



RECOMMENDATION REPORT

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DATE: Jan. 23, 2020

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Mark Liguori, Superintendent

SUBJECT: 2020-21 Student Transportation Fee Structure

ORIGINATOR: Lisa Weder, Director, Student Transportation

RESOURCE STAFF: Gurveer Chohan, Business Manager
Dave Antymniuk, Division Principal

REFERENCE: Policy 2: Role of the Board, Section 8.11
Policy 17: Student Transportation Services
Funding Manual for School Authorities, Section 8.1
Administrative Procedure 505: School and Administrative Fees
School Transportation Regulation AR 96/2019

EIPS PRIORITY: Enhance high quality learning and working environments.

EIPS GOAL: Quality infrastructure for all.

EIPS OUTCOME: Student learning is supported through the use of effective planning, managing, and investment in division infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the Student Transportation fee structure effective the 2020-21 school year.

BACKGROUND:

Policy 2: Role of the Board, Section 8.11 Fiscal Accountability establishes that the Board of Trustees will approve various administrative fees annually, including the transportation fees.

Alberta Education provides transportation funding based on the following criteria:

- Students attending their designated school and residing greater than 2.39 km to the school; and
- Students attending a non-designated school and residing greater than 2.39 km to both their designated school and the school they are attending.

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) provides enhanced transportation service that exceeds the transportation mandate as outlined by Alberta Education for a fee.

- Students who do not qualify for funding as per above criteria;
- Students who attend a non-designated school; or
- Students who access an additional bus to an alternate address.

Charging fees assists in recovering a portion of the incremental cost of providing these additional services.

Changes to the *Alberta Education School Transportation Regulation AR 96/2019* in September 2019 provides school boards the ability to charge eligible funded students for transportation services. AR 96/2019, Section 7 references the guidelines that must be adhered to when charging fees. The Regulation references and categorizes eligible and ineligible funded students into two groups:

- For eligible funded students' fees charged must not exceed the average difference per student between the estimated cost to the Board of transporting those students and the funding received by the Board; and
- For students who are ineligible for funding the fees charged must not exceed the average difference per student between the estimated cost to the Board.

Further, any surplus from transportation fees charged with respect to the above must be used to subsidize the cost of transportation of students in the two school years following the school year in which the surplus was collected.

The current fee structure in alignment with Board Policy 17: Student Transportation Services, defines eligible students as those students that we receive transportation funding for and attend their designated school. This group of students are currently not charged a fee for service. Ineligible students are defined as those students who we do not receive transportation funding for or students who attend a school of choice. This group of students are assessed a fee for service. Eligibility is further extended to those students that do not meet funding eligibility but are defined as hazard students and are therefore not assessed a fee.

A review and analysis of the current fee structure was conducted which took into consideration the following cost implications; legislation of the MELT (Mandatory Entry Level Training) for bus operators, addition of federal carbon tax on diesel fuel, funding implications of new school sites, and increased insurance costs. In order to sustain the current service levels provided and avoid a reduction in buses that affect ride time and capacities Student Transportation is proposing a change to the current fee structure. The proposed fee structure is built under the assumption of the current year's budget in adherence with AR 96/2019, Section 7. The Regulation allows us to charge the difference between the cost of transportation service and the funding received from Alberta Education. Based on the 2019-20 budget the allowable difference is 16% or \$1,532,336 that we could offset in fee collection in order to cover the cost of busing for the 2019-20 school year.

The proposed changes to fee structure would present as follows:

- 1) A two-tiered fee structure where all students eligible and ineligible (Policy 17) accessing transportation service will be assessed a fee;
- 2) Removal of the family rate;
- 3) Removal of the allowance for students who would have to cross a or walk along a Hazardous zone as defined in Policy 17; and
- 4) Supplemental fee for students accessing a second bus will apply.



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The implications of the new fee structure will allow EIPS Student Transportation to continue to deliver the current service levels while maintaining safe and efficient transportation. Further it will address new and increased costs affecting the Student Transportation budget and ensure equitable fees are applied for all students.

