



12245 – 131 Street, Edmonton, AB T5L 1M8  
780-454-1855 ext 170 [www.auroraschool.ca](http://www.auroraschool.ca)

Emergency after Hours – Golden Arrow 780-447-1538, press 1

---

# STUDENT TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK

Effective August 2019





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS.....</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
Student Responsibilities	
Parent/Guardian Responsibilities	
Bus Operator Responsibilities	
<b>EZ ENROUTE GPS SYSTEM .....</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>VIDEO SURVEILLANCE .....</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>COMMUNICATION.....</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>BUS ROUTES AND STOPS .....</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>SCHOOL CLOSURE AND INCLEMENT WEATHER .....</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>BUS REGISTRATION, FEES, REFUNDS &amp; PAYMENTS .....</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>PARENT PROVIDED (PP) Transportation.....</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION .....</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES.....</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>CONTACTS.....</b>	<b>Page 9</b>

# **SCHOOL BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS**

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Bus operators cannot make changes to the route without authorization from Lisa Weidel, Transportation Coordinator, if you need to change your child's stop, please contact Lisa @ [lweidel@auroraschool.ca](mailto:lweidel@auroraschool.ca)**
- Each Aurora school bus has a colored route sign in the front window of the school bus with the name of our school, route number and name. Teach your child the number/name of the bus they ride i.e. #5 Ellerslie bus, #2 North West bus, etc. Make sure your Kindergarten child has the colored bus tag attached to their backpack. This tag identifies which bus the student should be taking and corresponds with the route sign as displayed in the front window of the bus.
  - #1 Riverbend - Red
  - #2 North West - Yellow
  - #3 Millwoods East - Brown
  - #4 Tamarack - Black
  - #5 Ellerslie - Purple
  - #6 Grange West - Dark Green
  - #7 Millwoods Central - Gray
  - #8 North East - Blue
  - #9 Millwoods North - Orange
  - #10 North Central - Pink
  - #11 South Central - Light/Lime Green
- Parents will acknowledge and respect the bus operator's authority and responsibility for the bus.
- Parent will ensure their child/children is carrying the GPS beacon on a daily basis.
- Parents will ensure their child/children are punctual and are waiting/standing at the designated pickup location **five minutes** prior to the scheduled stop time, bus leaves at scheduled time.
- Parents will ensure their child/children respect public and private property while waiting for the bus and do not use private property for a gathering point while waiting for the bus.
- Parents will ensure their child/children are properly dressed for the weather conditions.
- Parents are responsible for their child/children's safety prior to boarding the bus in the morning and once they have got off the bus in the afternoon.
- Parents will ensure their child/children know how to recognize their bus stop and find their way home safely (if applicable).
- Parents will make sure their kindergarten child is wearing his/her colored bus tag on their backpack. This tag identifies which bus the student is to be riding and corresponds the route sign in the front window of the bus.
- Parents are responsible for their child/children's behavior on the bus and will assist in resolving discipline problems.
- Parents are responsible financially for vandalism to the bus caused by their child/children while riding on the school bus.
- Parents are responsible for establishing emergency procedures for their child/children so they know what to do if:
  - the bus is late or does not arrive
  - no one is home, or
  - there is an emergency school closure

- Parents must abide by the rules and regulations of the Highway Traffic Act (therefore not impeding the flow of traffic by parking or blocking a highway, roadway or traffic lane to get their children to the bus stop).
- Parents and unregistered or part time students are not permitted to ride the yellow school buses.
- Students in Grade 1 thru 9 are permitted to get off the bus alone at their designated stop. Kindergarten students however, are **not** permitted to get off the bus at their designated stop, unless a parent/guardian is at the stop. If a parent/guardian is not present, Bus Operator will radio Golden Arrow dispatch to advise that there is no parent, Golden Arrow School Buses will attempt to contact the parents. The bus operators may take the child with them as they complete the route and will remain with that child until he/she is picked up either at a stop or is delivered to an Edmonton Police Station. The child will not be brought back to the school. Please ensure your younger child/children know their telephone number and have it written down in their homework book.
- In preparation for delayed or cancelled service, it is critical that parents develop a back-up plan that is well understood by their children. Please anticipate that there will be days on which your bus is significantly delayed. The responsibility for the safety of your child is shared both by Golden Arrow School Buses and parents. Parents are responsible to the point at which the student boards the bus, Golden Arrow School Buses is responsible while the student is being transported. Never leave children at the stop without backup arrangements in the event of an emergency. Have the Golden Arrow School Buses number 780-447-1538 close at hand to find out the status of a delay.

