

STILLWATER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUS DRIVER HANDBOOK
2026-2027



Welcome to the Stillwater Public Schools Transportation Handbook.

The transportation of students to and from school is a vital part of a strong educational program. Safe and efficient school transportation depends on two key elements: competent drivers and consistent operating standards. When these are in place, we ensure that our program remains safe, efficient, and economical for everyone involved.

Driving a school bus is no ordinary task. It requires extensive knowledge, sharp judgment, strong visual skills, and the ability to make quick, accurate decisions. The way you develop and apply these skills will directly affect your performance as a professional driver.

As a school bus driver, you are one of the most important members of our educational team. In many cases, you are the first school representative students see each morning and the last they see at the end of the day. Their safety, well-being, and even their attitude toward school are influenced by the way you carry out your duties.

Like the captain of a ship, you are responsible for the safe and efficient operation of your bus, the protection of your passengers, and the orderly conduct of everyone on board. By maintaining a “happy ship,” you not only keep students safe but also create a positive environment that reflects well on our schools and community.

Student safety is the highest priority of Stillwater Public Schools. No other area of education places a greater responsibility on staff than the safe transportation of children on public highways and roads. As a member of our safety team, you are entrusted with this responsibility each day. Your professionalism, commitment, and constant attention to safety are essential to the success of our transportation program.

Purpose of This Handbook

This handbook is designed to be a quick reference for drivers. Inside, you will find answers to common questions, explanations of rules and procedures, and guidance on handling both daily responsibilities and emergency situations. It is meant to support you in your role and to ensure that every driver has the tools and information needed to perform their job safely and effectively.

Thank you for your service and dedication. Together, we will continue to improve safety, efficiency, and the trust families place in our school transportation system.

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DRIVER REQUIREMENTS

- Approval to drive a district vehicle requires a valid Oklahoma driver's license and a current Motor Vehicle Record showing a good driving history as defined by the district's insurance carrier be on file at the transportation office.
- Drivers will use the vehicle only for school business within the scope of the driver's authority observing all traffic laws and safe driving practices.
- Drivers will not allow an unauthorized person to drive the vehicle.
- All drivers are required to report suspension or revocation of their driver's license to the transportation department.
- District vehicles shall not be loaded with more passengers than their design capacity. Each passenger must occupy a seat when the vehicle is in motion.
- In vehicles equipped with primary restraint systems (e.g., seat belts), each occupant must use the restraining device as designed.
- Drivers who are involved in two (2) vehicle related incidents in a twelve (12) month period or three (3) incidents in a thirty-six (36) month period will be required to take a driver improvement course.
- Any driver of a motor vehicle involved in two accidents within a twenty-four (24) month period while functioning as an agent of the district and in which the driver acted negligently (and caused personal injury and/or property damage) shall be required to attend and successfully complete a Motor Vehicle Improvement Course, and must be attended within six (6) months of the date of the second accident.
- At the superintendent's or designee's discretion, drivers may be required to complete a driver improvement course. Drivers required to complete a motor vehicle improvement course must do so at their own expense.
- Any driver of a motor vehicle, while functioning as an agent of the district, that is involved in two (2) accidents in twenty-four (24) month period as a result of backing and or rear ending shall, in addition to the above paragraph be declared uninsurable for a period of three (3) months following the second accident.
- Use of wireless communication devices is prohibited while operating a school vehicle. If an emergency arises, the driver shall remove the vehicle from the roadway to place an emergency call to the proper authority. Drivers violating this policy shall be subject to disciplinary measures which could include termination employment.
- Before operating a school vehicle, the driver is responsible for ensuring that all necessary safety equipment and control devices are in good condition.
- All vehicles are to be returned to the transportation office fueled and free of trash and personal items.

PROFESSIONALISM

As a school bus driver, you are the first and last representative of the school district students see each day. Professionalism, demeanor, and appearance directly impact the safety and attitude of students. Drivers are expected to maintain a courteous, positive attitude toward students, parents, coworkers, and the community. To accomplish this it is important to keep your emotions under control and use appropriate, respectful language regardless of the situation. Greeting students cheerfully is a great way to start every day.

ATTENDANCE

Each job in our district is accompanied by a contract that outlines the number of contract days and hours per day. We expect all employees to work their scheduled days and hours and be on time. Bus drivers should arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled route departure to inspect the bus. Drivers and aides without regular route assignments should arrive at least 20 minutes by 6:20 AM for morning routes and 2:00 PM (1:00 PM on Fridays) for afternoon routes. Supervisors must be notified in advance if you are to be absent or late. Call (405)533-6347 in the event of an emergency or illness.

ABSENCE REQUESTS

All leave should be requested in advance. Leave will not be approved the first or last week of the school year, directly proceeding or following a scheduled school holiday, or on a scheduled PD day. To request time off, employees should submit their request through Frontline on the [SPS staff links](#) page or use the Frontline app using the instructions available [here](#). When entering leave, do not request hours beyond your contracted work schedule and include a note to indicate if it is for all day, AM only, or PM only. Whenever possible appointments should be scheduled outside of work hours. Employees should see the Transportation director prior to requesting leave to determine an agreeable time and date.

PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE

Employees should maintain personal cleanliness and dress appropriately for their responsibilities. Appropriate clothing does **not** include any of the following:

- Shoes without closed toes and backs.
- Heels exceeding 1.5 inches.
- Halter tops, see-through blouses, or spaghetti strap shirts.
- Dresses or skirts shorter than 4 inches above the knee.
- Shorts with less than a 6-inch inseam or unhemmed/fringed shorts.

- Clothing with logos promoting alcohol, tobacco, profanity, sexually explicit/suggestive content, or other offensive messages.
- Gang-related clothing or paraphernalia.

By maintaining professionalism and proper appearance, transportation staff reinforce safety, respect, and trust with students and the community.

TOBACCO/SMOKE FREE CAMPUS

Federal and state law prohibit smoking in any indoor facility or the grounds thereof, which is used to provide educational services to children. Therefore, the use of tobacco or tobacco simulating products by staff, students, visitors, and members of the public is prohibited 24 hours a day, seven days a week while on or in school property. The use of tobacco or tobacco-simulating products at any school-sponsored event outside school premises, school-authorized vehicles, or in personal vehicles while on school property is prohibited at all times. Tobacco and tobacco simulating products and devices include, but are not limited to cigarettes, cigarette papers, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco, electronic cigarettes, vapor products, or any other form of said products and devices. ([Tobacco/Smoke Free Campus - CKDA](#))

COMMUNICATION

Employees are expected to stay aware of route changes and remain accessible during work hours. Communication may be provided in multiple ways.

- Notices displayed on the TV in the break room.
- Notifications on the bus tablet.
- Postings near the door or time clock.
- Radio announcements - Keep the radio on channel 1 at an appropriate volume level and follow appropriate [Radio Procedures](#).
- District email - check your district email at least once daily on work days and occasionally before the beginning of school or at the end of long breaks.

DRIVER DAILY ROUTINE

MORNING ARRIVAL

Employee parking is in the gravel bus lot. Traffic is one way from North to South with a **10 MPH** speed limit. The area around the entry door is for temporary visitor parking only. Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to departure.

PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

Every driver must complete a pre-trip inspection before each route to ensure the bus is safe for operation. This process protects both students and drivers and must be completed daily. For routes, inspections are required to be completed using the tablet inspection form before starting the morning route. Further instructions are available in the [Bus Tablet Operation](#) section. For activity trips when a tablet is not available, paper inspection forms are available in the Dispatch office and must be turned in with each trip sheet. During the pre-trip inspection be sure to unplug electric cords and CNG hoses.

DRIVING THE ROUTE

All routes are to be run as scheduled and on time according to the route schedule on the [bus tablet](#). Parents and students are provided with stop locations and times and expect the route to run consistently regardless of who is driving. Drivers are not authorized to make route changes without the approval of the Director of Transportation. Any changes other than those required by road or traffic conditions must be approved and updated on the route before they begin. Drivers leaving a stop more than three minutes before the indicated stop time will be required to return to the stop for missed students.

PICK UP AND DROP OFF

Students are assigned to specific stops and should only load or unload at their designated stop. If a student that is not assigned to a stop attempts to board, radio dispatch for instructions. In most cases, you will be asked to get the students name and transport them to school until parents can be contacted. Do not turn students away unless instructed to do so by dispatch. When arriving at each school, follow the [School Drop and Pick up Procedures](#) and be patient with other traffic. Do not pass other buses without clear acknowledgement that it is safe to do so and do not back up in school loading zones. Educate students on proper bus loading and unloading procedures at the beginning of each semester and remind them throughout the year as needed.

STUDENT MANAGEMENT

Maintaining student discipline and safety is primarily the responsibility of the bus driver. Transportation staff and other district staff are here to assist and reinforce the authority of the driver. The driver is the first point of contact to provide the behavior expectations to the student and should only use bus conduct referrals when stated expectations and assigned seats are ineffective in correcting negative behavior. Interacting in a professional and courteous manner goes a long way in working with students. For additional information and procedures refer to [Student Conduct and Behavior](#).

PARKING THE BUS

Buses are to be parked only in their designated parking spot. They should always be parked ready to complete the next bus route or activity. The fuel level should be greater than one-half of a tank. Keys are to be removed and returned to the office. Floors should be clean and trash cans emptied.

POST TRIP INSPECTION

After parking the bus, complete a post trip inspection. Walk through the bus checking for sleeping students and forgotten items. Close all windows and doors. Walk around the bus checking for new damage and connecting electric cords and CNG hoses as appropriate.

BUS TABLET OPERATION

Confirm Vehicle

Be sure you are assigned to the vehicle you are driving on the run.

Inspections

After signing in and confirming the vehicle each morning, the Pre-trip inspection should appear. If it does not appear, choose inspections and select the Pre-trip form. Past inspections can also be viewed as well as additional inspection forms:

Pre-trip: Required every morning before running the route.

Post-trip: Required at the end of each day. Can also be completed after each route if needed.

Accident report: Can be used in the event of an accident or collision with an object.

Cleanliness report: For documenting the cleanliness of a bus.

