



# WCS TRANSPORTATION SERVICES HANDBOOK



<https://www.westmountcharter.com/parents/transportation/>

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## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

### Student Transportation

The primary goal of Westmount Charter School (WCS) Transportation Services is to ensure the safe and efficient transport of students to and from their designated residence. School buses are considered an extension of the school environment, and students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the behavioural expectations outlined in Administrative Procedure 340 - Student Code of Conduct.

The bus driver is responsible for student supervision from pick-up to drop-off and must be treated with respect and cooperation at all times. Drivers enforce expectations established by WCS, the *Education Act*, applicable regulations, and provincial transportation legislation. Families are encouraged to review transportation safety expectations with their children.

This WCS Transportation Services Handbook has been developed to help families understand the Westmount Charter School transportation system.

### Legislative Authority

Under the [Education Act](#) and the [Student Transportation Regulation](#), a school board may provide transportation services for students who:

- Reside within the attendance area of the school in which they are enrolled;
- Reside within the school division boundary; and
- Meet the minimum distance eligibility requirements:
  - ECS to Grade 6: Students residing more than 1.6 kilometres from the school
  - Grades 7 to 12: Students residing more than 2.0 kilometres from the school

In accordance with the *Education Act* and related regulations, the Board may levy transportation fees to recover the costs of providing student transportation services.

### Route Information

Bus routes and stop locations are established with safety as the primary consideration. Routes are designed to provide efficient and equitable service within available resources.

The following criteria guide route planning:

1. **Annual Review** - Bus routes and stop locations are reviewed annually based on spring transportation registrations and projected enrolment.

2. **Single Route Assignment** - Students are assigned to one designated bus route. Transportation is provided between the approved residence and the assigned stop.
3. **Community Stop Model** - Community stops are used to serve the greatest number of families and reduce travel time; door-to-door or end-of-block service is not provided.
4. **Ride Time** - Routes are designed to limit travel time to approximately one hour where possible. In some cases, students living farther away may experience longer ride times due to geographic factors.
5. **Service Area** - Transportation service is provided within Calgary city limits. Families residing outside city boundaries may access transportation by travelling to the nearest approved in-city stop.
6. **Stop Selection Criteria** - Stops are selected based on:
  - Student safety;
  - Road accessibility and municipal traffic regulations;
  - Route efficiency;
  - Visibility and safe loading/unloading conditions; and
  - Number of students served.
7. **Route Design** - Routes travel along major roadways where possible to promote efficiency and minimize travel time. Stops are created to balance safety, accessibility, and operational sustainability.
8. **Route Change Requests** - Parents/guardians must not approach drivers to request route or stop changes. All requests must be directed to the Transportation Coordinator.
9. **New or Modified Stops** - Requests for new stops or modifications to existing stops are subject to review and approval. Consideration will be given to safety, distance, route timing, and overall impact on service.
10. **Temporary Changes** - Temporary transportation adjustments may be considered on a case-by-case basis for illness, medical needs, or emergencies. Written requests must be submitted to the Transportation Coordinator at [schoolbus@westmountcharter.com](mailto:schoolbus@westmountcharter.com).

*Westmount Charter School reserves the right to modify routes and stop locations during the school year to address safety concerns, rider demand, or operational efficiency.*

## BASIC TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

### Pick-Up Times

At the start of the school year, WCS will communicate morning pick-up times to families. Routes are reviewed in September to ensure safety and operational efficiency, and times will be finalized as soon as possible.

Pick-up times may change during the school year due to route adjustments or operational considerations. Families will be notified of any changes in a timely manner.

### Late for Pick-Up

Students must be at their assigned stop and ready to board at least five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. Buses operate on a fixed schedule and cannot wait for late students.

If a student misses the bus, parents/guardians are responsible for arranging alternate transportation. Families are encouraged to have a contingency plan in place in the event of delays, inclement weather, or unforeseen route interruptions.

### Drop-Off Times

Afternoon drop-off times may vary due to traffic conditions, absences, or route modifications. Buses may arrive earlier or later than anticipated; therefore, families must ensure appropriate supervision and arrangements are in place.

### School Boundaries

In accordance with the *Education Act*, the Board establishes school attendance boundaries. Students are transported to their designated school within the established attendance area, subject to eligibility and transportation regulations. Transportation service for WCS is provided within Calgary city limits only.

### School Bus Loading and Unloading

The most hazardous part of a school bus ride is loading and unloading. The “Danger Zone” refers to the area within approximately three (3) metres on all sides of the bus where students may not be visible to the driver.

School zones are in effect from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on school days. Bus loading areas must remain clear during arrival and dismissal times. Students must not jaywalk, run between buses, or play in bus loading zones or parking lots.

Parents/guardians and drivers share responsibility for ensuring students understand and follow proper loading and unloading procedures.

### *Before Boarding the Bus*

1. Arrive at the stop at least five (5) minutes before the scheduled departure time. The posted time is the time the bus leaves the stop.
2. Wait in an orderly manner, safely back from the roadway or designated pick-up zone.
3. Stand at a safe distance from the bus until it has come to a complete stop.
4. Use a backpack or book bag to prevent loose papers or books from falling near the bus.
5. Ensure clothing, backpack straps, and jacket strings are secured to prevent entanglement in the bus doors.

### *Boarding the Bus*

1. Board in a single file and use the handrail when entering.
2. Sit down immediately and remain seated facing forward.
3. Keep feet, backpacks, and belongings out of the aisle.
4. Speak quietly and avoid distracting the driver.
5. Keep hands, arms, and head inside the bus at all times.
6. Do not throw objects inside the bus or out the windows.