Parents will respect decisions of the Transportation Coordinator (in cooperation with the Transportation Committee and Golden Arrow School Buses). In addition to the adherence to our transportation rules and procedures, we ask our parents to:

- Report any behavioral difficulties their child/children has experienced with fellow riders to the driver first, if it is not resolved through the driver contact Lisa Weidel, Transportation Coordinator 780-454-1855 ext 170. Aurora School will not tolerate bullying or misconduct if any kind and must be advised of any potential difficulties.
- Report any difficulties you experience with your bus operators to the Transportation Coordinator.

Bus operators are asked to report in writing to Aurora School their observation of any parent who approaches a bus operators with a request to alter a route, yelling/verbal abuse to the driver, tries to stop the bus at an unscheduled stop, pulls in front of the bus, or otherwise endangers the safety of the bus and/or its riders. The safety of children is our number one priority. Any of these actions could result in the possible bus suspension of your child.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The school bus is considered an extension of the classroom and therefore classroom conduct is to be observed at all times.**

- The bus operators is in full charge of the bus and the bus operator's directions **must** be obeyed.
- Students are responsible for their conduct to the bus operators and ultimately to the Principal(s). Serious or continued violation of these rules may lead to the loss of riding privileges and possible bus or school suspension.
- Students can only get off the bus at their designated stops, unless their parents have advised the school via a signed written note in the homework book or letter. The note or letter must then be signed by their school Principal and shown to the bus operators before they can be dropped off at the requested stop.
- Student will carry the GPS beacon **everyday** on the bus.

- Posted time is departure time, therefore students are required to be waiting/standing at the bus stop five minutes before the posted time.
- Students will respect public and private property while waiting for the bus and line up properly as the bus prepares to stop, keeping a safe distance from the bus.
- Students must conduct themselves in a quiet, courteous and respectful manner, showing consideration for the comfort and safety of others.
- Students will sit in the seat assigned to them by the bus operators.
- While the bus is in motion students must remain seated at all times.
- Items blocking aisles or emergency exits on a school bus are in violation of Alberta Transportation regulations and are NOT permitted
- Students will not open or adjust the window openings without the bus operator's permission.
- Food or drink is **not** permitted on the school bus.
- Students must not throw waste or other materials on the floor or out the windows of the bus.
- Students will be held accountable for willful damage to a bus.
- All items brought aboard the bus must be of adequate size to sit on the students lap. No loose items or unsecured sports equipment are permitted.
- Students may play portable music devices using personal headphones only.