My Runs

Runs should load automatically for regularly assigned drivers. If a run is not loaded, select add run at the bottom to add any additional runs. When running a route:

- “Service” the first stop before departing.
- If students do not appear when arriving at a stop, use the service button to start scanning students.
- Load students as they board the bus.
 - In rare cases when you are instructed to load a student that does not show up at a stop, use the “add student” button to search for the student to add. Only a few letters of the name are required to start the search.
- Unload students as they depart.
- After completing a run, select “start my next run” or “close” if you have completed all runs on the route.
- Start the next run before arriving at the first stop.
- Complete a post-trip inspection at the end of each day and log out.

Messages

The envelope at the top of the My Runs and Inspection pages is for receiving and sending messages. This is how you will receive route and student updates throughout the year. Responses are limited to a short period after receiving a message.

The “More...” button

Use this to return to inspections from my runs and access additional information.

Vehicle: allows you to change vehicles after initially confirming a vehicle.

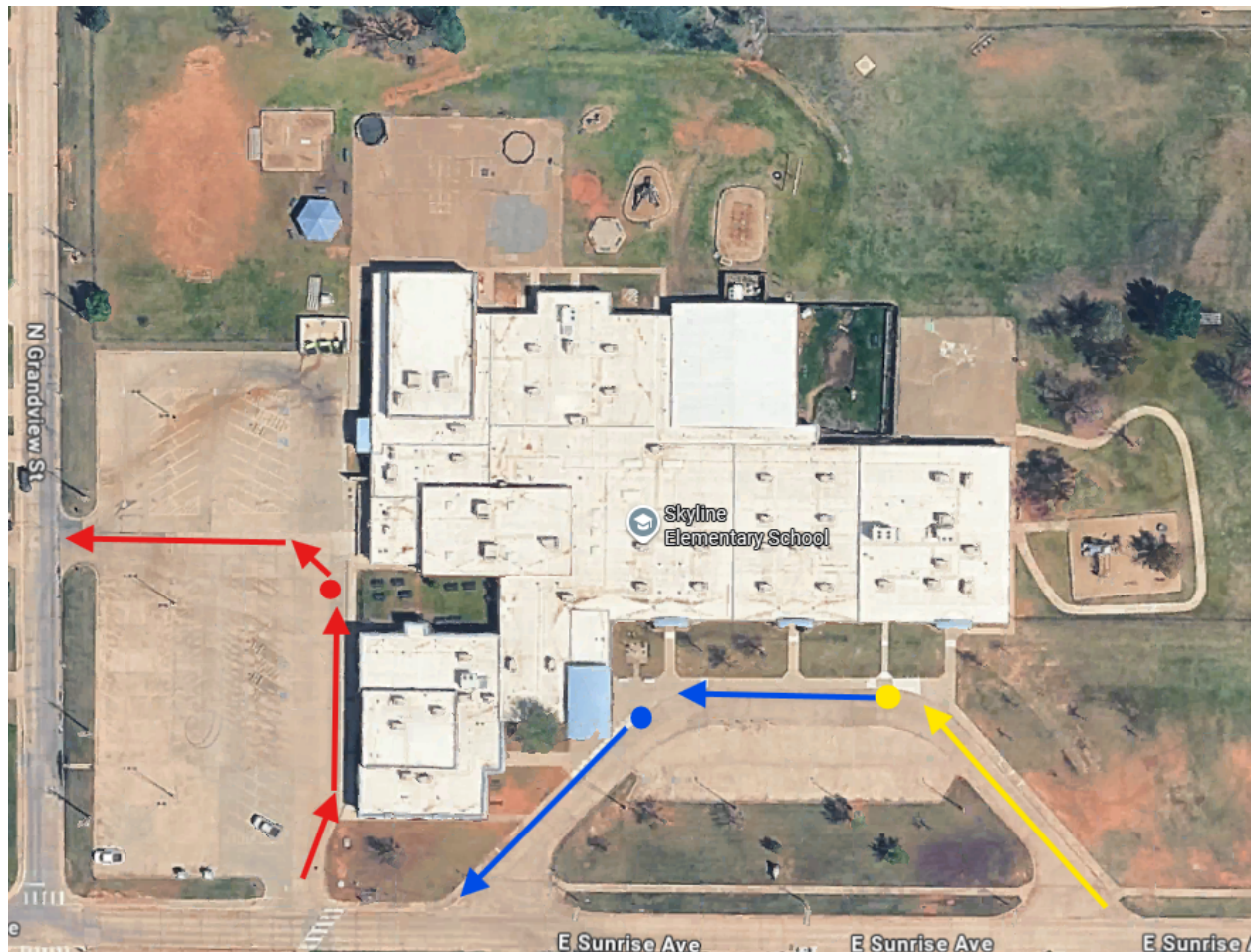
Lookup: used to look up students. If a student asks what bus they are assigned to, this can provide that information.

SCHOOL DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

At all sites, be courteous to all staff and parents that are picking up or dropping off students. Be patient and do not pass other buses unless instructed to do so. Each site has a designated loading and unloading location as well as procedures that site staff follow regarding student drop off and pick up. Follow their procedures to the best of your ability.

SKYLINE ELEMENTARY

Morning drop off is on the West side of the building by the cafeteria doors(Red). A teacher will wait at the door for the students. Afternoon pick up is on the south side of the building at the front doors(blue). Sped pick up and drop off are at the Southeast doors. Event loading is typically on the South side(Blue).



