

**ISD  
728**

Independent  
School District

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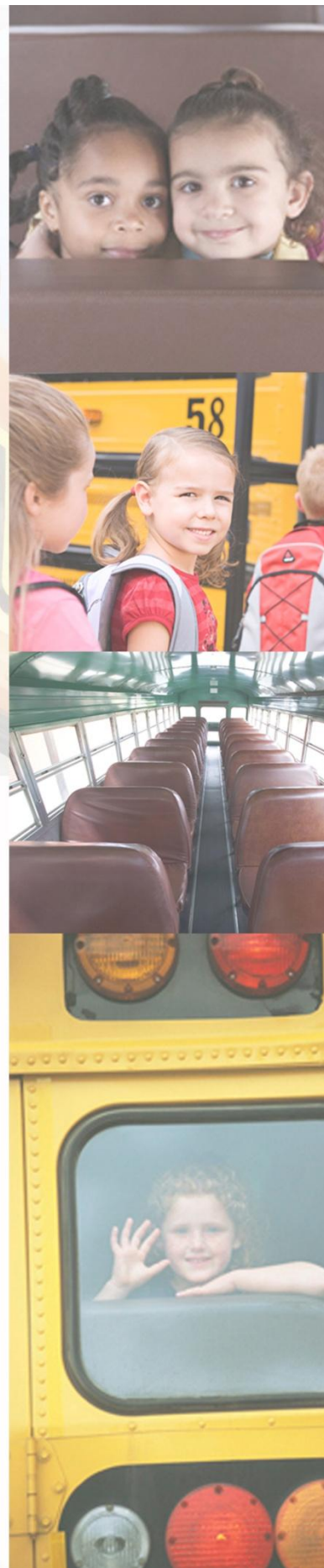
Elk River Area School District

# School Bus

# Transportation

# Information for Parents, Guardians and Students

Our **mission** is to **educate, inspire & empower**  
our **diverse** learners, to shape their **futures**, to accomplish their **dreams**  
and to contribute **positively** to our local and global **communities**.



# General Information



## District 728 and Vision Transportation Mission Statement

District 728 contracts with [Vision Transportation](#) to provide transportation to area students.

*The mission of District 728 and Vision of Elk River is to support the education process by transporting students safely, securely, reliably and in a timely manner to and from school and school events. Our goal is to operate safe, dependable and cost-effective transportation services for our students. We want the student's ride to be part of a positive educational experience.*

In spite of our best efforts, occasionally buses will be late due to traffic, weather, vehicle breakdowns and student management issues. We are committed to making every effort to reduce these problems.

## Vision Transportation Contact Information

12508 Elk Lake Road, Elk River, MN 55330

Buses are on the road from 6:30-9:30 a.m. and 1:50-5 p.m. Late or missed buses, cancellations and special program busing are priority calls during these hours. If you have questions or comments that are not urgent, please call when the buses are not operating.

General Information	763-441-4420
Bus route questions South of River	763-230-6027
Bus route questions North of River	763-230-6028
Special Education bus routes	763-230-6024
Field Trips	763-230-6023
Student conduct concerns	
– North of the Mississippi River	763-230-6026
Student conduct concerns	
– South of the Mississippi River	763-230-6021
FAX	763-241-0896
Web site	<a href="http://www.visionofelkriver.com">www.visionofelkriver.com</a>



## Title IX Statement

District 728 does not engage in unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, membership or activity in a human rights commission, or age. The Director of Human Resources has been designated to respond to inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies, including inquiries under Title IX.

## Bus Forms

District 728 families are asked to review the guidelines in this document in year and must complete a *School Transportation Form* for each student each year. Guidelines and forms are available on the ISD 728 Web site at [www.elkriver.k12.mn.us/transportation](http://www.elkriver.k12.mn.us/transportation).

# Bus Safety for Students

Vision of Elk River and District 728 are committed to maintaining a safe, respectful environment while transporting all students to and from school. All students are expected to show respect toward the bus driver, fellow students and their property. Harassment in any form will not be tolerated. Every student, public, nonpublic and charter, regardless of age, is responsible for following the rules in the Student Handbook and the rules outlined in this guide. Due to time and safety concerns, parents are not allowed on the bus.