- Under the proposed fee structure 5,083 eligible students, currently not paying a fee will be assessed a fee of approximately one-quarter of the current Payride fee;
- Under the current fee structure 239 Hazard students who are ineligible for funding, but are not assessed a fee, will now be assessed a fee of approximately two-thirds of the current Payride fee;
- Under the current fee structure 1,500 students who are assessed a Payride fee or a School of Choice fee will be assessed a fee of approximately two-thirds of the current fee;
- Under the current fee structure 141 students who are assessed a Choice and Payride fee under the proposed fee structure will be assessed a fee of approximately one-third of the current fee; and
- Although the proposed fee structure does not allow for a family rate, 21 families of four or more students would see an increase of approximately one-third over the current fee structure.

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

Once the fee structure is approved for 2020-21, Policy 17: Student Transportation Services must be updated to reflect the changes to the fee structure. Once funding has been announced, the Board of Trustees will approve the 2020-21 Transportation Fee Schedule and EIPS websites will be updated and communicated to the Leadership Group, school councils and the appropriate community and parent groups.

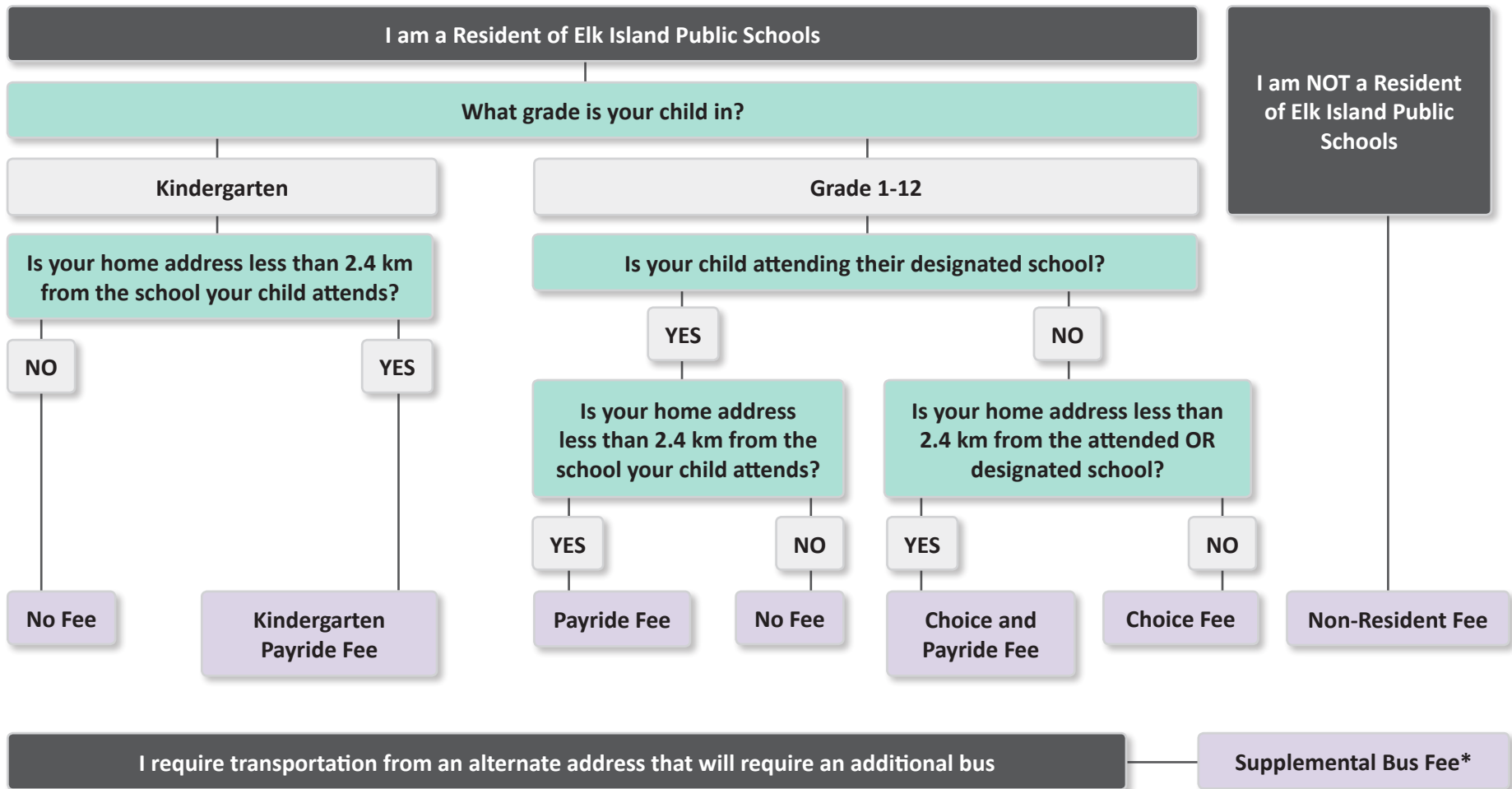
Attachment(s):