WILL ROGERS ELEMENTARY

Drop off and pick up are on the North side of the building (Yellow). When dropping off a teacher will meet the bus to welcome the students to school and dismiss them off the bus. During pick up, a teacher will bring students to the bus. Shuttle and event loading is typically on the South side (Blue). Both drives are one way as indicated.



HIGHLAND PARK ELEMENTARY

Drop off and pick up is on the North side of the building(Ble). When dropping off a teacher will meet the bus and welcome the students to school. During pick up, a teacher will bring students to the bus.



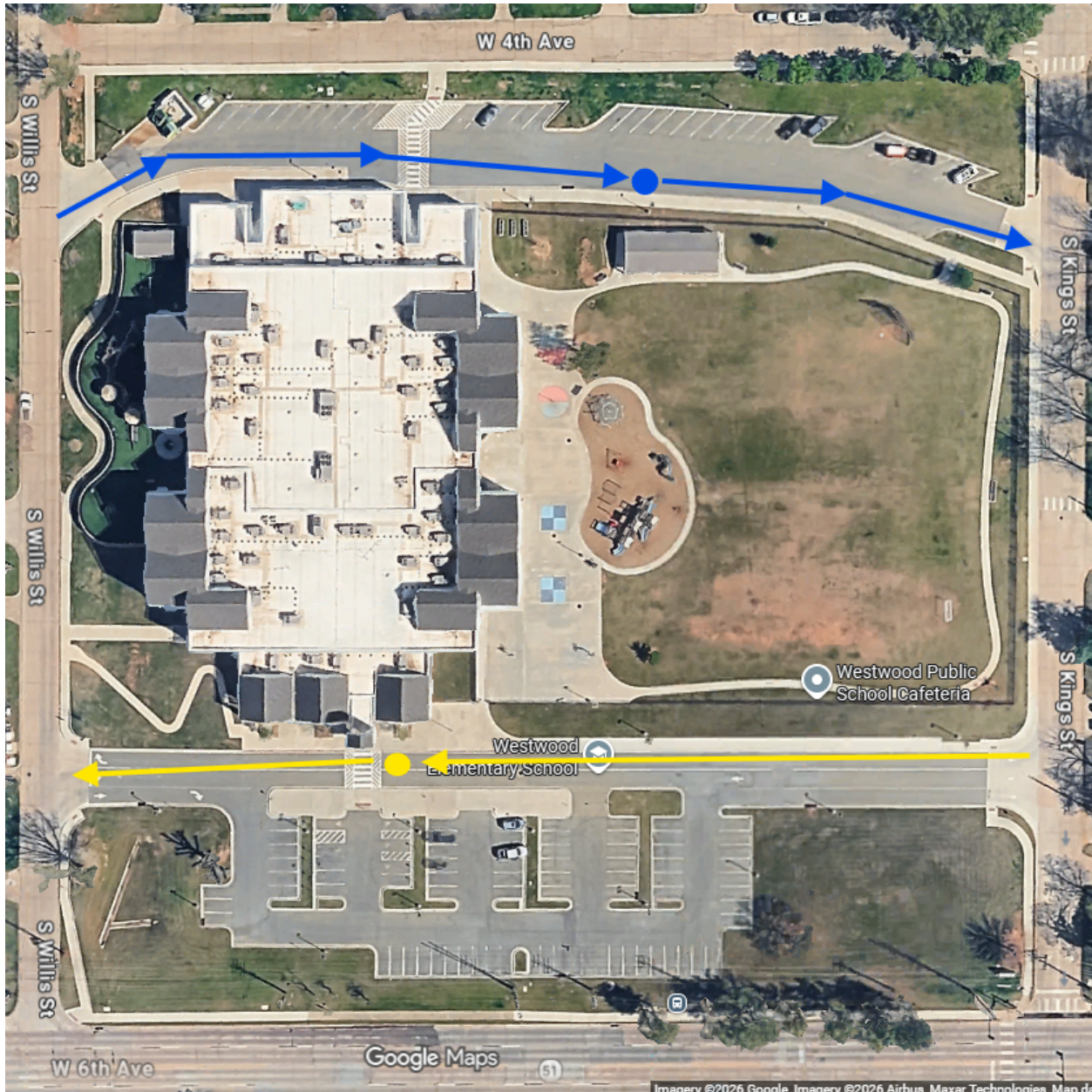
SANGRE RIDGE ELEMENTARY

Drop off and pick up is in the bus loop on the East of the school(Blue). When dropping off a teacher will meet the bus and welcome the students to school. During pick up, a teacher will bring students to the bus.