## Getting to the bus stop safely

When going to the bus stop, students are expected to:

- Use the sidewalk where one is provided, or
- Walk on the left shoulder of the street or roadway facing traffic, single file or no more than two abreast when there are no sidewalks.

## Safety at the bus stop

At the bus stop, students are expected to:

- Arrive five minutes before their scheduled pick-up time;
- Be cooperative and respectful of property (parents are responsible for their child's behavior at the bus stop);
- Stay a safe distance back from the curb and wait for the bus to come to a complete stop, and
- Never accept rides from strangers, even though the student may have missed the bus.

## Boarding the bus safely

When boarding the bus, students are expected to:

- Remain on the side of the street they reside on; if students must cross the street, they should walk 10 steps in front of the bus;
- Stop, look at the bus driver, and wait until the driver gives a hand signal to cross; then look left, right and left again before crossing the street;
- Walk quickly across the street, without stopping, turning back or running, and
- Enter in an orderly manner using the handrails; no pushing, shoving or crowding.

## Safe behavior on the bus

On the bus, students are expected to:

- Take a seat promptly, remain seated and avoid moving around while the bus is in motion;
- Once students board the bus, they must remain on the bus until they have reached their school or designated stop;
- Follow the instructions of the driver and/or assistant promptly and respectfully;
- Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself; no pushing, shoving or horseplay;
- Do not put head, arms, feet or any object out of the window;
- Respect the vehicle (students will be charged for damage/vandalism to the bus)
- Transport only items that fit on a student's lap;
- Do not handle any of the bus safety equipment, unless directed by driver (first aid kit, reflectorized triangles and the emergency door/window latches are for emergency use only);
- Do not bring weapons, flammable materials or any other dangerous or objectionable items on the bus;
- Do not fight, use abusive language/gestures, light incendiary devices or use tobacco products;
- Do not throw, flip or propel objects on the bus or out the windows, and
- Do not eat, drink or bring live animals on the bus.

## Leaving the bus safely

When leaving the bus, students are expected to:

- Remain seated until the bus has completely stopped and then exit without pushing or crowding;
- Use the handrail when leaving the bus, and
- Move away from the bus after stepping onto the curb.
- If students must cross the street, they should walk 10 feet ahead of the bus. Stop, look at the bus driver and wait until the driver gives a hand signal to cross; then look left, right and left again before proceeding. Walk quickly across the street, without stopping, turning back or running.

# Bus Information for Parents and Guardians

## Bus Stop Request Process

Please read through all of the provided information before making a route change request. If you feel you have a request that is not answered in the *Questions and Concerns* section of this guide, submit your request in writing to:

**Vision of Elk River Transportation,**  
12508 Elk Lake Road, Elk River, MN 55330

Or you may submit your request electronically at [www.visionofelkriver.com](http://www.visionofelkriver.com) and click on contact us. After your request is reviewed, you will be notified by Vision Transportation of the decision.



## Questions and Concerns

### **Q. How will I know which bus my child takes?**

A. Parents receive a mailing before school starts each fall showing bus stop locations, bus numbers and times for the school(s) your child(ren) attends. You may also access this information via the District's Parent Portal online at [www.elkriver.k12.mn.us/parentportal](http://www.elkriver.k12.mn.us/parentportal) (not available to private school students).

### **Q. How are bus stop locations determined?**

A. Our goal is to consistently identify bus stops in neighborhoods on the basis of safety, efficiency and distance between stops. Generally bus stops are located at an intersection in order for the driver to have a wide area to scan for traffic and students, to create efficient routes and to minimize buses backing up.

- School bus drivers do not have the authority to change bus routes or student pick-up/drop-off locations.
- Generally, bus stops are located at least three blocks away from each other.
- Generally, up to 25 students are assigned to a bus stop. This number may be exceeded at cul-de-sacs, high-density housing areas and high school stops because students are not standing on through streets and/or they are older.
- Bus stops are placed at locations that meet defined criteria, are centrally located and within reasonable walking distances from the student's home.
- We are not able to locate bus stops within the line of sight of each student's home or daycare.

