



**Bus Dispatch available 7:00 am – 8:15 am and 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm**

**Rental Bus Lines 780-660-4950**

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# **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK**

Effective October 2021



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## SCHOOL BUS RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### **MASKS ARE MANDATORY FOR ALL STUDENTS 2021 - 2022**

Students will be required to sit with their siblings (no exceptions) and, in some cases, students from different households may also be required to sit together.

In accordance with Aurora Academic Charter School, the following rules are the expectations for Aurora students while on or waiting for the school bus. These rules have been established to ensure that a safe, clean and comfortable environment is maintained for all riders.

The school bus is considered an extension of the classroom and therefore classroom conduct is to be observed at all times. The bus driver is responsible for the students on his/her bus and must therefore, receive the respect, consideration and co-operation of each student and parent.

### PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Bus operators cannot make changes to the route without authorization from Lisa Weidel, Transportation Manager, if you need to change your child's stop, please contact Lisa @ [lweidel@auroraschool.ca](mailto:lweidel@auroraschool.ca)**
- Each Aurora school bus has a colored route sign in the front/side window of the school bus with the route number. Teach your child the number of the bus they ride i.e. Bus #5, Bus #11, etc. Make sure your Kindergarten child has the colored bus tag attached to their backpack, this is given from the teacher. This tag identifies which bus the student should be taking and corresponds with the route sign as displayed in the front/side window of the bus.
  - #1 - Red
  - #2 - Yellow
  - #3 - Brown
  - #4 - Black
  - #5 - Purple
  - #6 - Dark Green
  - #7 - Gray
  - #8 - Blue
  - #9 - White
  - #10 - Pink
  - #11 - Lime Green
  - #12 – Orange
- Parents will acknowledge and respect the bus operator's authority and responsibility for the bus.
- Parents will ensure their child/children are punctual and are waiting & standing at the designated pickup location **five minutes prior** to the scheduled stop time, bus leaves at scheduled time.
- Parents will ensure their child/children respect public and private property while waiting for the bus and do not use private property for a gathering point while waiting for the bus.
- Parents will ensure their child/children are properly dressed for the weather conditions.
- Parents are responsible for their child/children's safety prior to boarding the bus in the morning and once they have got off the bus in the afternoon.

- Parents will ensure their child/children know how to recognize their bus stop and find their way home safely (if applicable).
- Parents will make sure their kindergarten child is wearing his/her colored bus tag on their backpack. This tag identifies which bus the student is to be riding and corresponds the route sign in the front window of the bus.
- Parents are responsible for their child/children's behavior on the bus and will assist in resolving discipline problems.
- Parents are responsible financially for vandalism to the bus caused by their child/children while riding on the school bus.
- Parents are responsible for establishing emergency procedures for their child/children so they know what to do if:
  - the bus is late or does not arrive
  - no one is home, or
  - there is an emergency school closure
- Parents must abide by the rules and regulations of the Highway Traffic Act (therefore not impeding the flow of traffic by parking or blocking a highway, roadway or traffic lane to get their children to the bus stop).
- Parents and unregistered or part time students are not permitted to ride the yellow school buses.
- Students in Grade 1 thru 9 are permitted to get off the bus alone at their designated stop. Kindergarten students however, are **not** permitted to get off the bus at their designated stop, unless a parent/guardian is at the stop. If a parent/guardian is not present, Bus Operator will radio Rental Bus Lines dispatch to advise that there is no parent, Rental Bus Lines School Buses will attempt to contact the parents. The bus operators may take the child with them as they complete the route and will remain with that child until he/she is picked up either at a stop or is delivered to an Edmonton Police Station. The child will not be brought back to the school. Please ensure your younger child/children know their telephone number and have it written down in their homework book.
- In preparation for delayed or cancelled service, it is critical that parents develop a back-up plan that is well understood by their children. Please anticipate that there will be days on which your bus is significantly delayed. Parents are responsible to the point at which the student boards the bus, Rental Bus Lines is responsible while the student is being transported. Never leave children at the stop without backup arrangements in the event of an emergency. Refer to the EZ GPS tracking app to find the location of the bus.