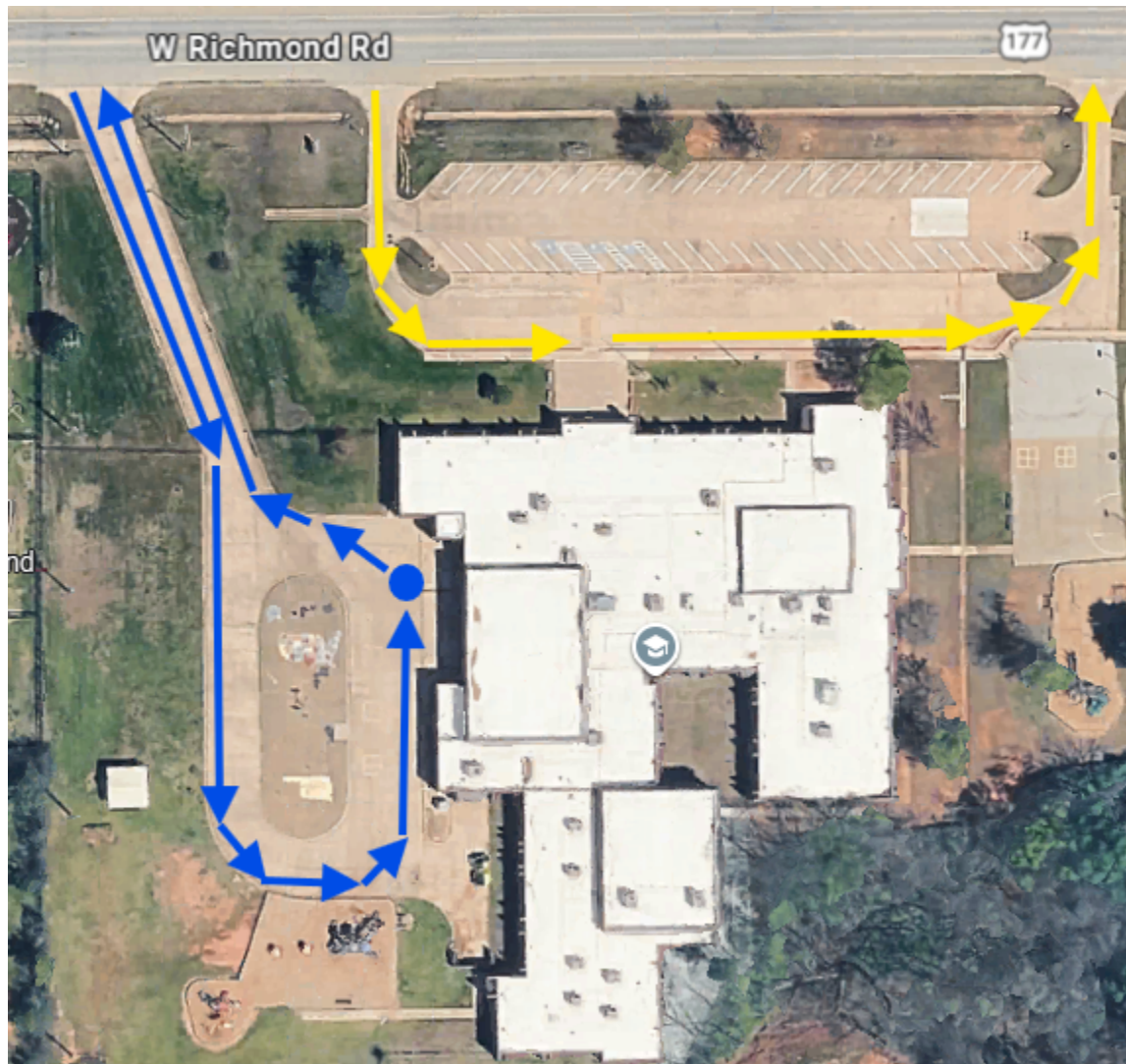
WESTWOOD ELEMENTARY

Drop off and pick up is on the North side of the school past the crosswalk(Blue). A teacher will meet the bus to welcome the students. For pick up all buses will park past the cross walk. Teachers will bring the students to the bus. Shuttles and activities are typically loaded on the South side(Yellow).



RICHMOND

Drop off and pick up is in the bus loop on the West side of the building(Blue). Teachers wait for students by the cafeteria door. Students are dismissed from the cafeteria to board in the afternoon. Some activities are loaded on the North side(Yellow).



