

## STEM, GIS, and AVPA Transportation Information

The decision for a student and parent to enter into the STEM, GIS, or AVPA program is not an easy one. One of the major factors that must be taken into account is how the student will get to and from school. The following information is intended to provide insight and understanding into the school bus transportation that is offered for these programs.

### In-district Students using School Bus Transportation

If a student lives in the school district of the school where the program is located, they ride their local neighborhood bus.

### Out-of-District Students using School Bus Transportation

For most students, it is the responsibility of the parents to transport their student to and from a “hub stop”. In the morning the student will meet a bus that will transport them to the program school. In the afternoon the parent is responsible for having someone at the “hub stop” when the bus arrives to transport their student home. The bus may make additional “hub stops” along the way to and from school.

For some students, they may be able to ride their neighborhood bus in the morning to their local school and then catch a shuttle bus to the program school. In the afternoon there are some schools where the students will be transported to their local school, and the parents can elect to have their student ride their neighborhood bus home or the parent can pick them up from that school.

### Using a “Hub Stop” in the morning

It is the responsibility of the parent to wait with their student until their student is loaded on the school bus. Parents should not leave their students unattended at a “hub stop”. At most schools the school bus will park in the school bus loop, but at some schools the school bus will pull into the car parking area. It varies by location and time. Parents are asked to be flexible the first few days of school while learning the normal routine.

### Using the local neighborhood bus in the morning then transferring to shuttle bus (if available)

It is the responsibility of the parent to make sure their student travels to and from their neighborhood bus stop safely and boards their local school bus safely.

When the local neighborhood school bus arrives at their local school, the students will walk to the shuttle bus. During this time period, they are the responsibility of the site administrator for that school.

Once the students have loaded onto the shuttle bus, they are then the shared responsibility of the program school and Department of Transportation (DOT).

### Using a “Hub Stop” in the afternoon

It is the responsibility of the parent to meet the bus at the correct time. When the bus arrives, the student should depart the bus and go to the parent pickup location. At most schools the school bus will park in the school bus loop but at some schools the school bus will pull into the car parking area. It varies by location and time. Parents are asked to be flexible the first few days of school while learning the normal routine.

If the parent is not at the hub stop at the correct time and if it is a school location, the students should enter the front lobby of the school and wait for their parents. During the time the students are unloading and waiting, if at a school, they are the responsibility of the site administrator for that school.

### Using the neighborhood bus in the afternoon (if available)

During transit from the program school to the local school, the students are the shared responsibility of the program school and DOT. Once at the local school, the students will transfer to their neighborhood bus. During the transfer they are the responsibility of the site administrator of that school. While being transported home, the students are the shared responsibility of the local school and DOT.

### Delays

On occasion, the schools buses will encounter delays. Some of the delays result from issues at the program school and some result from issues while in transit, such as accidents, road closures and mechanical issues.

When a delay occurs, once the program school is notified of the delay and if the delay is major (more than 15 minutes), the program school will contact the parents and the school where the “hub stop” is located.

If there is a transfer to local district buses, the local district school will attempt to hold their local buses for a few minutes if the delay is minor. If the delay is major, the local buses will be allowed to depart and parents of the program students will be contacted. In this instance, parents will be expected to pick up their student at the transfer school. However, if parents are unable to pick up their student, alternative arrangements will be made for another bus to take the students home. An additional significant delay should be expected while an available school bus driver and an available school bus are located and dispatched to transport the students home.

### Notifying Schools regarding Students

Prior to the start of each school year, the central office Supervisor responsible for each program will contact the school sites that are listed as “Hub Stops” or transfer points and notify them of students from the Supervisor’s program that will be using their location.

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### I live out of district but I want a bus stop near my house. Why can't this happen?

Due to equity and efficiency issues, the school system is unable to provide transportation to and from home for every student in the STEM or GIS program. Many of our school districts have large geographic areas and even though there are only a few students in the programs, to cover the geographic area would require several additional school buses. Hypothetically, the school buses would service the area then meet at a designated location where students would transfer to another bus and be shuttled to the program school. In many cases, it could take 2 to 2.5 hours from home to school in order to accomplish this service. Currently there are not enough school buses available to handle this service, plus the amount of time on the school bus would be considerable.

### Why is the middle school time for STEM so early?

Up until a few years ago, many of our middle schools and high schools used the same bus. These were called combination buses. The school bus would drop off at the middle school then proceed to the high school. To accommodate this, Spring Ridge Middle School always had an early time. When the decision was made to eliminate combination buses, either the middle schools or high schools were going to have to go at the earlier time. Spring Ridge Middle School had always been at an earlier time and because middle school is three years versus four for high school, it was decided that the middle schools would have the earlier start time.