Parents will respect decisions of the Transportation Manager (in cooperation with Rental Bus Lines). In addition to the adherence to our transportation rules and procedures, we ask our parents to:

- Report any behavioral difficulties their child/children has experienced with fellow riders to the driver first, if it is not resolved through the driver contact Lisa Weidel, Transportation Manager 780-454-1855 ext 170. Aurora School will not tolerate bullying or misconduct if any kind and must be advised of any potential difficulties.
- Report any difficulties you experience with your bus operators to the Transportation Manager.

Bus operators are asked to report in writing to Aurora School their observation of any parent who approaches a bus operators with a request to alter a route, yelling/verbal abuse to the driver, tries to stop the bus at an unscheduled stop, pulls in front of the bus, or otherwise endangers the safety of the bus and/or its riders. The safety of children is our number one priority. Any of these actions could result in the possible bus suspension of your child.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The school bus is considered an extension of the classroom and therefore classroom conduct is to be observed at all times.**

- The bus operators is in full charge of the bus and the bus operator's directions **must** be obeyed.
- Students are responsible for their conduct to the bus operators and ultimately to the Principal(s). Serious or continued violation of these rules may lead to the loss of riding privileges and possible bus or school suspension.
- Students can only get off the bus at their designated stops, unless their parents have advised the school via a signed written note in the homework book or letter.
- **Posted time is departure time, therefore students are required to be standing and waiting at the bus stop five minutes before the posted time, not in the vehicle.** Buses will leave at the posted time if the student is not there or just reaching the stop. If the student misses the bus the parent can meet the bus at a stop after theirs as long as it doesn't impede the bus driver at the next stop (no chasing the bus, flashing lights, cutting off the bus, etc.)
- Students will respect public and private property while waiting for the bus and line up properly as the bus prepares to stop, keeping a safe distance from the bus.
- Students must conduct themselves in a quiet, courteous and respectful manner, showing consideration for the comfort and safety of others.
- Students will sit in the seat assigned to them by the bus operators.
- While the bus is in motion students must remain seated at all times.
- Items blocking aisles or emergency exits on a school bus are in violation of Alberta Transportation regulations and are NOT permitted
- Students will not open or adjust the window openings without the bus operator's permission.
- Food or drink is **not** permitted on the school bus, only water in a proper container.
- Students must not throw waste or other materials on the floor or out the windows of the bus.
- Students will be held accountable for willful damage to a bus.
- All items brought aboard the bus must be of adequate size to sit on the students lap. Poster boards can be kept with the student in their seat, not behind the driver's seat. If it should impede the safety of other students in the seat, they will not be allowed. Soccer balls, footballs, basket balls and skates are only allowed in a zippered bag or backpack, not a plastic grocery bag. Hockey sticks are not allowed on the bus, no exceptions.
- Students may play portable music devices using personal headphones only.

## **BUS OPERATOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Obey all rules and regulations of the Highway Traffic Act at all time.
- Adhere to the bus schedules that have been established by Aurora School.
- Pick up and drop off students only at the bus stops designated by Aurora School.
- Upon early arrival at Aurora School, bus operators will not allow students to exit the bus until the supervisors have arrived outside. Supervision starts at 8:15 am, **only** if the Supervisor is outside.
- All school doors with the exception of the main door (on the north side) lock at 8:30 am, if bus arrives after 8:25 am then drop off at the crosswalk near the Elementary entrance, NEVER in the bus lane. At that point there is no supervision and the doors are locked. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- Buses depart the school at 3:20 pm.
- Bus operators are not authorized to make changes in the routes, except in unavoidable situations.

- Bring forward any reasonable requests to make route changes however no changes can occur until approved by Aurora School.
- Students in Grade 1 thru 9 are permitted to get off the bus alone at their designated stop. KINDERGARTEN students, however, are **not** permitted to get off the bus at their designated stop, unless a parent/guardian is at the stop. If a parent/guardian is not present, Bus Operator will radio Rental Bus Lines dispatch to advise that there is no parent, Rental Bus Lines will attempt to contact the parents. The bus operators may take the child with them as they complete the route and will remain with that child until he/she is picked up either at a stop or is delivered to an Edmonton Police Station. The child will not be brought back to the school. Please ensure your younger child/children know their telephone number and have it written down in their homework book.
- Notify the school Principal in writing about any inappropriate or unsafe behavior by students using the Infraction Form.
- Parents and unregistered or part time students are not permitted to ride the yellow school buses.
- Use of cell phone or any other personal portable electronic device while operating a school bus. Failure to follow the law (Distracted Driving Legislation Bill 16) will result in immediate termination.
- Bus operators are asked to report to Aurora School their observation of any parent who approaches a bus operators with a request to alter a route, tries to stop the bus at an unscheduled stop, pulls in front of the bus, or otherwise endangers the safety of the bus and/or its riders. The safety of children is our number one priority. Any of these actions could result in the possible bus suspension of your child.

