



Parents: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why can't my child be picked up in front of my house? The bus is going right by.

Buses typically try to stop at corners and within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of home for elementary and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile for secondary students. There are state and district guidelines that are used to develop routes and we are funded by the state for transportation based upon the efficiency of our bus routes.

Individual home bus stops drive up fuel costs, extend route times, thus reducing the efficiency of the routes. Group bus stops help reduce route times and stabilize transportation costs by allowing a bus to service two to three routes (multiple tiers) in the morning and afternoons. Many buses have 65 children on a route and each stop can add close to 60 seconds of time on the route. Individual stops will add 15 to 30 minutes per route resulting in an extended bus ride for the students, fewer routes being served by a bus and a significant increase in the overall number of buses required for the district.

2. I can't see my child at the bus stop. Can the stop be moved closer to our home?

In order for our students to be transported in an efficient manner, and to be fair and consistent, stops are no further than $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from elementary students' homes and no further than $\frac{1}{2}$ mile for secondary students unless there are road restrictions. We encourage parents to be involved in monitoring their child's bus stop by walking to the stop with your child in the morning and meeting the bus at the stop in the afternoon. Parent visibility is an important aspect of student, neighborhood and bus safety.

3. My bus has not arrived, and it is 10 minutes past the scheduled arrival time. What should I do?

If your bus is more than 10 minutes late, call First Student (636) 458-2044 (Wildwood/Grover Office) or (636)677-7711 (Fenton Office) so they can determine the reason for the delay and provide you with an estimated arrival time. Parents of children on VICC buses need to call (314) 721-8657.

4. I understand all of the buses are equipped with digital cameras. What is the purpose of the cameras?

The bus cameras monitor who gets on and off the bus, activity in the student seating area, and bus driver actions. The cameras are used to verify accusations of unacceptable behavior occurring on the bus and activities that occurred on the bus prior to an accident. In the event a student is accused of a discipline problem, the camera recordings are reviewed by school administrative members to determine if disciplinary action is warranted.

continued

5. My child is in kindergarten. Will he/she be picked up at our home?

Morning kindergarten students will use the normal elementary bus stop designated for their home. These students will be dropped off at their home during midday, if road conditions allow for the safe maneuvering of the bus. Afternoon students will be picked up from home, as long as the road conditions allow for the safe maneuvering of the bus. (Please note many cul-de-sacs are not large enough for school buses.) Parents or guardians of kindergartners riding a kindergarten only bus must be present at the bus stop or a student may be taken back to their school. Kindergartners transported on buses with other elementary students will be let off the bus at the regular stops and parents are encouraged to be at the bus stop.

6. We live on a busy street without sidewalks. It is unsafe for my child to walk to the closest bus stop. What will you do?

We place the greatest priority on the safety of each student being transported. Therefore, when the above conditions or similar unsafe conditions exist, we will adjust the bus stop to safeguard the safety of your child.

7. Why were activity buses eliminated for middle school and high school?

Due to the current economic conditions, the funding for student transportation has been reduced by \$1.1M by the state. Overall tax revenue to the school district from property and sales taxes has also declined requiring the district to dip into reserves in order to continue the academic programs currently provided by the district. Reducing the transportation budget by \$700K was necessary and studies indicated the activity buses were used sporadically and were very costly to the district.

8. What is the tier system and how does it work to create efficient routes?

Rockwood has a system that allows us to use bus drivers and buses on multiple routes to ensure students arrive at school safely and on time, while using resources efficiently. The three tiers for 2010/11 are as follows:

1st Tier - Middle schools buses will drop off students at school between 7 a.m. and 7:15 a.m. for a 7:30 school start time.

2nd Tier - High schools and early-start elementary school buses will drop off students between 8 a.m. and 8:10 a.m. for an 8:16 a.m. high school start time and an 8:23 a.m. elementary start time.

3rd Tier - Late start elementary schools will drop off students at approximately 8:50 a.m. for a 9:00 a.m. school start time.

continued

9. What is the district doing to address rising fuel costs and low ridership on some routes?

Student ridership counts are conducted twice a year and each year routes are reviewed to determine if the student population has shifted as a result of students graduating or moving into the district. Routes are adjusted if there are significant changes in student home locations.

High school ridership is the most difficult to predict as many of the upper classmen drive to school. A survey was conducted with high school parents to determine if some students were not planning to ride the bus and students not requiring transportation were not assigned a bus. All middle and elementary students living ½ mile or more from school are assigned a bus regardless of their personal transportation capabilities. Other efforts to manage costs include: assigning more high school students to a bus than the bus capacity allows knowing many of the students will not ride the bus, using a fuel hedge for 50 percent of our usage as a method to stabilize fuel costs, conducting an annual fuel bid, and consolidate routes where time and mileage allows in the more sparsely populated areas of the district. Route changes are announced as they occur.

Please feel free to send your transportation questions to Mr. Bill Sloan, Director of Transportation, at 636.733-2032 or sloanwilliam@rockwood.k12.mo.us.

Contact Information

Online Transportation Information System - E-Link is Rockwood's online Transportation Information System. This program allows parents to determine which bus their child will ride, the bus stop times and more! Visit the system at <http://elink.rockwood.k12.mo.us/elinkrp/>.

Bus Services – Call bus services at the following phone numbers:

First Student – Wildwood/Grover: 636-458-2044

First Student - Fenton: 636-677-7711

EED (VICC) Program/ GoAhead: 314-721-8657

Rockwood Transportation Services – Contact Bill Sloan, director of purchasing and transportation at the Rockwood Administrative Center at 111 East North Street in Eureka, MO 63025
Phone: 636.733.2032
Fax: 636.938.2251

Find out more about Rockwood Transportation on the Web at www.rockwood.k12.mo.us/departments/transportation .

