (more students) on all of the elementary school bus routes.

Who do I contact to inquire about “lost and found” items on the school bus?

Please contact the Transportation Department at 978-264-3328 and select the lost and found voicemail box. Community members could also send an email to ABRSDtransportationlostandfound@abschools.org.

When does my child need to be at the bus stop?

We ask families to be at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to the posted arrival time. If the bus is late, we ask families to stay at least 10 minutes after the posted time. Schedules will be more erratic the first couple of weeks of school but it will normalize and bus stop times will become more consistent as the school year progresses.

How do I know it is safe for my child to approach the bus?

We teach and use the “Thumbs Up” protocol which can be found on the Transportation website (see above).

What can I do to prepare my child for the bus ride?

Please review the Thumbs Up procedures with your child, as well as all of our student behavior expectations, your bus route and bus stop information.

The Transportation Department staff wish all families a great start to the new school year!

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