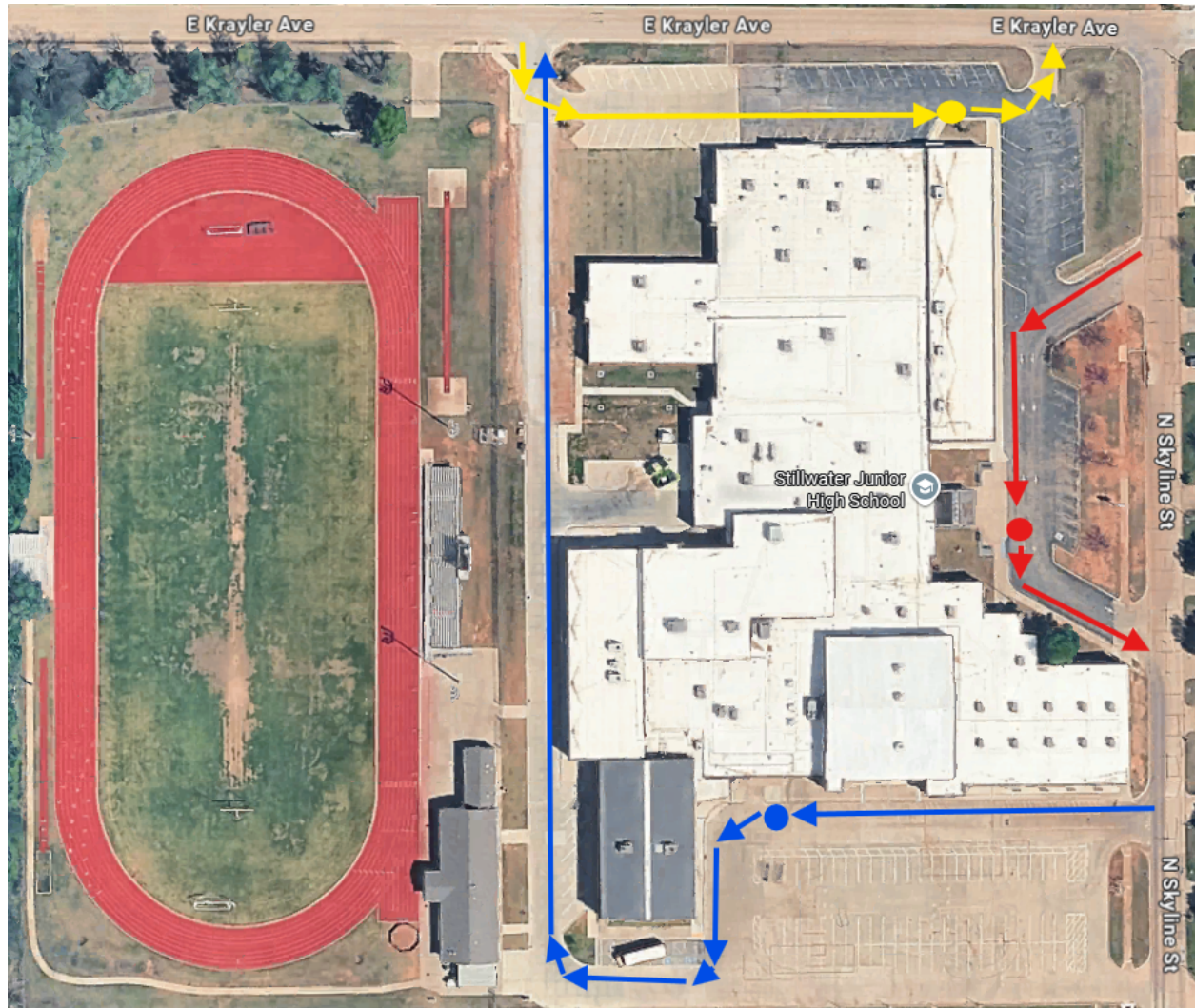
MIDDLE SCHOOL

Drop off and pick up on the east side of the building(Blue). Drop off near the cross walk while remaining aware of other buses pulling in to drop off. During pick up, pull as far forward as possible, leaving the crosswalk open for students. When the inside lane is full, pull up the crosswalk in the outside lane and wait for other buses to depart before moving to the inside lane for pick up.



JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Drop off and pick up on the South side of the building for gen ed buses(Blue). Special needs pick up and drop off is on the North side(Yellow). Shuttles typically load in the front circle drive(Red). Be cautious and courteous when using the North driveway since you are going against the flow of traffic.



HIGH SCHOOL

Drop off and pick up is on the East side of the building. Pull as far forward as possible along the darker sidewalk section (red line) before dropping off or picking up. Students are to be dropped off and picked up only along the section indicated below. Be patient and do not pass other buses unless instructed to do so.



STUDENT CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

The guidelines outlining student expectations and discipline procedures are available in policy [CN-E1](#). Drivers and aides are expected to understand the policy and follow the actions outlined to provide firm, equitable, and consistent discipline while ensuring the safety of all students.

Driver's action steps:

1. Verbal statement to the student of expectations and consequences.
 - a. Calmly state clear, positive instructions.
 - b. Speak respectfully avoiding sarcasm, ridicule, and yelling.
 - c. Speak directly to the individual student when possible.
 - d. If a student refuses to follow instructions, calmly state the consequences for failure to follow instructions. If a student continues to not comply, move on to the next discipline step. Do not escalate the situation into an argument with the student.
2. Assigned seat.
 - a. Assigned seating can be applied individually or uniformly for all riders as a student management tool.
 - b. When assigning students for discipline issues, the assignment should remain in effect until the student demonstrates they are able to behave in an appropriate manner.
3. Submit a student behavior report.
 - a. Behavior reports should only be submitted after steps 1 and 2 have proven ineffective or the behavior presents a possible dangerous situation.
 - b. Behavior reports must be submitted in a timely manner to allow staff to investigate and provide consequences.

By maintaining order, fairness, and good judgment, bus drivers promote safety, respect, and a positive atmosphere for all passengers.

ENTERING STUDENT CONDUCT REPORTS:

Student behavior reports are an important part of maintaining safety, order, and accountability on the school bus. A written report provides a formal record of repeated or serious misconduct and helps administrators take appropriate action.

When to enter a Report

- A student repeatedly violates bus rules after verbal warnings.
- A student's behavior endangers themselves or others.
- A serious incident occurs (e.g., fighting, vandalism, defiance, use of prohibited substances, or harassment).
- The driver believes the issue requires administrative attention.