1. 2019-20 Transportation Fee Schedule
2. Student Transportation Fee Flow Chart
3. *School Transportation Regulation – AR 96/2019*
4. Policy 17: Student Transportation Services

ML:lmw

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRANSPORTATION FEE SCHEDULE

DESCRIPTION	2019-20
Payride	\$414.50
Students who attend their designated school and reside less than 2.4 km from their designated school.	
Choice	\$462.00
Students who attend a non-designated school and reside greater than 2.39 km from both their designated and non-designated school.	
Choice Payride	\$876.50
Students who attend a non-designated school and reside less than 2.4 km from either their designated or non-designated school.	
Kindergarten Payride	\$207.25
Busing for Kindergarten Students who reside less than 2.4 km away from their attended school.	
Non Resident	\$876.50
A student (including Kindergarten) who does not reside within the boundaries of EIPS.	
Family Rate	\$945.00
Applicable to families exceeding \$945.00 in fees (*Note: Supplemental Bus fee not eligible for family rate discount).	
Supplemental Bus*	\$125.00
Per student fee to access an additional bus to/from an alternate address. (*Note: fee not eligible for family rate discount).	
Replacement Bus Pass	\$20.00
Administration Fee - Payment Plan	\$25.00
Administration Fee - Refunds	\$25.00



Family Rate

If multiple children in your family are using transportation and the fees are greater than \$945, you qualify for the family rate. Contact Student Transportation to have your fees adjusted.

*Supplemental bus fee not eligible for the family rate discount.

Calculating Home-to-School Distance

Home-to-School Distance is calculated using a combination of roadways and walkways—it may not always match the driven distance of your family car. To determine the distance from your home to the school your child is designated to or attending visit Find My Designated School or Contact Student Transportation.



Province of Alberta

EDUCATION ACT

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION REGULATION

Alberta Regulation 96/2019

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Extract

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ALBERTA REGULATION 96/2019

Education Act

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION REGULATION

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Definitions

1 In this Regulation,

- (a) “attendance area”, with respect to a school, means an attendance area established by the board for the school;
- (b) “transportation service area” means the area surrounding a school in which a board establishes school bus routes on which students may be transported to and from the school.

Transportation criteria

2 For the purpose of section 59(1)(c) of the Act, the student must reside at a distance of at least 2.4 kilometres from the site of the school.

Distance from bus route

3 In providing for the transportation of a student under section 59(1) of the Act, the transportation must be provided on a route that is not more than 2.4 kilometres from the residence of the student.

Computing distance

4 In computing distances for the purposes of this Regulation,

- (a) the official survey made under any Act of Canada or the Legislature relating to surveys must be accepted as final and conclusive and all sections are deemed to be 1.6 kilometres square and no more,
- (b) the width of road allowances must be excluded from the computation, and
- (c) the distance of a residence from a school or from a bus route is the shortest distance measured along a travelled road or public right of way between the school site or the bus route, as the case may be, and the nearest roadway access at the boundary of the quarter section or lot on which the student's parent resides.

Specialized supports and services outside attendance area

5 If a student is entitled to access to specialized supports and services under section 11(4) of the Act but does not reside in the attendance area for any school that provides specialized supports and services that are suitable for the student, the board of which the student is a resident student must provide for the transportation of the student to and from the school that provides the specialized supports and services in which the board enrolls the student.