## **BUS OPERATOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Obey all rules and regulations of the Highway Traffic Act at all time.
- Adhere to the bus schedules that have been established by Aurora School.
- Pick up and drop off students only at the bus stops designated by Aurora School.
- Upon early arrival at Aurora School, bus operators will not allow students to exit the bus until the supervisors have arrived outside. Supervision starts at 8:15 am.
- Buses depart the school at 3:20 pm.
- Bus operators are not authorized to make changes in the routes, except in unavoidable situations;
- Bring forward any reasonable requests to make route changes however no changes can occur until approved by Aurora School.
- Students in Grade 1 thru 9 are permitted to get off the bus alone at their designated stop. KINDERGARTEN students, however, are **not** permitted to get off the bus at their designated stop, unless a parent/guardian is at the stop. If a parent/guardian is not present, Bus Operator will radio Golden Arrow dispatch to advise that there is no parent, Golden Arrow School Buses will attempt to contact the parents. The bus operators may take the child with them as they complete the route and will remain with that child until he/she is picked up either at a stop or is delivered to an Edmonton Police Station. The child will not be brought back to the school. Please ensure your younger child/children know their telephone number and have it written down in their homework book.
- Notify the school Principal in writing about any inappropriate or unsafe behavior by students using the Infraction Form.
- Parents and unregistered or part time students are not permitted to ride the yellow school buses.
- When necessary, in accordance with Provincial Standards, students in Grades Kindergarten through six may be required to sit three to a seat, students in Grades 7 through 9 will sit two to a seat.
- Use of cell phone or any other personal portable electronic device while operating a school bus. Failure to follow the law (Distracted Driving Legislation Bill 16) will result in immediate termination.
- Bus operators are asked to report to Aurora School their observation of any parent who approaches a bus operators with a request to alter a route, tries to stop the bus at an unscheduled stop, pulls in front of the bus, or otherwise endangers the safety of the bus and/or its riders. The safety of

children is our number one priority. Any of these actions could result in the possible bus suspension of your child.

•

## **EZ ENROUTE GPS**

EZ enRoute is an iBeacon technology based tracking system which you can use to track the status of your child/children's bus. By accessing transportation, families have consented to having their child/children carry the beacon, students will be provided with a free beacon which will be carried in their backpack daily. Information will be transmitted through a mobile App, which will notify the parent when the child has boarded the bus as well as when they get off the bus.

\*The first beacon is provided free, a replacement beacon is subject to a \$15.00 replacement fee. In June, before the end of each school year, beacons will be collected as they are school property. In the event that a beacon is not returned, families will be charge a \$15.00 replacement fee for each unreturned beacon charged to their Family Zone account.

## **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

High Definition Video cameras that included audio, have be added to all the school buses to better monitor and be pro-active in assisting drivers and students to resolve incidents, issues and addressing safety concerns. The school bus is an extension of the classroom and this tool will be beneficial in assuring the same expectations as in the classroom are withheld in the school bus.

Lisa Weidel, the Transportation Coordinator will be the only person who will review the video and would only be done if a concern has been brought forth and we are unable to clearly clarify the incident and cannot resolve it through the parent and/or student and/or driver interaction first. If required, the Principals and/or Superintendent will be shown the video in the case of an incident. \*Program has the ability to block/blur faces that are not involved with the incident.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Aurora School uses a variety of methods to communicate with bus riding families. Route information is primarily communicated through the website and email. Bus information with respect to late buses is communicated either by School Connect, email, EZ enRoute GPS during school hours when possible. Please make sure parent emails and phone numbers are up to date on you Family Zone account.

## **BUS ROUTES AND STOPS**

Aurora Academic Charter School currently operates eleven bus routes serving the Edmonton area. Routes can be viewed on line on our website under Parents, Transportation or click on the following link <https://www.auroraschool.ca/bus-routes>

Aurora bus routes and stops are determined based upon the following criteria:

- The location of the student's primary residence(s) being at least 2.4 km from the school and within the city limits.
- Two stops locations will be considered for students with two parent resident addresses.
- Stops will not be created for extracurricular activities or at the parents' workplaces. However, a student may access such a stop if it is concurrently used by another student as his/her primary stop.

