Transportation Update

Carrie Olson, Director of Transportation
February 2026

Transporting Students







SOWASHCO STUDENTS

- 18,000+ students
- 12,000+ riders twice a day
- 24 school/ program locations

PRIVATE AND CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS

- 1,600 students
- 1,000+ riders twice a day
- Five school locations

TRANSPORTATION

General Education

- 88 morning routes
- 94 afternoon routes

Special Education

- 76 total routes (Morning, Noon and Afternoon)

Transportation Staff

- 98 Full-time Bus Drivers
- 12 Substitute Bus Drivers
- 5 Bus Assistants
- 7 Mechanics
- 5 Office Support Staff
- 4 Administrators



Point of Pride

80% of our Transportation Staff live within the boundaries of South Washington County Schools

Recruitment To-Date

- **Advertising**
  - Local advertising
  - Job posting site (Indeed)
  - Attendance at job fairs
  - Social media campaigns

- **Applicants**
  - Total Applicants = 89 since July 1
  - 31 Interviews conducted since July 1
  - 13 drivers hired, 3 currently in training

- **Salary and Benefits**
  - Wages start at $28/hour
  - Benefits start at 20 hours worked/week
  - Paid Training
  - Retirement Contributions

What to Know: Transportation Opt-In Process

- Started Opt-In during the 2023-24 school year
- Accurate information/data = more efficient routing and services
- 2026-27 Opt-In Campaign starts February 9 and runs through March 6
- Families will receive Opt-In information in early-February

Bus Cancellations to Date

Date	AM/PM Routes	Student Impact
November 19-21, 2025	3 PM Routes/3 days	185 students at 6 schools
December 8, 9, 12, 2025	3 PM Routes/3 days	130 students at 5 schools



Current Late Arriving Bus Routes

Late Arriving Buses (Greater than 5 minutes)

- **Morning buses**
  - Bailey Elementary (1)
  - Valley Crossing Elementary/St. Ambrose (2)

- **Afternoon buses**
  - Cottage Grove Elementary (1)
  - East Ridge High School (2)
  - Nuevas Fronteras (2)
  - Valley Crossing Elementary/St. Ambrose (2)



EXAMPLE: Late Arriving Bus ERHS

Scan Date	Scan Time (3:05 p.m.)	Day of Scan	Location
Jan. 16, 2026	3:10 p.m. (5 minutes late)	Friday	East Ridge High School
Jan. 20, 2026	3:11 p.m. (6 minutes late)	Tuesday	East Ridge High School
Jan. 21, 2026	3:13 p.m. (8 minutes late)	Wednesday	East Ridge High School

EXAMPLE: Late Arriving Bus NFSI

Scan Date	Scan Time (3:50 p.m.)	Day of Scan	Location
Jan. 16, 2026	4:01 p.m. (11 minutes late)	Friday	Nuevas Fronteras
Jan. 20, 2026	4:01p.m. (11 minutes late)	Tuesday	Nuevas Fronteras
Jan. 21, 2026	4:05 p.m. (15 minutes late)	Wednesday	Nuevas Fronteras

EXAMPLE: Late Arriving Bus VCES/St. Ambrose

Scan Date	Scan Time (3:45 p.m.)	Day of Scan	Location
Jan. 16, 2026	3:53 p.m. (8 minutes late)	Friday	Valley Crossing
Jan. 20, 2026	3:54 p.m. (9 minutes late)	Tuesday	Valley Crossing
Jan. 21, 2026	3:59 p.m. (14 minutes late)	Wednesday	Valley Crossing

Considerations for for 2026-27

- Buses arriving after scheduled school start or dismissal times
- Expansion of Math and Science Academy
  - Additional bus stops
  - Staggered arrival/departure times (2 sites)
- Ongoing district-wide road construction
- Ongoing work in the City of Woodbury - Water Pipeline Project



Considerations For 2026-27

- Continue to review the data to determine possible solutions for late student arrivals and dismissals at schools
    - This may include a shift in school start/end times for some
- Continue to utilize the Opt-in information for purposes of routing students
- Continue to utilize the bus passes for scanning students on and off
- Fully implement the tracking app for student bus ridership

Questions?