## **EZ ENROUTE GPS**

EZ enRoute is a touch free GPS technology based tracking system which you can use to track the status of your child/children's bus. Registering for transportation enables the parent to track the bus via an app, EZ EnRoute. Download the app, username is the email address you provided on your Family Zone account and the password must be RESET the first time you use it. One parent is setup per child, if you want any additional logins please contact Lisa at [lweidel@auroraschool.ca](mailto:lweidel@auroraschool.ca)

## **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

High Definition Video cameras that included audio, have be added to all the school buses to better monitor and be pro-active in assisting drivers and students to resolve incidents, issues and addressing safety concerns. The school bus is an extension of the classroom and this tool will be beneficial in assuring the same expectations as in the classroom are withheld in the school bus.

Lisa Weidel, the Transportation Manager is the only person who will review the video and would only be done if a concern has been brought forth and we are unable to clearly clarify the incident and cannot resolve it through the parent and/or student and/or driver interaction first. If required, the Principals and/or Superintendent will be shown the video in the case of an incident. \*Program has the ability to block/blur faces that are not involved with the incident.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Aurora School uses a variety of methods to communicate with bus riding families. Route information is primarily communicated through the website and email. Bus information with respect to late buses is

communicated either by PowerSchool School Connect, or email, or EZ enRoute GPS. Please make sure parent emails and phone numbers are up to date on you Family Zone account.

## **BUS ROUTES AND STOPS**

Aurora Academic Charter School currently operates twelve bus routes serving the Edmonton area. Routes can be viewed on line on our website under Parents, Transportation or click on the following link <https://www.auroraschool.ca/bus-routes>

Aurora bus routes and stops are determined based upon the following criteria:

- The location of the student’s primary residence(s) being at least 2.4 km from the school and within the city limits.
- Two stops locations will be considered for students with two parent resident addresses.
- Stops will not be created for extracurricular activities or at the parents’ workplaces. However, a student may access such a stop if it is concurrently used by another student as his/her primary stop, with permission from the Transportation Manager.
- Stops are congregational in nature, serving multiple families and communities. These congregational stops may result in the need for parents to drive their children to their bus stop in their home community. If there is no home community stop, a neighboring community stop may be assigned.
- Stops are created at or near Edmonton Transit bus stops.
- Aurora School does not offer door-to-door or near-to-door service, due to the distance the buses must travel and our requirement to keep drive times and costs within policy guidelines.
- Bus routes travel along major arterial roadways, not in and out of the smaller suburban streets.
- Bus service outside the City of Edmonton is not provided. However, parents are welcome to drive their children to an existing stop within city limits as long as there is room on the bus.
- Students living in Edmonton’s communities may expect ride times of up to 75 minutes each way. This is a common driving time for Charter schools.
- Aurora School reserves the right to alter routes and stop locations during the school year to accommodate changing rider demographics and/or to improve the flow, timing or safety of a route and/or stop.
- Routes, stops and travel times change from year to year with the changing student population.

Stops are chosen based upon a combination of the following criteria:

- ETS Bus Stop locations
- Distance and time of the route
- Minimization of backtracking or wandering
- The number of riding families in a community
- Centralized location of the stop for all users in the community

## **YELLOW BUS CANCELLATION/INCLEMENT WEATHER**

The Transportation Manager, in consultation with School Administration may suspend or cancel school bus service to Aurora School when weather conditions constitute a hazard to the safety of students.

During inclement weather, the final decision to send a child to the bus stop or to school rests with the parents, even if the buses and school may be operational.



It shall be the responsibility of the Transportation Manager to advise the Principals regarding road and driving conditions. The Transportation Manager will solicit advice from the bus contractor and bus operators when preparing the recommendation.

