2025-2026 Transportation Handbook

KEARNEY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OWN Your FUTURE

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Dear KPS Families,

The purpose of this handbook is to provide an overview of KPS transportation services, including bus safety, registration, and key guidelines for riders.

Each day, KPS transports nearly 700 students across approximately 14 regular and special education bus routes. Our regular education buses operate on a **hub-and-spoke system**, where each bus serves a designated geographical area based on student enrollment.

- **Morning Routes:** Buses pick up students from their homes or designated stops and transport them to the **Hub** at Horizon Middle School. Most students then transfer to another bus, while others remain on the same bus or attend Horizon Middle School. From the Hub, buses continue to other KPS schools.
- **Afternoon Routes:** Buses pick up students from their schools and return to the Hub, where most students transfer to their designated bus for the ride home.

This handbook outlines essential transportation policies, safety procedures, and behavior expectations. We encourage you to review it carefully and reach out to the transportation office with any questions.

Please note that **Special Education transportation is managed separately** through coordination with school IEP case managers. While some general guidelines in this handbook may apply, it is primarily designed for regular education bus riders.

If you need assistance, our transportation office is available during the following hours:

Transportation Office Hours:

- **School Days:** 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM
- **Non-School Days:** 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Thank you for partnering with us to ensure a safe and efficient transportation experience for all KPS students.

Sincerely,

Jason Sutton, Ed.D.
Transportation Director
Kearney Public Schools
308-698-8260
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25-26 KPS Bus Registration Information

*******Registrations to ride the school bus must be turned in no later than Friday, July 25, 2025.**

Registrations turned in AFTER July 25 will not be considered until after school has started and will only be provided transportation if there is room on the bus.

Registrations received BEFORE July 25 will be accepted and provided transportation based upon a priority based system as explained below.

First Priority: All students meeting one of the designations below will be routed first.

- Students living more than 4 miles from their designated school of attendance otherwise known as their "home school."
- Students classified as homeless or in-transition as determined and governed by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- Students involuntarily transferred to another school due to building enrollment.
  - Students voluntarily transferring to another school are NOT guaranteed transportation.
- Students living within the previous Glenwood attendance area (25-26 school year only)
- Students attending a specific school to receive specialized district services.

⇩

Second Priority: All remaining registrations will be considered "Second Priority". After the "First Priority" students have been routed, remaining students will be routed to buses if there is room on the bus. **"Second priority" students will only be registered if there is room on the bus and on a first come first served basis.**

Late Registrations (After July 25): Registrations turned in after July 25 will be reviewed using the same priority based system as above but will not be considered until after school starts. An update regarding the status of late registrations will be sent via email in September to the email on the registration form.

All registrants will be notified on July 30, 2025 as to the status of their registrations.

Special Education Transportation:

Special Education students receive transportation as follows:

- The student is required to attend a facility other than the normal school of attendance
- The nature of the student's disability is such that special education transportation is required

Special Education transportation is determined by the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team. Should the IEP team determine that special education transportation is required, a transportation plan will be submitted to the Director of Special Education Services for approval. Pending approval from the Director, the logistics will be completed by Transportation.

In order for Special Education Transportation to begin on the first day of school, the transportation plan must be provided to Transportation by Friday, July 25, 2025. Special Education Transportation registrations turned in after July 25 will not be able to ride until Tuesday, September 3.

2025-2026 KPS Regular Education Bus Registration Form

☐ Routing Priority Status 1
OR
☐ Routing Priority Status 2

See back side for more information about Routing Priority

All families will be notified via email regarding their approval status on July 30.

Student First Name:_____ Last Name:_____

Grade:_____Date of Birth:_____ Gender_____

Address:_____ Zip:_____

Parent/Guardian:_____ Phone:_____

Parent/Guardian email address: _____

Other Parent/Guardian:_____ Phone:_____

School Attending:_____

Please see the list of pick up and drop off locations below:

Where would you like your student picked up in the morning? Please see the list of approved stops.

_____

Where would you like your student to be dropped off in the afternoon? Please see the list of approved stops.

_____

*Students are allowed only **one** pickup and **one** drop off location.

Please note:

- In case of an emergency, 911 will be called.
- We will be sending safety and other important bus information via email and text. By signing below you are agreeing to review this information and to maintain accurate contact information with the transportation office.