### **Q. What is the maximum length of time for a bus route?**

A. Every attempt is made to limit student ride times to less than one hour and 15 minutes one way.

### **Q. Under what conditions is consideration given to adjusting bus stop locations?**

A. Roads and streets sometimes intersect on areas of road that cause concern for school bus transportation and other drivers. We make every effort to select safe places to load and unload students given these varying factors of roads, streets, traffic speed and locations of residences. Adjustments to bus stops may be made when we believe a safer alternative is available

### **Q. Why do some children have to cross the street to board the bus?**

A. We are not able to route buses so that all children can wait for the bus on the door side. We recommend that children wait on the side of the street that they reside. The bus will activate warning lights and a stop arm to alert traffic in order to accommodate students that need to cross the street to board the bus.

### **Q. Will the bus drive into a cul-de-sac or down a dead-end street?**

A. Except to transport special education students, buses generally are not routed down cul-de-sacs because of the danger to small children and property caused by the bus turning around and/or backing up in a small area. However, elementary school buses are routed down cul-de-sacs which are quarter mile long or longer, and middle school and high school buses are routed down cul-de-sacs which are half mile or longer provided there's a safe area for the bus to turn around.

**Q. My child is the only student using the bus stop. Can the stop be moved closer to our home?**

A. Generally, bus stops are centrally located for all students. Bus stops are not changed to accommodate one or more students because that may displace other students further from their home. Even though other students living along the route may not be riding the bus, we must keep bus stops as they have been published. A central bus stop is necessary because other students may begin riding the bus or new families may move into the neighborhood. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their child arrives safely at the bus stop.



**Q. The bus drives right past my house. Why can't it stop at my house?**

A. The higher frequency of stops makes other drivers impatient. This may result in drivers driving around the bus and causes greater safety concerns than the distance a student has to walk to the bus stop. It also delays the bus by increasing the number of stops, making overall student ride time longer.

**Q. What if my child occasionally needs to be dropped off at a different stop?**

A. Students may be picked up or dropped off at a destination other than their normal bus stop only in cases of emergency. Parents or guardians are urged to contact their principal or principal's designee as soon as possible.

**Q. What do I need to do so my child will have a successful bus ride to/from school?**

1. Arrange for your students to be at their bus stop five minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.
2. Monitor children from damaging the property of others at the bus stop.
3. Be aware that the bus will pick up and drop off students at the same stop every day school is in session.
4. Help your children learn their bus numbers.
5. Review the bus safety rules outlined in this book with your children.
6. Accompany younger children to the bus stop and meet the bus at the end of the day for the first days of school, or arrange for an older child or child care provider to be at the bus stop for the first days of school.
7. Understand that the bus pick-up and drop-off times are based on existing weather and road conditions. Traffic congestion, road construction, inclement weather and population changes may cause minor adjustments in pick-up and drop-off times. Parents will be notified of any major changes in bus schedules that affect their child.

## Daycare



All students are required to have a *School Transportation Form*, which includes daycare information, on file for each student with the school of attendance and Vision of Elk River, Inc. Forms are available on the ISD 728 Web site at [www.elkriver.k12.mn.us/transportation](http://www.elkriver.k12.mn.us/transportation).

This information is used to assign bus stops and for notification in case of an emergency. Students cannot be transported to or from daycare sites that are outside the school attendance zone.

The *School Transportation Form* must be completed and in the hands of the school or Vision by Aug. 1. There is no guarantee that we can accommodate daycare transportation once routes have been set for the start of school.

**Daycare Application Procedure:** Daycare information is included on the *School Transportation Form* and must be renewed each school year. If the daycare situation changes in the course of the school year, a new form must be submitted to enact the change. Daycare change requests must allow five days before the change can take effect.

## Students with Special Needs



Vehicles are equipped with two-way radios to allow drivers to communicate directly with the Transportation Department. Specially adapted seats, support and/or protective devices shall be used for all students who require such devices to ensure safe transportation. These shall be selected in consultation with the parents on the basis of the specific needs of the student.

Assistants will be assigned to supervise and assist students in transit as deemed necessary by the Director of Special Education. Drivers and assistants are required to have in-service training in first aid and in dealing with specific needs of the children on the route.

### **How do I get special transportation for my child if I believe they need it due to a medical condition or because they receive special education services?**

A1. In the case of students receiving special education services, the IEP team must establish that special transportation is required as a related service in order for the student to benefit from their special education services.

