

23-24

Transportation – Frequently Asked Questions



Volusia County Schools
Student Transportation
Services 23-24

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GENERAL

When will student bus information be available for the 23-24 school year?

- *Student Transportation is currently preparing routes that will service Volusia County students most efficiently and effectively. Bus information will be released to the public August 10, 2023. Please contact your school to ensure your student is coded appropriately for bus transportation.*

A student lives in the walk zone but there is a stop nearby. Why can't the student just get on that bus?

- *A stop in the non-transported zone (walk zone) would be for either an ESE student with transportation as a related service (TARS) in their IEP or for a student with a 504 Accommodations Plan. Florida Statutes state that regular Ed students must be two or more miles from school to be eligible for transportation. There are no other exceptions.*

I have a student that broke his leg. Can he get curbside transportation?

- *Possibly, upon accessibility. The Routing Analyst will need to be provided with a current physician's statement explaining the medical condition and the duration period. The student will then qualify for Temporary Medical assignment.*

There is a sexual predator near the bus stop. Can the bus stop be moved?

- *Stops are checked for safety which includes predators/offenders. It is parent responsibility to safely get their child to and from the bus stop and while at the bus stop.*

Will a first grader be allowed to get off the bus if the parent is not at the stop?

- *The rule of thumb is that a parent or guardian be at the bus stop to meet Pre-K through first grade students. There is no written rule; however, form #2013-021 VCS should be completed and return to school.*

Who is responsible for the student behavior at the bus stop?

- *Per Florida Statute Administrative Rule 6A-3.0121, the parent/guardian is to ensure students are aware of and follow the district's adopted code of student conduct while the students are at school bus stops, and to provide necessary supervision during times when the bus is not present.*

There is a student that has split custody and wants to go to mom's house Monday, Tues. and Wed. and Dad's house Thurs., and Fri., Can we do that?

- *Students are assigned to and from the residential address in Focus. Alternate arrangements become parent responsibility.*

I have a student that needs to go to a daycare/babysitter in the afternoon. Do we provide transportation for child care?

- *Students are assigned to and from the residential address in Focus. Alternate arrangements become parent responsibility.*

I have a new student that needs bus transportation ASAP because the family does not have transportation to/from school. Is this possible?

- *If there is an existing stop near the student's home, the student can begin riding with a boarding pass issued by the school. If a bus stop needs to be created for the student, the process can take approximately 3-5 days.*

Parent/Guardian states that they are unable to walk their student to/from the currently assigned stop. Can a closer stop be established?

- *Bus transportation is reviewed and assigned based on the needs of the student. Bus stops are centrally located for all students within the residential neighborhood. Per FL Statute, students can be assigned up to 1.5 miles from their home address.*

Who do I contact regarding a late item or an item left on a bus?

- *Routing does not have direct contact with Bus Operators. Please contact Dispatch. East Volusia XT: 50565 or West Volusia XT: 20851.*

ACADEMY STUDENTS

Why can't an academy student be assigned to the stop closest to their home?

- *Academy students are attending an out of zone program by choice. As a courtesy, students may be assigned to the closest established stop, pending availability on the bus.*

What do I tell the academy students that want transportation?

- *Out of zone academy students are assigned to the closest established stop. They must be coded in Focus properly and will be assigned pending availability on the bus. Academy students may or may not have a bus assignment on the first day of school as Transportation will not have accurate student loads for the first few weeks of school.*

BOY'S AND GIRL'S CLUB

We have students that want to go to the Boy's & Girl's Club after school program. Can I put them on the bus that goes there?

- *No. Only students that have been assigned by Routing may ride the bus to the Boy's & Girl's Club. To be assigned, the student's information must be provided to the club by the parent/guardian. The club will then forward that information to the Boy's & Girl's Club Area Director for approval. The Area Director will then contact the Routing team to make to official assignment.*

BUS PASS

How do I get set up on the Bus Pass system?

- *Contact your Routing Analyst for assistance to the bus pass system in Infoshare.*

What if a student wants a stop change/same route but it is across a major highway?

- *Regular Ed students and students following the ESE feeder pattern for program will not be permitted to cross major highways due to safety reasons.*

Can an Emergency Bus Pass be issued for a student to go to their friend's house?

- *The school should use their judgment to decide what constitutes an emergency. Emergency Passes should only be used for emergency cases.*

Can a student that is not eligible for transportation be issued an emergency bus pass?

- *No. A student must be eligible for transportation to be issued an emergency bus pass.*

CHARTER SCHOOLS

If a charter school student has an IEP, can they get curbside or transportation in the walk zone?

- *No. Transportation as a Related Service (TARS) only pertains to students going to their zoned school or following ESE feeder pattern for program.*

FOCUS

Focus will not accept the address I am trying to input. What should I do?

