

Wayland Public Schools

Student Transportation Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible for a school bus pass without paying a fee?

Students in Grades K-6 who live more than two (2.0) miles from their assigned school (shortest drivable route) are entitled to free bus transportation.

Who can choose to pay a fee to ride the bus?

K-6 students living two (2.0) miles or less from their school and all students in Grades 7 – 12 will not be transported solely at district expense. These students who wish to ride the school bus must purchase a bus pass for the entire year, payable in advance. The only exceptions to this policy are for those special needs students whose Individualized Educational Program (IEP) requires special transportation, those students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch under Federal guidelines (100% waiver), and those students who have been approved for reduced fees (50% to 100% waiver) under the district's financial assistance program.

How much is the bus transportation fee?

The bus fee for the school year is \$300 per student, with a family maximum of \$850. **This fee increases to \$400 per student the day after the deadline date on March, 31.** The total cost of transportation per-student fee is much less than the fee for this service. Fees cover approximately 30% of the cost of transporting students to and from school each day.

How is the distance from the school determined for all students?

It is measured by using the walking route from the center line of the public way in front of the student's home to the bus drop area of their assigned school. The Town of Wayland's Geographic Information System data is used for determining these distances and has been imported into the district's transportation routing software for calculating distances.

Will the bus routes and schedules stay the same each year?

Bus routes, number of buses and actual routes, will be established starting with revisions to prior routes, based on the number of riders, their residences and the space availability on the buses, providing there has been no major changes to grade, school, or time configurations for the upcoming school year. Routes are finalized and published in June. Routes may shift slightly mid-September after the traffic flows settled down.

What if I have elected to send my student to an elementary school other than the one serving the district where I live?

The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of elementary school students who voluntarily attend a school outside of their assigned district are responsible for transportation to and from school. The bus will not travel out of its district.

Do I need to complete a transportation registration form even if my student is eligible for free school bus transportation?

Yes. Parents must complete a transportation registration form that includes every student in the household who plans to ride a bus.

What if one of my students will ride free and the other will need to pay a fee?

If at least one student is paying, all students in the household (including free) may be registered through the Registration and Payment Center provided by Unibank. Up to four (4) paying and two (2) free may be entered on one form. If you only have students eligible to ride free, or need financial assistance, please use the links at the top left of the Student Transportation webpage. Registration of all students enables the School Department to appropriately plan transportation routes for the school year.

Does my student need a bus pass to board the school bus?

Yes. Every student who either pays a fee or is eligible for free transportation will be issued a bus pass that must be shown each day upon entering the bus. The pass entitles the student to ride to and from school on an assigned bus with an assigned bus stop. Bus passes will be mailed to families approximately 2 weeks prior to the start of school in September.

Can my student use the bus pass he was issued last year?

No. New color coded bus passes are issued each year.

What happens if my student loses his/her bus pass?

In the event a student loses a bus pass, a duplicate pass may be obtained from the School Department's Transportation Office for a \$10.00 replacement fee, payable by check or money order only. (No cash is accepted.)

Can I purchase a bus pass for my student later in the year?

Parents can purchase a pass for their student later in the year, provided space is available on the bus serving their neighborhood. Proration of fees and refunds are addressed in the next question.

Can I get a prorated pass or request a refund of my student's bus fee?

Yes, prorated fees and refunds (with return of the pass) will be given according to the following schedule:

Registration

September-December 100%

January-March 75%

April-June 50%

Refunds

September-December 50%

January-March 25%

April-June 0%

Can I pay the transportation fee with a credit card?

The district accepts credit card payments for transportation fees through Unibank. Please use the Online Registration and Payment Center link on the Student Transportation webpage. There is a fee for the use of a credit card (charged by the bank).

Is there any financial assistance available if the bus fee causes hardship?

The School Committee has established an income-based waiver program for fee-based riders that offers free service or reduced fees to qualifying families. If qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch, free service may be obtained by providing a Sharing Information with Other Programs form available on the Food Services Department Student Transportation webpages. If you do not qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program, you may still qualify for financial assistance under Wayland's program which has higher qualifying income limits. An explanation of the Financial Assistance Program, including income limits, and an application form can be found on the Student Transportation or Business Office webpages, or at the School Department's Business Office (2nd floor, Wayland Town Hall).

Is there a penalty fee if my check is returned to the district for insufficient funds?

Yes. A fee of \$25.00 will be assessed and must be paid in addition to the bus fee before a bus pass will be issued.

Why must I apply for a bus pass in March?

In order to plan the bus routes and prepare passes for mailing in August, the Business Office must receive all transportation requests by **March 31**. Families who move into Wayland after the March 31 deadline may register and indicate that they are new to Wayland. **The bus fee per student increases by \$100 per student after the registration deadline.**

Can my student ride home on a bus other than the one to which s/he is assigned?

No. Students may only ride their assigned bus. Transportation to social events, play dates, day care or religious classes is not permitted. Students with two residences in Wayland should contact the Transportation Coordinator, Melissa Ricci, at 508-358-3753 or Melissa_Ricci@wayland.k12.ma.us

Can my student bring his/her large instrument or project on the bus?

No. Due to the narrow width of the school bus aisle and the height of the seat backs, no large instruments (e.g. cellos, French horns), large projects or large objects may be brought on the bus. In addition, a student must be able to carry and contain any and all items between his/her legs or on his/her lap during the course of the ride to and from school.

May my student eat or drink on the school bus?

No. Out of concern for the safety of students, particularly those who suffer from life-threatening allergies, food, including any type of candy or gum, and drinks are strictly prohibited from consumption on the school bus. All food, drink and candy must remain contained while on the school bus.

Who do I contact if my student has lost an item on the school bus?

Call the First Student Bus Dispatcher, Janet Delano, at (508) 358-7543

Who do I call with concerns or questions about the day-to-day operation of the school bus?

Call the First Student Bus Dispatcher at (508) 358-7543

Who do I call with concerns or questions about the route of the bus?

Call the Transportation Coordinator, Melissa Ricci, at (508) 358-3753 or the Director of Finance and Operations, Susan Bottan, at 508-358-3750.