### *Unloading the Bus*

1. Remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop and the doors have opened.
2. Exit in an orderly manner using the handrail.
3. After exiting, take five (5) large steps away from the bus to move out of the Danger Zone.
4. Remain at a safe distance and wait until the bus has departed before approaching the roadway.
5. If crossing in front of the bus, wait for the driver's signal and ensure traffic has stopped in both directions before proceeding.
6. Never cross the street between parked or stopped vehicles.
7. Walk to the nearest safe intersection when crossing is required.

### *Additional Safety Considerations*

During shorter daylight hours, reflective material on winter clothing and backpacks is strongly recommended.

Students must follow all directions provided by the bus driver at all times.

## BUS RULES

In accordance with WCS Board policies and Administrative Procedure 340 - Student Code of Conduct, the following expectations apply to all students while riding the school bus or waiting at a bus stop. These rules are in place to ensure a safe, orderly, and respectful environment for all riders.

Students are accountable for their conduct to the bus driver and ultimately to the Principal. Serious or repeated violations of these expectations may result in suspension of bus riding privileges and/or additional school-based consequences.

### Student Expectations

1. The bus driver is in full charge of the bus at all times. Students must follow the driver's instructions promptly and respectfully.
2. Students may be assigned a seat by the driver and are expected to remain in that seat unless directed otherwise.
3. Students must be at their assigned stop at least five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled departure time. Pick-up times are available on the [MyBusStop](#) application.
4. Students must not distract the driver. Unnecessary conversation or behaviour that interferes with the safe operation of the bus is prohibited.
5. Behaviour expectations on the bus are the same as in school. Any conduct that endangers safety is not permitted.
6. To prevent allergic reactions and choking hazards, eating is not permitted on regular school buses. Food must remain sealed in backpacks. Drinking water is allowed.
7. Portable music devices may be used with personal headphones only.
8. All personal items must fit securely on the student's lap or under the seat. Large instruments and unsecured equipment (e.g., skis, skateboards, skates, balls) are not permitted.
9. Tobacco products, vaping devices, drugs/controlled substances, contraband, and weapons are strictly prohibited.
10. Littering or throwing objects inside or outside the bus is prohibited.
11. Students must keep all parts of their bodies inside the bus at all times.
12. Students must remain seated, facing forward, while the bus is in motion.
13. Students may only disembark at their assigned stop unless written authorization from a parent/guardian has been approved through the Transportation Department.
14. When exiting the bus, students must follow the driver's instructions and check carefully for traffic before crossing the road.

## Supervision of Younger Students

Kindergarten and Grade 1 students may only disembark if a parent/guardian or designated caregiver is present at the stop. If no authorized adult is present and cannot be reached, the student will be transported to the nearest Calgary Police Service station for supervision. The student will not be returned to the school, and any associated overtime costs may be billed to the family.

Families are responsible for ensuring contact and emergency information remains current.

## Consequences

Students who violate these expectations may be reported to the Principal and may face suspension from bus riding privileges and/or additional disciplinary action in accordance with school policy.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN CHECKLIST

Parents/guardians play an important role in ensuring safe and successful student transportation. Please review the following responsibilities:

1. Complete the Transportation Registration form online with accurate contact information.
2. Ensure children arrive at the pick-up location five minutes early; do not wait in your vehicle.
3. Teach children to respect property and avoid using private property as a gathering spot.
4. Dress children appropriately for the weather.
5. Be responsible for any willful damage caused by your child on the bus.
6. Ensure children can recognize their bus stop and get home safely.
7. Attach name, address, and phone number to clothing or backpack for Kindergarten, Grade 1, and first-time riders.
8. Escort and meet young children at the bus stop to ensure safety.
9. Provide necessary medication and ensure children know how to use it.
10. Establish emergency procedures for delays, no one home, or school closures.
11. Ensure Kindergarten and Grade 1 children wear bus tags and know their phone numbers.
12. Have a backup plan for bus delays and ensure children know it.
13. Encourage children to talk to the bus driver if they are unsure about stops or get on the wrong bus; they should not get off at an unfamiliar stop.
14. Review bus safety rules and expectations regularly with your children.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Westmount Charter School is committed to keeping parents/guardians informed of bus delays and cancellations in a timely manner.

Transportation updates are communicated through:

- Westmount Charter School website
- [MyBusStop Transportation App](#) (families are strongly encouraged to download the app and enable notifications for real-time updates)

These platforms are used to ensure timely, consistent communication about delays, cancellations, and service changes.

The website and app are updated to reflect delays exceeding 15 minutes and route cancellations.

In the event of a cancelled route, the Transportation Coordinator will contact affected families directly. If a bus breakdown occurs, the driver will notify the Transportation Coordinator immediately, and updates will be posted online for families and school administration as information becomes available.

To ensure accurate routing and timely communication, parents/guardians must notify their child's campus promptly of any change of address or contact information. Please email updated details to:

- [ecadmin@westmountcharter.com](mailto:ecadmin@westmountcharter.com) – Westmount Charter School Elementary Campus
- [mhadmin@westmountcharter.com](mailto:mhadmin@westmountcharter.com) - Westmount Charter School Mid-High Campus

Keeping contact information up to date helps us maintain safe, efficient transportation services for all students.

### Contact Information for Transportation Services



Westmount Charter School  
728-32<sup>nd</sup> Street NW, Calgary, Alberta T2N 2V9  
403-217-0426  
[schoolbus@westmountcharter.com](mailto:schoolbus@westmountcharter.com)

### Closing

The safety and well-being of our students is a shared responsibility, and we appreciate families' partnership in reinforcing transportation expectations. Thank you for supporting a safe and respectful bus experience for all Westmount students.