- Stops are congregational in nature, serving multiple families and communities. These congregational stops may result in the need for parents to drive their children to their bus stop in their home community. If there is no home community stop, a neighboring community stop may be assigned.
- Ride times to be equal for all students if possible per the route. Routes are planned so the first student on the morning is first student off in the afternoon.
- Stops are created at or near Edmonton Transit bus stops.
- Aurora School does not offer door-to-door or near-to-door service, due to the distance the buses must travel and our requirement to keep drive times and costs within policy guidelines.
- Bus routes travel along major arterial roadways, not in and out of the smaller suburban streets.
- Bus service outside the City of Edmonton is not provided. However, parents are welcome to drive their children to an existing stop within city limits.
- Students living in Edmonton's communities may expect ride times of up to 60 – 75 minutes each way. This is a common driving time for Charter schools.
- Aurora School reserve the right to alter routes and stop locations during the school year to accommodate changing rider demographics and/or to improve the flow, timing or safety of a route and/or stop.
- Routes, stops and travel times change from year to year with the changing student population.

Stops are chosen based upon a combination of the following criteria:

- ETS Bus Stop locations
- Distance and time of the route
- Minimization of backtracking or wandering
- The number of riding families in a community
- Centralized location of the stop for all users in the community

## **SCHOOL CLOSURE/INCLEMENT WEATHER**

The Transportation Coordinator, in consultation with School Administration may suspend or cancel school bus service to Aurora School when weather conditions constitute a hazard to the safety of students.

During inclement weather, the final decision to send a child to the bus stop or to school rests with the parents, even if the buses and school may be operational.

It shall be the responsibility of the Transportation Coordinator to advise the Principals regarding road and driving conditions. The Transportation Coordinator will solicit advice from the bus contractor and bus operators when preparing the recommendation.

The following factors, shall serve as guidelines for considering school closure:

- a) Wind-chill of approximately -40 degrees Celsius, as determined by the Public Weather Information Office in Edmonton;
- b) Temperature of -35 degrees Celsius, as determined by the Public Weather Information Office in Edmonton
- c) Road and driving conditions

In the event of a busing cancellation a decision will be made no later than 6:30 AM. An automated phone message and EZ enRoute notification will be sent out to parents. Information on bus cancellations will be available on our website at [www.auroraschool.ca/students-parents/busing](http://www.auroraschool.ca/students-parents/busing)



Official information released to the public will be broadcast through Corus Entertainment (630 CHED, 880 CHQT, 92.5 CKNG & 103.9 CISN), Jim Pattison Group (99.3 CIUP & 102.3 CKNO), New Cap Broadcasting (96.3 CKRA & 97.3 CIRK) and Rogers Communication (91.7 CHBN, 101.7 CKER & 102.0 CHDI) radio stations for busing updates.

While on route, a bus operator has the authority to change the route direction in the case of an accident, impassable roads, road closure or directed by law enforcement.

## **BUS REGISTRATION, FEES, REFUND & PAYMENTS**

Aurora Academic Charter School subsidizes the bus fees. The school currently receives a transportation grant from Alberta Education, which is directly applied against the cost of providing the busing service. The grant is provided for students who reside 2.4 km or greater from the school and ride the bus as of September 30. Most of the balance is covered by user fees paid by parents of busing students. Waivers for transportation fees are not provided.

### **YEARLY BUS FEES** (Payment is made online through Family Zone Account)

Transportation fees are subject to annual review by the Board of Directors.

Grade 1 to 9 Student .....\$ 600 per year/child  
 Kindergarten Student.....\$ 300 per year/child  
 No Family Rate

**Bus fees are due in full September 1 of each school year.**

### **SERVICE CANCELLATION AND REFUNDS**

Parents may choose to cancel their use of the busing service. All busing cancellation requests must be received in writing by the Transportation Coordinator and include the date at which the student will stop using the bus.

#### **Full Time and ESC Bus Rider Refunds**

Before August 31..... Full refund  
 September 1 to April 1 ..... Refund is prorated according to date bus service was cancelled.  
 After April 1 ..... No Refund

## **PARENT PROVIDED (PP) TRANSPORTATION**

### **GENERAL PROVISION**

Parents can enter into an agreement with Aurora Academic Charter School that entitles them to individual funding for Parent Provided (PP) Transportation for arranging their child/children's transportation to and from school each day.