The following factors in combination with each other, shall serve as guidelines for considering cancellation of bus service:

- a) Wind-chill of approximately -40 degrees Celsius, as determined by the Public Weather Information Office in Edmonton;
- b) Temperature of -35 degrees Celsius, as determined by the Public Weather Information Office in Edmonton
- c) Road and driving conditions

In the event of a busing cancellation a decision will be made no later than 6:30 AM the morning of. An automated phone message will be sent out to parents. Information on bus cancellations will be available on our website at [www.auraschool.ca/students-parents/busing](http://www.auraschool.ca/students-parents/busing)

While on route, a bus operator has the authority to change the route direction in the case of an accident, impassable roads, road closure or directed by law enforcement.

## **BUS REGISTRATION, FEES, REFUND & PAYMENTS**

Aurora Academic Charter School subsidizes the bus fees. The school currently receives a transportation grant from Alberta Education, which is directly applied against the cost of providing the busing service. The grant is provided for students who reside 2.4 km or greater from the school and ride the bus as of September 30. Most of the balance is covered by user fees paid by parents of busing students. Waivers for transportation fees are not provided.

### **YEARLY BUS FEES** (Payment is made online through Family Zone Account)

Transportation fees are subject to annual review by the Board of Directors.

Grade 1 to 9 Student .....\$ 680 per year/child  
 Kindergarten Student.....\$ 340 per year/child  
 No Family Rate

**Bus fees are due in full September 1 of each school year.**

### **SERVICE CANCELLATION AND REFUNDS**

Parents may choose to cancel their use of the busing service. All busing cancellation requests must be received in writing by the Transportation Manager and include the date at which the student will stop using the bus.

#### **Full Time and ESC Bus Rider Refunds**

Before August 31..... Full refund, less deposit  
 September 1 to April 1 ..... Refund is prorated according to date bus service was cancelled, less deposit  
 After April 1 ..... No Refund



## **PARENT PROVIDED (PP) TRANSPORTATION**

### **GENERAL PROVISION**

Parents can enter into an agreement with Aurora Academic Charter School that entitles them to individual funding for Parent Provided (PP) Transportation for arranging their child/children's transportation to and from school each day.

### **CONDITIONS FOR FUNDING**

1. Child/children must live at least 2.4 km from the school (calculated by path or road mileage, lesser of two)
2. Parents must register their transportation choice by completing and returning the Parent Transportation Contract to the school before October 31.
3. Applications for PP funding will not be available to parents after October 31.

### **DISBURSEMENT**

The PP funding is paid by cheque and mailed out to eligible families at end of August to the address on file.

### **TRANSFERRING BETWEEN BUSING AND PP TRANSPORTATION**

Parents can register for Aurora School busing **OR** apply for PP transportation funding. Parents are not permitted to do both.

## **CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION**

Parents who have applied for PP Transportation funding can subsequently make a charitable donation to Aurora Academic Charter School of either ALL or a portion of the funding. A tax receipt will be provided for all donations over \$25. Alberta Education requires that we pay out the PP funding in its entirety after which time you can make a donation back to the school.

## **CONTACTS**

### **TRANSPORTATION**

- For **lost items**, please speak to the bus operators directly.
- For **busing delays**, please contact Rental Bus Lines:

#### **Rental Bus Lines**

Dispatch

Phone: 780-660-4950

- For issues regarding **student discipline and bus behavior**, please contact:

**AACS - Elementary**

Mary Healy, Principal

Phone: 780-454-1855

Fax: 780-454-8104

Email: [mhealy@auroraschool.ca](mailto:mhealy@auroraschool.ca)**AACS – Middle School**

Peter Dang, Principal

Phone: 780-454-1855

Fax: 780-454-8104

Email: [pdang@auroraschool.ca](mailto:pdang@auroraschool.ca)

- For questions regarding **general inquires, bus routes, schedules, fees & billing**, please contact:

**AACS – Transportation Department**

Lisa Weidel, Transportation &amp; Facilities Manager

Phone: 780-454-1855 ext 170

Fax: 780-454-8104

Email: [lweidel@auroraschool.ca](mailto:lweidel@auroraschool.ca)

## PARENT PROVIDED TRANSPORTATION

For parent provided (PP) transportation, disbursements and administration, call:

**AACS - Central Office**

Marla Leganchuk, Secretary Treasurer

Phone: 780-454-1855 ext 171

Fax: 780-454-8104

Email: [mleganchuk@auroraschool.ca](mailto:mleganchuk@auroraschool.ca)