A2. In the case of a medical condition special transportation may be provided when a team of individuals knowledgeable about the student, including parent input, evaluates the need for an accommodation under Section 504. Contact the principal or school social worker for elementary students or the school counselor for middle or high school students. Also Minnesota law provides for special transportation for a student placed in an approved Care and Treatment program for mental health or chemical dependency treatment. Again contact the principal or school social worker for elementary students or the school counselor for middle or high school students.

#### **Responsibilities of parents/guardians**

- Have the student dressed and ready to board the vehicle five minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time;
- Provide and assume responsibility for the movement of the student from the residence to the curbside for pick up, and from the curbside to the residence upon return of the student from school, and
- Communicate problems with special transportation to Vision Transportation at 763-230-6024.
- In the event it is determined that the matter is beyond the scope of the Transportation Department, the Special Education Director will be contacted for assistance.

## **Student Behavior: *Minnesota Statute 121A.59, Bus Transportation is a Privilege Not a Right***

*Transportation by school bus is a privilege, not a right, for an eligible student. A student's eligibility to ride a school bus may be revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct policies, or for violation of any other law governing student conduct on a school bus, pursuant to a written school district discipline policy. Revocation of a student's bus riding privilege is not an exclusion, expulsion, or suspension under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act. Revocation procedures for a student who is an individual with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, United States Code, title 20, section 1400 et seq., section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, United States Code, title 29, section 794, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Public Law 101-336, are governed by these provisions.*

All students, public, nonpublic and charter, are expected to behave in accordance with federal, state and local laws and rules, and with District and school policies and regulations, and in a way that respects the rights and safety of others. Corrective action to discipline a student and/or to modify a student's behavior will be taken by staff when a student's behavior does not fall within these parameters. A number of our buses are equipped with a video camera which records video and audio to monitor student behavior. We have found the cameras to be valuable for resolving student behavior issues.

### **Be a good neighbor**

Students are expected to respect neighbors' property as they go to or from the bus stop or wait for the bus. Good neighbors do not:

- litter;
- walk on lawns;
- pick flowers or other plants from lawns or gardens;
- throw stones, snowballs or other objects;
- leave objects lying across curbs or sidewalks where they might trip other students or adults, or
- climb trees, fences, or retaining walls.

## A Word to Motorists on the Road: Safety is everyone's responsibility - know and obey school bus laws!

Motorists who fail to stop for a school bus with RED LIGHTS FLASHING AND STOP ARM EXTENDED may be charged with a gross misdemeanor punishable by a \$700 to \$3,000 fine and/or one year in jail. Flashing amber (yellow) lights are a warning that the bus is preparing to stop. Flashing red lights and extended stop arm mean that the bus is stopped either to load or unload passengers.

### Danger Zone

Please remind your children they must never try to retrieve books or papers from around or underneath the bus. We suggest children keep all papers and articles in a backpack.

### Winter safety

In winter students should:

- Be dressed in warm winter clothing, hats, mittens and boots;
- Use the handrail when boarding or exiting the bus to prevent slipping on icy steps or road surfaces, and
- Not stand or play on snow piles at the bus stop; students playing on snow piles could slide into the street into the path of oncoming traffic.

### Severe weather

Severe weather conditions may result in:

- A two-hour delay in opening schools;
- Closing schools for the entire day, or
- Closing schools before the end of the regular school day.

### School closings information

When District 728 school schedules or activities change because of severe weather or other emergencies, the information is shared with the public in the following ways:

- By telephone using a mass notification system called Parent Link, [www.elkriver.k12.mn.us/parentnotification](http://www.elkriver.k12.mn.us/parentnotification);
- On the District Web site at [www.elkriver.k12.mn.us](http://www.elkriver.k12.mn.us)
- On the District information line at 763-241-3400
- On WCCO Channel 4, WCCO 830 AM, KSTP TV Channels, KARE TV Channel 11, KMSP/FOX Channel 9, and WQPM radio (106 FM or 1300 AM).

### Did You Know?

- District 728 provides transportation to and from school for more than 12,500 students.
- District buses travel more than 1.75 million miles each year.
- All buses must pass rigorous state inspections each year.
- All buses have two-way radios for constant contact with the dispatchers.
- Bus evacuation drills are held twice a year at all grade levels.
- Vision of Elk River maintains approximately 110 vehicles and employs more than 120 transportation employees who serve Elk River Area Schools.
- The school district is over 175 square miles.