How to enter a Report:

1. Sign into a Chromebook with the TR Public Session account.
2. On the top right of the home page click on the SPS Transportation link.
3. Click on Student Behavior.
4. Fill out the form.
 - a. Enter a brief and concise description of the conduct while highlighting what the student has done.
 - b. Submit a separate form for each student.
 - c. Do not enter multiple forms for an individual student for multiple infractions on a single route or enter previous infractions when entering a current incident.
5. Submit the form.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergencies can occur at any time — from crashes and fires to stalled buses, medical situations, or hazardous conditions. Knowing what to do before, during, and after an evacuation can save lives. If the bus is in a safe location, remain on the bus until assistance arrives or you are instructed to move.

Evacuate immediately in the following situations

- The bus is on fire or at risk of fire.
- The bus is stalled on or near railroad tracks.
- The bus's position may worsen (sliding, rolling, unstable ground).
- There is imminent danger of collision.
- Hazardous materials pose a direct threat.

When evacuating

- Secure the bus by setting the brake, removing the keys and turning on hazard lights.
- Use the service door if possible.
- Move students at least 100 feet away from any roadway or railroad track and in the direction of oncoming traffic or trains and upwind of any fire or hazardous materials.

- Notify dispatch with location, conditions, and assistance needed.
- Walk through the bus to ensure all students have exited.
- Retrieve the First Aid kit and fire extinguisher if safe.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

The following procedures should be followed for all traffic accidents involving school vehicles. All accidents require a police report and must be reported to the transportation department.

If you are involved in an accident while transporting students, remember that your first priority is the safety of the students. **NEVER leave students unattended!** If you are the only adult in the vehicle, wait until another school employee arrives before exiting the vehicle.

1. Secure the area
 - a. Make sure all vehicles involved are stopped and are in no immediate danger of being struck by other traffic.
 - b. Make sure there are no immediate life threatening injuries.
2. Call for assistance
 - a. If the accident occurs in Stillwater during regular operation hours, contact the transportation office by radio or phone (533-6347).
 - b. At any other time or location, contact the appropriate local authorities. If there are injuries or the threat of injuries, call 911.
 - c. When calling for assistance, you should be prepared to give the following information.
 - i. Location-direction of travel-mile marker and such
 - ii. Nature of accident – including number of vehicles involved
 - iii. Are there injuries requiring ambulance assistance?
3. Reassure the students.
 - a. Students should remain seated in the same location as when the accident occurs.
4. Exchange information.
 - a. While waiting for police to arrive, begin getting student information including name, address, phone number and location in the vehicle at the time of the accident.
 - b. Get the reporting officer's name, agency, and report number.
 - c. Do not accept responsibility for the accident or offer to pay for any damages. The insurance company will determine fault and pay damages as appropriate.
 - d. Do not make statements about vehicle defects.
5. Follow up with the transportation office
 - a. All accidents must be reported to the transportation office. If the accident occurs outside of Stillwater, notify the transportation office on the next business day.

SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES

If a severe storm is approaching when school is scheduled to be released, students may be held at the school until it is safe for them to be released. If this occurs after arriving at the school, secure the bus and wait inside the building until students are cleared to leave.

ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Regular shuttles are assigned by the Director of Transportation. Activity trips and substitutes are assigned by the Dispatcher. If you are unable to drive your regularly scheduled shuttle or assigned activity, inform the dispatcher in a timely manner to arrange for a replacement driver.

TRANSPORTATION CONTACTS

- Matt Parsel - Transportation Director
 - Route changes
 - Student concerns
 - Anything not addressed in a timely manner.
- Gary Moffitt - Head Mechanic
 - Mechanical issues
 - Driving questions
 - Bus concerns
- Vicki Jameson - Transportation Compliance Clerk
 - Time card and leave issues
 - Updating driver information
 - Onboarding process
- James McDaniel - Dispatcher
 - Shuttles
 - Activity trips
 - Daily routes
- Rhett Bryan - Mechanic Assistant
 - Mechanical issues

