



TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The Avon Community School Corporation's Transportation Department strives to keep students safe and families informed as we make improvements. Changes are necessary as we maximize resources, reduce expenses, and become more efficient in our daily activities.

Some changes will affect modifications to last school year's routing schedule. The criteria used in making these decisions is always based on safety. The process of developing safety protocol involves parents, bus drivers, local law enforcement and fire department, administrators from the Town of Avon, Avon School Board, school administrators and others.

Following are changes/updates:

Bus Back Up

Safety is always our primary concern. Over the past several years, we have made increased efforts to prevent our buses from being in an area where they must back up. Although we have been successful, there are still a handful of routes that are not in compliance. These areas typically involve cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets. Please be assured that we are making every effort to eliminate driving in these types of areas. We continue to assign bus pick-up points at intersections that better serve our community yet still support our safety concerns. In spite of our efforts, there may still be a circumstance that requires a bus to backup. These circumstances normally occur when a conflict in protocol exists. For example; you reside in a cul-de-sac whose intersecting road has a 45 mph speed limit. In this example, we will default to driving down the cul-de-sac vs. asking your child to wait at the 45 mph intersection.

In addition, there are times, particularly when rounding curves in a road, where the clearance between parked vehicles prohibits a school bus from proceeding. If this becomes an ongoing issue, it may become necessary to change pick up points. Drivers need assistance from parents to help eliminate vehicles from parking on both sides of neighborhood streets.

Route Adjustments

Please be advised that bus drivers do not have the authority to make any adjustments to their routes or their pick up points. Each route is calculated to leave the Transportation Center at a specific time, make an exact number of stops, and arrive at a specific destination within a specified time frame. Alterations, additions or other changes greatly affect the outcome. In addition, if the normal driver is unable to report to work, the substitute driver must follow the route as originally designed. Due to time constraints, it's normally not possible for a driver to turn around and pick up a student who has missed the bus. On inclement weather days, parents are encouraged to work together to keep children warm and safe.

Call Center

Every year, the transportation facility receives thousands of calls from parents/guardians. The number of calls, particularly at the start of the school year, far exceed the number of staff available to personally answer an initial phone call. In order to respond to your calls in a timely manner, a temporary call center will be established to assist with questions concerning transportation. The Transportation Call Center will be staffed with well-informed individuals who have the knowledge to answer your questions. The call center will open Monday, July 18, 2016. A contact number will be posted on our webpage.

Bus Stop Evaluation Request

A "Bus Stop Evaluation Request" will once again be available on our web page (<http://www.avon-schools.org/Page/157>) beginning Wednesday, August 24, 2016. The purpose of this service is to assist parents with concerns about their child's bus stop. Before filing your request, please be knowledgeable of the guidelines used in establishing stops. If your child's stop meets the following criteria, no adjustments will be made:

1. Kindergarten students must be met at the bus stop by a parent or designee. If parents choose a designee, an authorization affidavit must be signed and submitted by the parent to the school or transportation center office. The form is located at: <http://www.avon-schools.org/Page/157>

2. It is the parent's responsibility to provide for their child's safety while arriving, waiting at, and departing from the bus stop.
3. Students from several homes shall meet at a central point for pick-up and drop-off.
4. Students must be at their bus stop five (5) minutes before their scheduled pick up time. A bus may arrive up to five (5) minutes before or after its scheduled time.
5. The school bus should be clearly visible from any direction a vehicle might approach.
6. Stops are generally located at residential intersections.
7. Whenever possible, bus stops will avoid cul-de-sacs, non-through streets, and private property.
8. Buses will avoid the use of turn-arounds and backing up unless unavoidable.
9. Stop distance parameters to/from the bus stop are as follows. Elementary/Intermediate-Maximum 1,000 feet, Middle School/High School Maximum 1,500 feet. (If a conflict in protocol exists, the walk distance may be extended by a maximum of 25%.)
10. The lack of sidewalks, lighting conditions, weather conditions, stop not being visible from home and/or the bus traveling past the house do not warrant a stop evaluation.
11. Group bus stops will not be located on roads where speed limits are in excess of 40 mph.

Additional Options

Families are encouraged to work with neighbors if possible. Additional options are available. The Hendricks Regional Health YMCA offers before- and after-school care at each of our Elementary and Intermediate Buildings. Contact information is available in each building. If your child attends a day care/child care facility as defined in I.C. 20-27-9-11 and I.C. 20-27-9-12, and the facility is located within the same boundary area as his/her school, the Transportation Department will assign your child's bus stop to correspond with the stop associated with the facility. The protocol used above for setting bus stops applies to all day cares/child care facilities.

GPS

What is GPS and why is it on the buses? Avon Schools has GPS (Global Positioning System) service on all buses and support vehicles to enhance safety and efficiency. One of the primary advantages for parents is the ability to use your smartphone or home computer to track the position of your child's bus. **Here Comes the Bus, which last year was a paid service, is offered FREE of charge to ALL parents for the 2016-2017 school year.** Sign up at: <http://herecomesthebus.com/#DownloadTheApp>

Parents of Kindergarten Students

Parents of kindergarten students are required to meet their child at the bus stop for the afternoon drop off. A parent may designate others individuals to receive their child by signing an authorization affidavit. The affidavit is available at your child's school, transportation center or online on our webpage. If a parent elects to complete the form at the school or transportation center, a photo ID is required. If you elect to complete the form at home, the parent signature must be notarized.

Transportation Communication

School Messenger allows our transportation office to reach parents quickly thru notification by an automated phone message when there is an unexpected late bus or a change in any bus detail. **E-Link** provides parents with the most up to date bus stop information. Parents are encouraged to log into E-Link often after July 18, 2016 and prior to the first day of school as bus stops may be slightly altered due to new student enrollment. Log into E-Link at: (<http://www.avon-schools.org/Page/157>)

Contact Us

If you have questions relating to your child's bus stop, routing or pick up times, please call the Transportation Center at 317-544-6140. Be sure to visit the Transportation webpage (<http://www.avon-schools.org/Page/157>) often for the most up-to-date information.

All of us at the Avon Community School Corporation Transportation Center appreciate and acknowledge the cooperation and support we have received from our families and the community. We ask that you continue to assist us through this transitional period. It is our goal to keep you advised of changes as they occur. Look for additional correspondence during the school year.

Kind Regards,
Avon Community School Corporation Transportation Department

