

## **Transportation Mission Statement**

The mission of AISD Transportation is to provide safe, reliable and professional transportation service for our students according to the parameters set forth by the District's policy, and in adherence to applicable State and Federal Laws.

## **Regular Route Service Parameters**

Regular Route bus service is provided to students based upon eligibility criteria as set forth by District Policy.

## **DISTRICT POLICY FOR Eligible STUDENT RIDERS**

Students are eligible for transportation route service if the following criteria are met:

1. Students reside two or more miles from their campus of regular attendance, i.e. home school, Magnet school, or AISD Academy, measured along the shortest route to school. The 'home school' campus is determined by the student's residential address and the assignment boundary of each school.
2. Students living within two miles of their home school, Magnet school, or AISD Academy who would be subject to hazardous traffic conditions if they were to walk to school.

## **Hazardous Conditions Policy**

A road condition is considered hazardous to student pedestrian traffic under the following conditions;

1. Students must walk along or across a freeway, an expressway, an overpass, an underpass, or bridge where no walkway is provided.
2. Students must cross an uncontrolled major traffic artery.
  - Neighborhood streets without a sidewalk are not considered hazardous to pedestrian traffic.

Transfer students are not eligible for Transportation route service.

## **SCHEDULING GUIDELINES**

Bus routes are created to enhance student safety while maximizing vehicle efficiency. Bus routes will be designed to keep the ride time as short as possible for all students.

## **Bus Stop Policy: Definitions and Parameters**

### **Basic Considerations**

School bus stops are situated so as to allow students to wait off the main roadway for the bus if at all possible. Stop locations are determined by analyzing all or some of the following: population density within a given neighborhood, traffic patterns, and sidewalk locations. Stops are spread as far apart as policy will allow in order to decrease the number of stops each bus will make on its route, thus minimizing riding time for the students. Stops are not placed in dead end streets whenever possible to minimize bus accidents while backing (Backing is a very dangerous maneuver for a school bus).

## **Bus Stop Walk Range**

The bus stop walk range is defined as the maximum walking distance from a student's residential address to the student's assigned stop location. The stop range for Elementary School students is one quarter mile, for Middle School students it is one half mile, for High School students it is one mile. For Magnet campuses, designated Academies and special programs approved for cross-town busing, please note the following: For the current school year 2011/2012, due to time constraints, and bus passenger capacity, our policy is that the stop range may be longer than that set for Middle or High School students. Effective at the start of school year 2012/2013 the maximum walk is one and a quarter mile. Landmark locations, such as AISD school campuses, may be used to accommodate the most students possible in a timely and efficient manner.

## **Residential Address**

The student's residential address is recorded and maintained in the AISD student data system. That address is automatically imported into AISD's transportation routing software from the District database. All address changes must be reported to the registrar of the student's assigned school. Transportation Department personnel cannot enter or edit information as recorded in the District Student Data system, nor can we act as intermediary between parents and schools regarding address changes.

## **Route Changes**

Transportation routes are re-evaluated and adjusted prior to the start of school each year, and as necessary during the school year, to provide the best service for all eligible students. Routes are subject to change as required by considerations pertaining to student load and bus capacity, total ride time, arrival time at school, and bus route coordination with the bell times of Elementary, Middle, and High School levels.

## **Requests for Stop Location Changes, or Additional Stops**

We are constantly evaluating bus stop locations so as to be as efficient and fair as possible. Requests for stop location changes, or additional bus stops on a route, are evaluated according to the policy regarding stop location and 'stop range' walking distance as defined above. The highest priority will be given to stop change requests that meet the following conditions.

1. The student's walk to stop is in excess of the 'stop range' policy as stated above.
2. The student's walk to stop is hazardous as defined under the "Hazardous Conditions Policy" stated above.
3. The stop location is in close proximity to a hazard that could compromise the safety of students.

If you are new to the District (or to a particular school), are eligible for transportation service, but do not have a bus stop within the stop range walking distance for the student's school level, please call the Transportation Department at 414-0238 to request a stop. Please note that it may take up to 3-5 business days to make a route change (or longer at the beginning of the school year, or if the new stop will significantly change the pickup times for other students on the route), so you may have to make arrangements for your child to get to and from school during this time.

If changes to school bus routes do affect the pickup and drop-off times for other students on the route, all parents must be given adequate notice.

### **‘Pick Up Time’ Policy and Notification**

Bus route stop times are scheduled as accurately as possible, and drivers are instructed to arrive safely at each stop at the designated time. Due to possible variances between individual clocks, students are asked to arrive at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time. Drivers will depart the bus stop when students are safely seated. In order to maintain the schedule and arrive at school on time, Drivers cannot wait for late students. Please understand that under any circumstance, a student running to catch a school bus is a safety hazard. In the afternoon, all buses will wait 7 minutes at the school for students to board. Students are expected to proceed immediately to the buses. Once school officials release the buses from school, drivers are instructed not to stop or open the door for late students. If students run after moving buses, expecting a bus to stop, it creates a safety hazard due to the students being too close to moving bus wheels.

Before the beginning of each school year, Transportation notification letters are mailed to the parents or guardians of all students currently eligible for school bus transportation in AISD. Those students who are assigned to a bus stop are informed of the Route Name and Bus Number, Stop Location, and Stop Time. Those students who may be eligible for transportation by the Residence Address as recorded in the District Student Data system, but who do not have a stop assignment, will receive a letter informing them to call the Transportation Department at 414-0238 to request school bus transportation.

Bus stop information can also be accessed on the main AISD website, <http://www.austinisd.org/> by clicking on the “Bus Stop Finder” link. The website is updated every night and has the most current information.