Student residing outside areas

6(1) If a student is enrolled in a school pursuant to section 10(2) or (4) of the Act but does not reside in the attendance area or the transportation service area for that school, the student or the parent of the student must provide for the transportation of the student

- (a) to and from the school, or
- (b) to and from a designated stop on a school bus route in the transportation service area for that school.

(2) If a student or the parent of a student chooses to provide transportation in accordance with subsection (1)(b), the board that enrolled the student in the school must provide for the transportation of the student between the school and the designated

stop nearest to the student's residence on a school bus route in the transportation service area for that school.

(3) Subsection (2) does not apply unless there is a seat available for the student on the school bus after the students referred to in section 59(1) of the Act are accommodated on that school bus.

Transportation fee amount limitations

7(1) A fee charged under section 59(3) of the Act respecting the transportation of students in accordance with section 59(1) of the Act and this Regulation must not exceed the average difference per student between

- (a) the estimated cost to the board of transporting those students, and
- (b) the funding received by the board under the *Education Grants Regulation* (AR 120/2008) in respect of the transportation of those students.

(2) A fee charged under section 59(3) of the Act respecting the transportation of students other than students referred to in subsection (1)

- (a) who are eligible for funding under the *Education Grants Regulation* (AR 120/2008) must not exceed the average difference per student between
 - (i) the estimated costs to the board of transporting those students, and
 - (ii) the funding received by the board under the *Education Grants Regulation* (AR 120/2008) in respect of the transportation of those students,and
- (b) who are not eligible for funding under the *Education Grants Regulation* (AR 120/2008) must not exceed the estimated average cost per student to the board for transporting those students.

(3) A fee referred to in this section must be established in accordance with the board policies under section 8(1).

(4) Any surplus from fees charged under subsection (1) or (2) must be used to subsidize the cost of transportation of students referred to in that subsection in the 2 school years following the school year in which the surplus was collected.

Board policies

8(1) A board must establish, maintain and implement policies respecting the transportation of students and the transportation fees it proposes to charge.

(2) The board policies must include

- (a) a requirement to demonstrate to parents the need to charge any transportation fee, including its amount,
- (b) the circumstances under which any transportation fee may be waived or refunded,
- (c) the process a parent has to follow to request that a transportation fee be waived or refunded,
- (d) a process designed to ensure that the staff of each school and the parents of students enrolled in that school are notified of the circumstances under which a transportation fee may be waived or refunded and of the procedures for requesting that a transportation fee be waived or refunded, as the case may be, and
- (e) with respect to the transportation of students and transportation fees,
 - (i) processes designed to enable the resolution of disputes and concerns between parents and the board, and
 - (ii) any other requirements directed in writing by the Minister.

Transportation fee schedule

9 A board must, prior to the commencement of each school year, establish a schedule of transportation fees, in the form, if any, required by the Minister, listing each type of transportation fee, with its amount, that may be charged in that school year.

Publication of policies and fee schedule

10 A board must, prior to the commencement of each school year, publish the policies established under section 8 and the transportation fee schedule established under section 9 on the board's website or in any other manner the board determines would provide parents and the public with notice of the policies and transportation fee schedule.

Collection and use statement

11 A board must, on request, provide to the Minister a statement, in the form, if any, required by the Minister, that demonstrates that the transportation fees collected by it have been spent for the purposes for which they were collected.

Charter schools

12 This Regulation applies to charter schools in the manner set out under the *Charter Schools Exemption and Application Regulation*.

Expiry

13 For the purpose of ensuring that this Regulation is reviewed for ongoing relevancy and necessity, with the option that it may be repassed in its present or an amended form following a review, this Regulation expires on August 31, 2022.

Repeal

14 The *School Transportation Regulation* (AR 102/2017) is repealed.

Coming into force

15 This Regulation comes into force on September 1, 2019.

Policy 17

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The Board believes that the provision of transportation services to students in Elk Island Public Schools allows for equitable access to programming and does so through safe, caring and efficient transportation services for students.

The Board may provide enhanced transportation services to those students who are ineligible for busing according to the School Transportation Regulation.