### **CONDITIONS FOR FUNDING**

1. Child/children must live at least 2.4 km from the school (calculated by path or road mileage, lesser of two)
2. Parents must register their transportation choice by completing and returning the Parent Transportation Contract to the school before October 31.
3. Applications for PP funding will not be available to parents after October 31.



## **DISBURSEMENT**

The PP funding is paid by cheque and mailed out to eligible families at end of August to the address on file.

## **TRANSFERRING BETWEEN BUSING AND PP TRANSPORTATION**

Parents can register for Aurora School busing **OR** apply for PP transportation funding. Parents are not permitted to do both.

## **CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION**

Parents who have applied for PP Transportation funding can subsequently make a charitable donation to Aurora Academic Charter School of either ALL or a portion of the funding. A tax receipt will be provided for all donations over \$25. Alberta Education requires that we pay out the PP funding in its entirety after which time you can make a donation back to the school.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

1. Specific details related to all student transportation services are found in the *Student Transportation Handbook*.
2. Yellow bus service will be the preferred means of student transportation.
3. A student shall receive no more than one form of transportation service from Aurora Academic Charter School.
4. The Board of Directors will:
  - a. delegate the day-to-day operations to the Transportation Coordinator
  - b. consider recommendations for busing from the Transportation Coordinator and Transportation Committee
  - c. ensure the service provided is in keeping with the finances available
  - d. establish and review user fees for the services provided
5. The Secretary-Treasurer will:
  - a. ensure completion of the annual application for Alberta Education's transportation grant
  - b. prepare Parent Provided (PP) transportation contracts and funding cheques to qualifying families
6. The Transportation Committee will
  - a. hear any parent appeals with respect to student transportation and report its findings to the Board of Directors
  - b. work with the Transportation Coordinator with respect to current and new route development
7. The Transportation Coordinator will:
  - a. be responsible for day-to-day operations
  - b. keep parents informed about transportation services provided
  - c. establish routes and schedules, in conjunction with the bus carrier
  - d. provide periodic updates to the Board of Directors on student transportation
  - e. maintain the *Student Transportation Handbook*

8. The School Principal(s) or designate(s) will be responsible for:
  - a. the supervision of students loading and unloading at the school
  - b. student misconduct on the school bus that has been reported to them by bus operators
  - c. student bus suspensions for violation of bus rules and regulations contained in this handbook

## **CONTACTS**

### **TRANSPORTATION**

- For **lost items**, please speak to the bus operators directly or contact Golden Arrow School Buses.

#### **Golden Arrow School Buses**

Phone: 780-447-1538 press 1

- For **busing delays**, please contact Golden Arrow School Buses:

#### **Golden Arrow School Buses**

Dispatch

Phone: 780-447-1538 press 1

- For issues regarding **student discipline and bus behavior**, please contact:

#### **AACS - Elementary**

Jacqueline Harman

Phone: 780-454-1855

Fax: 780-454-8104

Email: [jharman@auroraschool.ca](mailto:jharman@auroraschool.ca)

#### **AACS – Middle School**

Peter Dang, Principal

Phone: 780-454-1855

Fax: 780-454-8104

Email: [pdang@auroraschool.ca](mailto:pdang@auroraschool.ca)

- For questions regarding **general inquiries, bus routes, schedules, fees & billing**, please contact:

#### **AACS - Central Office**

Lisa Weidel, Transportation Coordinator

Phone: 780-454-1855 ext 170

Fax: 780-454-8104

Email: [lweidel@auroraschool.ca](mailto:lweidel@auroraschool.ca)

### **PARENT PROVIDED TRANSPORTATION**

For parent provided (PP) transportation, disbursements and administration, call:

#### **AACS - Central Office**

Holly Maccagno, Secretary Treasurer

Phone: 780-454-1855 ext 151

Fax: 780-454-8104

Email: [hmacagno@auroraschool.ca](mailto:hmacagno@auroraschool.ca)