- *Check the proof of residence first to make sure all information has been entered correctly, including the zip code. Email Beatriz Avram, Mapping Specialist, with the address and she will verify in our system, or contact StudentInformationSupport@volusia.k12.fl.us.*

Why can't I just code every student for ridership?

- To efficiently and effectively utilize transportation, students should only be coded for ridership if the parent has requested and the student is eligible.

If I code a walker for Ridership, will he get assigned a bus stop?

- No. They will show up on a report that is run through the GIS/Routing Dept and will be uncoded.

I have gone into Focus to change an address. It says "Stop Change" under optional services on the Transportation tab. Do I take that out?

- No. The special coding could be tracking this student for an alternate reason. Please contact the GIS/Routing Analyst for review.

When a student is approved for curbside or needs equipment on the bus, do I have to enter anything special on the Transportation tab of Focus?

- If the IEP states curbside, baby seat, etc., it is the responsibility of the school to ensure the student is properly coded on the Transportation tab.

If the student requires a bus attendant, do I have to enter anything special on the Transportation tab of Focus?

- If the IEP committee has determined the student requires a bus attendant on the bus, the Needs field should be updated with proper coding, I-In Zone for Program or O-Out of Zone for Program.

I have gone into Focus to change a student from Y-Student Rides Bus – Regular to N-Does not ride. There is additional coding in fields on the Transportation tab. Do I take that out?

- Yes; all other coding should be removed from a Non-rider's Transportation tab.

ESE-IEP REQUIREMENTS

An ESE student is assigned a specialized bus stop but the sibling is assigned differently. How do I get all of them together at the same bus stop?

- Send an email to your Routing Analyst with the sibling(s) name and alpha and they will code, assign, and notify.

Bus driver says that the student is too big for a baby seat. What do I need to do to change the equipment to a harness?

- *Equipment needs are mentioned in the student's IEP and are also coded by school personnel on the Transportation tab in Focus. With the need for an equipment change verified, update the coding in Focus under Special Requirements. This update will come through to your Routing Analyst and email notification will be sent for the change in equipment.*

Curbside student has moved. Can they get their new bus stop tomorrow?

- *No. New curbside addresses need to be checked for safety before they can be created and routed. This procedure takes 3-5 days. A heads-up email to your Routing Analyst is always helpful.*

Can I give a new ESE student a bus pass so they can ride today?

- *No. Many ESE students need special services on the bus per their IEP. It is best to contact your Routing Analyst so they can be assigned properly.*

Is an ESE student attending an out of zone school for program guaranteed a bus?

- *Yes. All ESE students attending an out of zone school following the ESE feeder pattern are guaranteed a bus.*

PETALS STUDENTS

A student now lives out of zone and is homeless. Is bus transportation provided?

- *Transportation for homeless requests is first submitted through the homeless liaison. If the student meets criteria, the liaison will then contact Routing.*

PARENT REQUESTS-INQUIRIES

Parent states that their child has a disability and needs transportation in the non-transported zone. What do I tell them?

- *Parents need to contact their school to see if they qualify for an IEP or 504 Accommodations Plan. If so, a meeting will be set up along with a representative from the Student Transportation Services to discuss the need for transportation.*

What do I tell parents when they call and say that their child's bus stop is dangerous?

- *All bus stops are checked for safety during the summer each year and have met state criteria to be deemed a safe stop.*

How do I explain to a student or parent that they cannot have a stop on a different route?

- Due to student accountability and safety, all students are to ride their assigned bus morning and afternoon. Alternate requests are not permitted.

Parent says that there is a closer stop than the one their student is assigned. Is there?

- InfoShare is a helpful tool that can show which stop is the closest. There may, however, be a closer stop created for a special needs student. When in doubt, call your Routing Analyst.

Parent wants to know when their student boards the bus and when they are dropped off. Is there a way to track this?

- Yes, they can track this information through the Where's the Bus App. Direct parents to www.WheretheBus.com to sign up for this service.

VARIANCES

I have a student on a variance. Is it possible for him to ride a bus? If so, what do I do?

- Student bus transportation is only guaranteed when the student attends his/her zoned school, and resides outside of the school's 2-mile walk zone. Parents/legal guardians are responsible for transportation for students attending a choice school, and ensuring their students arrive on time to school.

We have a student that is moving and wants to stay at our school on a variance. What is the closest bus stop?

- When the student moves out of zone and requests transportation, make sure that the student is coded in Focus for out-of-zone transportation. Students will then be assigned to the closest stop, pending availability, and notification will be sent to the school. Students not coded correctly will not be assigned to a bus.

STUDENT TRACKING SYSTEM

How does a new student log in to ride the school bus?

- Students will enter their alpha id when boarding and un-boarding the bus.