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PAY PERIODS

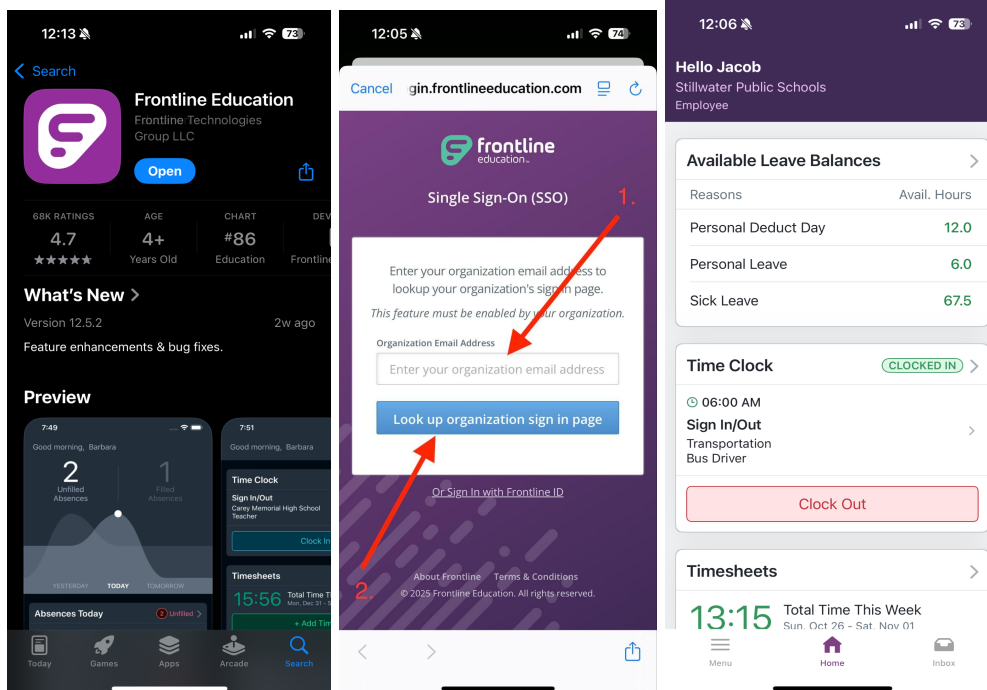
Pay periods run from the 14th of each month to the 14th of the following month. Payday occurs on the last working day of each month.

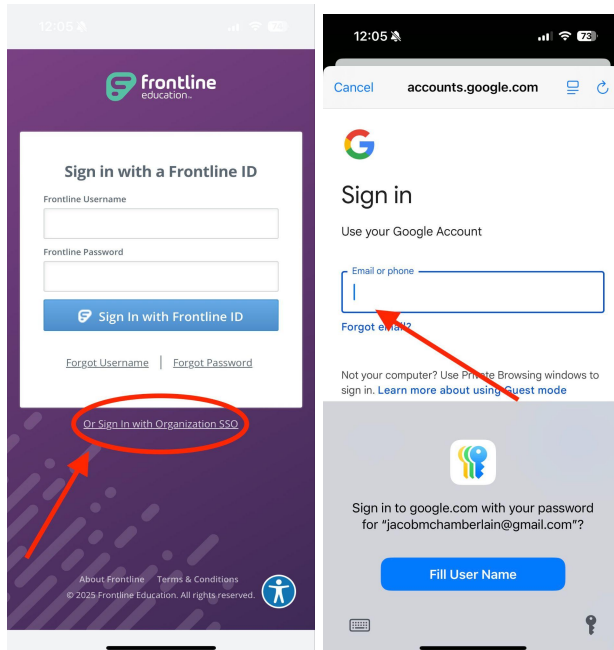
It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that they have accumulated sufficient hours during each pay period. Employees are encouraged to review their time regularly in Frontline to verify accuracy and address any discrepancies promptly.

If you have any questions or issues regarding payroll, hours, or pay periods, please see the Transportation Compliance Clerk for assistance.

DOWNLOADING AND SETTING UP THE FRONTLINE APP

1. Download the frontline app from the app store
2. Sign in using an organization
3. Use your school email to sign in
4. Sign in using your school Gmail account





IDLE REDUCTION POLICY

Stillwater Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive environment for all persons occupying our schools. In light of the significant risk posed by vehicle exhaust emissions, especially to children, Stillwater Public Schools is implementing a vehicle idling policy. This policy is intended to improve the health and safety of all individuals in or around the school and school grounds and reduce risks associated with exposure to vehicle exhaust (such as aggravated respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, decreased lung function, acute respiratory symptoms and chronic bronchitis). Queuing of buses for pickup and drop-off as well as periods of idling during the bus commute itself can cause particular problems. The steps outlined below indicate the exact timing of specific changes to current operations, provide guidance on effective implementation and outline procedures for conflict resolution and enforcement:

1. Bus idling on school grounds shall not exceed five minutes in all cases, except as noted under “Exceptions.”
2. When school bus drivers arrive at loading or unloading areas to drop off or pick up passengers, they should turn off their buses as soon as possible to eliminate idling time

and reduce harmful emissions. The school bus should not be restarted until it is ready to depart and there is a clear path to exit the pick-up area.

3. At school bus depots, limit the idling time during early morning warm-up to what is recommended by the manufacturer (generally three to five minutes) in all but the coldest weather.

4. Buses should not idle while waiting for students during field trips, extracurricular activities or other events where students are transported off school grounds.

5. In colder weather, schools are directed to provide a space inside the school where bus drivers who arrive early can wait.

6. In colder weather, if the warmth of the bus is an issue, idling is to be at a very minimum and occur outside the school zone. The "warmed" bus is to enter the school zone as close to pick-up time as possible to maintain warmth and then shut down.

7. All service delivery vehicles shall turn off the engines while making deliveries to school buildings

8. During morning start-up, buses should idle no longer than necessary to bring engines to proper operating temperature, defrost all windows and operate all heaters, air conditioners or other equipment to ensure the safety and health of the driver and passengers.

9. Signs should be prominently posted on school grounds to remind all (car, bus and truck) drivers of our school's idling policy

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

[CN - School Transportation](#)

[CN-E1 - Stillwater Public Schools Transportation Guidelines](#)

[CN-R1 - Requirements to drive a Stillwater Public Schools Vehicle](#)