Parent Signature:_____ Date:_____

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Second Priority: All remaining registrations will be considered "Second Priority". After the "First Priority" students have been routed, remaining students will be routed to buses if there is room on the bus. **"Second priority" students will only be registered if there is room on the bus and on a first come first served basis.**

Designated Stops

KPS offers transportation services for students to and from designated stops listed below. For students living in rural areas, additional stops may be added, but are not guaranteed.

AM Stops	PM Stops
All KPS Schools (Elementary, Middle and KHS)	All KPS Schools (Elementary, Middle and KHS)
Countryside Trailer Court (Mailboxes)	Countryside Trailer Court (Mailboxes)
Northwest Crossing Apartments	Northwest Crossing Apartments
Riverdale Post Office	Riverdale Post Office
Valley View Trailer Court (Mailboxes)	Valley View Trailer Court (Mailboxes)
Prairie View Apartments	Prairie View Apartments
Rodeo Trailer Court	Rodeo Trailer Court
Winnelsen (UNK West Campus)	Winnelsen (UNK West Campus)
1733 Estates (Mailboxes)	1733 Estates (Mailboxes)
Sunset View Trailer Court	Sunset View Trailer Court
North Odessa (Nobel Ave)	North Odessa (Nobel Ave)
1727 University Drive	1727 University Drive
Fountain Hills Apartments	Fountain Hills Apartments
Sterling Apartments	Sterling Apartments
Glenwood Estates - Hickory and Redwood	Glenwood Estates - Hickory and Redwood
Ridgeview Estates Apartments	Ridgeview Estates Apartments
Riverside Trailer Court	Riverside Trailer Court
ESU 10 (AM only)	Meadow Lane (near La Platte Rd) PM only
	Kearney Catholic - Star Bright PM only

Bus Pass Requirement & Consequences

All students must have a **bus pass** to ride the bus. Each student receiving transportation services will be issued **one free bus pass** at the beginning of the school year. Students are required to **scan their bus pass each time they board and exit the bus**.

The bus pass is an essential **safety tool**, allowing us to accurately track students while they are on the bus and ensuring that only registered riders are on board.

If a student repeatedly fails to bring their bus pass, their riding privileges may be revoked. **Replacement bus passes** are available for a fee of $10.00.

Consequences for Not Using a Bus Pass

- 5 cumulative days without a bus pass: Parent contact.
- 10 cumulative days without a bus pass: Parent contact.
- 15 cumulative days without a bus pass: Parent contact and 5-day suspension from riding.
- 20 cumulative days without a bus pass: Parent contact and 5-day suspension from riding.
- 25 cumulative days without a bus pass: Parent contact and 10-day suspension from riding.
- 30 cumulative days without a bus pass: Permanent suspension from bus transportation.

We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring a safe and efficient transportation experience for all students. If you have any questions, please contact the transportation office.

Bus Behavior Expectations & Consequences

To ensure a **safe and orderly** ride, students must follow the bus driver's directions and expectations at all times. The ride to and from school is considered an **extension of the school day**, meaning that all school rules also apply on the bus. Students should avoid any behavior that may distract the driver or compromise safety.

Bus Rules

- **Follow the bus driver's instructions** at all times.
- **Remain seated** and keep all body parts out of the aisle to allow the driver a clear view behind the bus.
- **Respect assigned seating** as determined by the driver and/or para.
- **Use appropriate language and volume** when speaking.
- **No eating or drinking** on the bus unless the driver gives permission.
- **Keep the bus clean** by disposing of trash properly.

Behavior Interventions & Consequences

If a student does not follow bus expectations, the following steps will be taken:

1. **Intervention 1:** The bus driver speaks with the student.
2. **Intervention 2:** The Transportation department calls the parent, and the school principal is notified.
3. **Intervention 3: 5-day suspension** from the bus; the school principal is notified.
4. **Intervention 4: 10-day suspension** from the bus; the school principal is notified.
5. **Intervention 5: 20-day suspension** from the bus; the school principal is notified.
6. **Intervention 6: Suspension for the remainder of the school year**; the school principal is notified.

Severe Misconduct & Immediate Consequences

Serious infractions may result in **immediate suspension or permanent removal** from the bus. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Fighting or physical assault**
- **Attempting to start a fire or possession of lighters/matches**
- **Possession of a weapon**
- **Verbal threats, including threats to harm or kill**
- **Profanity directed at the driver**
- **Inappropriate sexual statements or physical contact**
- **Possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or vape devices**
- **Theft or vandalism**
- **Bullying or harassment**

These rules and consequences are in place to protect all students and ensure a safe and respectful transportation experience. If you have any questions, please contact the transportation office. School consequences can be assigned in addition to bus consequences.