Specifically

1. Student transportation eligibility

1. Transportation shall be provided for eligible students to the school that the student has been designated or directed to attend.
2. Eligibility for transportation shall be determined on the basis of Early Childhood Services to Grade 12 students who have:
 1. parents/guardians who reside 2.4 kilometres or more from the school they have been designated to attend, or have been directed to attend by the Superintendent or designate; and/or
 2. chosen to attend programs for which transportation is funded under Alberta Education's transportation guidelines.
3. For students attending French immersion and bilingual programs, the school to which they are designated to access that program shall be used for purposes of determining eligibility.
4. Students directed to special needs programming whose parents/guardians reside 2.4 kilometres or more from the school they have been designated to attend shall be eligible for transportation. The Board may provide transportation for ineligible special needs students where deemed necessary by the Superintendent or designate.
5. Eligibility for transportation is extended to those ineligible students who would otherwise have to:
 1. cross an uncontrolled railroad track;
 2. cross a primary highway with posted speeds of 80 km/hr or higher;
 3. cross a road with posted speeds of 80 km/hr or higher without standard traffic light protection; and/or
 4. walk along a road with posted speeds of 60 km/hr or higher, without the benefit of sidewalks.
6. Temporary eligibility may be granted at the discretion of the Superintendent or designate in new subdivisions until sidewalks or permanent streets are completed.
7. The Board may choose to provide public transit passes to eligible students where yellow school bus service does not exist.

2. Enhanced student transportation services

1. Payride busing service

1. may be made available to students who are ineligible for busing under Alberta Education's transportation guidelines;
 2. is a service provided on a yellow school bus at a fee for students who reside less than 2.4 kilometres from their designated school;
 3. may be available to students whose parents/guardians reside less than 2.4 kilometres away from their designated school providing parents/guardians have paid a fee for service;
 4. shall be limited to space available on existing school buses, and shall be offered on a first come first serve basis, with preference given to students presently receiving payride service;
 5. shall be for ten (10) months, commencing the first instructional day in the school year, ending the last instructional day in June; and
 6. students previously accommodated shall continue to be accommodated unless circumstances change and they are otherwise notified.
2. Choice busing service
 1. may be made available to students who choose to attend a school/program other than their designated school/program assume responsibility for their transportation. Choice busing services may be made available at a fee to parents/guardians;
 2. is a service provided on a yellow school bus at a fee for students who reside greater than 2.4 kilometres from their designated school and school of choice; and
 3. may be made available to students providing:
 1. there is space available on the bus;
 2. there is no significant diversion from regular routing that would impact cost effectiveness or ride time; and
 3. parents/guardians have paid a fee for service.
3. Choice/payride busing service
 1. may be made available to students who are ineligible for busing under Alberta Education's transportation guidelines and who choose to attend a non-designated school;
 2. is a service provided on a yellow school bus at a fee for students who reside less than 2.4 kilometres from either the designated school or school of choice; and
 3. may be made available to students providing:
 1. there is space available on the bus;
 2. there is no significant diversion from regular routing that would impact cost effectiveness or ride time; and
 3. parents/guardians have paid a fee for service.
4. Supplemental busing service
 1. may be made available at a fee for students who are accessing an additional bus to/from an alternate address providing:
 1. there is space available on the bus;
 2. there is no significant diversion from regular routing that would impact cost effectiveness or ride time; and
 3. parents/guardians have paid a fee for service.

3. Provision of transportation services

1. Transportation services shall normally be provided by contract. The Board's representative for the purposes of administration of agreements shall be the Superintendent or designate.
2. The Superintendent or designate may make other busing agreements where it is feasible and fiscally responsible and inform the Board.

4. Transportation fees

1. Transportation fees shall not be charged to eligible students.
2. Fee payment options shall be made available for transportation fees.
3. A fee waiver process shall be in place for Payride transportation fees to the designated school.
4. Student transportation fees shall be reviewed and approved annually by the Board.

Reference:

Sections 7, 11, 52, 53, 59, 59.1, 222 *Education Act*
School Transportation Regulation 96/2019

Last reviewed:	Last updated:
March 12, 2014	March 20, 2014
March 7, 2017	June 15, 2017
Dec. 4, 2017	Jan. 25, 2018
March 19, 2018	April 19, 2018
March 19, 2019	April 18, 2019
Dec. 19, 2019	Dec. 19, 2019