School Bus Safety

Did You Know?

Traveling to school by **school bus** is one of the safest modes of transportation. According to the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA),** students are approximately **70 times more likely** to get to school safely on a school bus than by car.

Why Are School Buses So Safe?

1. Built for Safety

- **High-Visibility Design:** The **yellow color** ensures buses stand out, making them more visible to motorists.
- **Traffic Warning Signals:**
    - **Yellow flashing lights** activate as the bus approaches a stop, signaling drivers to slow down—just like a traffic light.
    - **Red flashing lights and a stop arm** deploy when students are loading or unloading. **Drivers must stop** when they see the red stop arm, as students may be crossing the street.
- **Protective Seating:** Bus seats are padded and designed to create a **"compartmentalization" effect,** offering protection in the event of a collision. **Students must remain seated properly** at all times.
- **Emergency Exits:** Buses are equipped with multiple emergency exits for added safety.
- **State Laws for Protection:** Nebraska law **prohibits drivers from passing a school bus** during loading or unloading, regardless of their direction of travel.

2. Professional Drivers

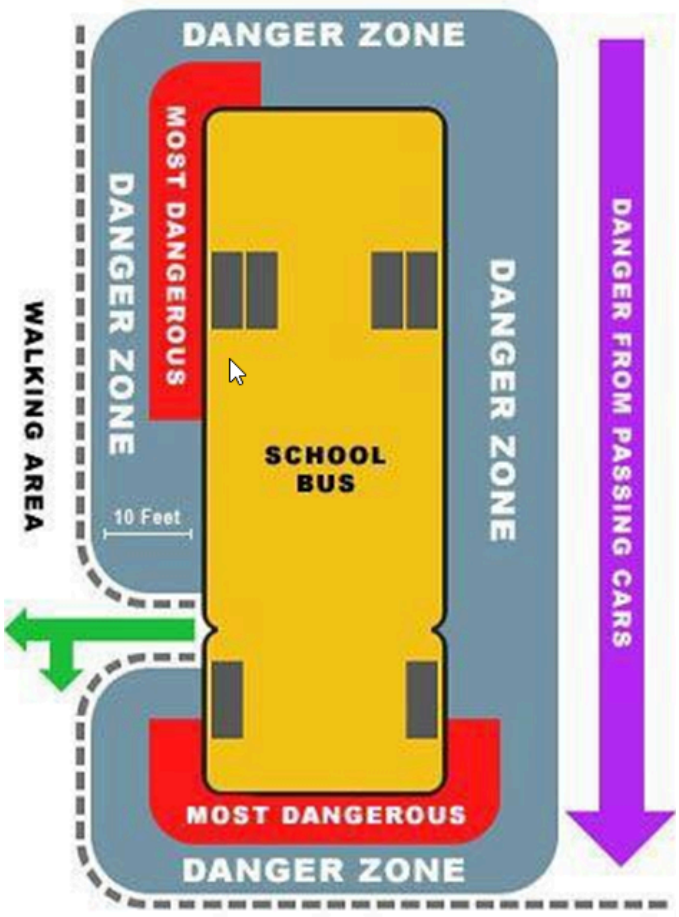
- **Highly Trained:** KPS bus drivers undergo **regular training** and must maintain updated certifications.
- **Dedicated to Student Safety:** Our drivers are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of every student.

3. The Role of Parents

- Parents are essential in reinforcing **safe bus behaviors** with their children.
- Please talk to your child about the importance of **staying alert, following bus rules, and being cautious** while loading, unloading, and riding the school bus.

By working together, we can ensure a **safe and reliable** transportation experience for all students. Thank you for your support!

The School Bus "Danger Zone"

The most dangerous segment of a bus ride is during the loading and unloading process. Please be sure to show the image below to your child and explain it. The "Danger Zone" is the area on all sides of the bus where children are in the most danger of not being seen by the driver - the area 10 feet in front of the bus, ten feet on either side, and the area directly behind a school bus.

Students must always stay as far away from the "Danger Zone" as possible. If students must cross the street, they should cross only in the front of the school bus.