

Transportation

Parent

Handbook

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Southland Transportation

Willco Transportation

Transportation Coordinator

Central Office	240, 688 Heritage Drive SE
Northeast Elementary	1140 Mayland Drive NE
Northwest Elementary	719 – 44 Ave NW
Southeast Elementary	9711 Academy Drive SE
Southwest Elementary	898 Sylvester Cres SW
North Middle School	211 McKnight Blvd NE
South Middle School	8710 Ancourt Road SE
High School	1919 - 76 Ave SE

403-287-1335

403-242-1176

403-520-3206 ext 158

403-520-3206

403-520-5456

403-282-5202

403-258-2728

403-259-3527

403-253-9257

403-259-3175

403-243-3316

1.0 Bus Passes (not applicable for 2009-2010)

Students, who have paid for busing, will be issued a bus pass. The pass is to be shown to the driver while boarding the bus. Students without a pass will not be allowed to ride the bus. If the pass is lost, a replacement one will be issued for a \$10 fee. The pass remains the property of FFCA and is not transferable. If the family becomes delinquent in their bus fees, the pass will be revoked, and will only be returned once all fees are paid in full.

2.0 Bus Stops

2.1 Afternoon Departure

The Supervising Teacher will signal the buses to leave 10 minutes after school dismissal. Once the bus has left the school, it will not return to pick up any students who have missed the bus. The Supervising Teacher will return the student to the office and the family will be contacted to come and pick up the student.

2.2 Afternoon Drop Offs

Parents must arrive 5 minutes ahead of the scheduled bus arrival time. Children in Kindergarten and Grade One will not be allowed off the bus if there is no parent or older sibling there to assist them. In the event you are late, the bus driver will not wait past the scheduled time and will continue on with their route, and return to the stop after all other children have been dropped off. The driver will remain with the student until he/she is picked up. Parents are expected to be on time to pick up their children, and will only be given one warning. If the bus needs to continue on its route and return with your child to the stop, FFCA will bill the family the overtime fee that is charged from the Bus Company. If your older student is not allowed off the bus without you being present, this must be put in writing to the Transportation Coordinator at the beginning of each school year.

At stops that are utilized by more than one family, the driver does not have to wait for all parents to arrive. The families using community stops are expected to help one another as needed.

If a parent has an older child riding the bus, they may request, in writing, permission to allow a kindergarten or grade one student to disembark without a parent/guardian present. Leaving them in the care of the older sibling. Upon receiving written permission to allow your child off the bus without an adult present, please be advised that if that sibling is not riding on your designated bus route one day, this permission still applies. The younger student will need to exit the bus. Please be sure that you comfortable with this decision when you grant permission.

2.3 Arrival At The Schools

Children are allowed to play outside until the entry bell rings. Once the bell has rung, they will enter the school through the designated doors and proceed to their classrooms. If the buses are delayed by more than 10 minutes, the children are to enter the school by the main or designated doors. Each Campus may request that the

students report in at the office first. The students are to proceed quietly to their classrooms.

2.4 Morning Pick Ups

Students are expected to arrive at the bus stop **five** minutes prior to the pickup time. The bus will leave as soon as all the students at that stop have boarded. If all the children who are normally at that stop are not there, the bus will not wait for them beyond the scheduled pickup time. Parents who arrive late to the stop can proceed to the next or alternate stop. Drivers will not pick up students at any unscheduled stops. Parents shall not phone the bus company to radio the driver to ask them to wait.

Drivers will report any parent who tries to stop the bus at an unscheduled stop; try to board at intersections; pull in front of the bus; or otherwise endanger the safety of the bus and/or the students. The safety of the children is our number one priority.

3.0 Behavior/Discipline

FFCA has established the following expectations to ensure that a clean safe and friendly environment is maintained for everyone riding the bus:

- ◆ The driver will assign specific seats to students.
- ◆ Students will not board the bus without the driver present. Once on board, they will remain on the bus until the bus reaches their stop.
- ◆ Students must conduct themselves in a quiet and courteous manner, showing consideration for the comfort and safety of others.
- ◆ Students must not put their arms or heads out the windows, move through the aisle, or try to get on or off the bus while the bus is in motion.
- ◆ Students must not distract the bus driver, discard waste on the floor or throw anything on the bus or out the windows.
- ◆ Students must not yell, scream or use rude language.
- ◆ Students must not push, shove or otherwise engage in rowdy behavior.
- ◆ Students who are responsible for causing willful damage to a bus will be required to pay for damages.
- ◆ The driver is in charge of the bus and his/her directions must be followed. Any incidents of disrespect will be reported to the school.
- ◆ Students are not to throw garbage in the wastebasket while the bus is in motion. They are to either put their garbage in their knapsacks, pockets, or hold on it. Once the students have arrived at their designated stop, they can drop the garbage into the wastebasket while departing the bus.

- ◆ Continued violation of the above could result in withdrawal of bus riding privileges.

In summary, students are expected to:

Stay seated, Obey instructions, Respect others, Talk quietly (SORT)

Bus Discipline Procedure

1. Under the following conditions, the Southland/Willco Bus will return to an FFCA campus:

Northeast Elementary

- The behaviour of riders on the bus poses a significant risk to the safe operation of that bus.
- The bus has not reached its first stop.
- The decision comes and the school can be notified before 4:00 pm.
- The bus will return to the Northeast Elementary Campus.

North Middle

- The behaviour of riders on the bus poses a significant risk to the safe operation of that bus.
- The bus is not more than halfway through its route.
- The decision comes and the school can be notified before 4:00 pm.
- The bus will return to the North Middle Campus.

Southeast Elementary

- The behaviour of riders on the bus poses a significant risk to the safe operation of that bus.
- The bus has not reached Deerfoot Trail.
- The bus is not more than halfway through its route.
- The decision comes and the school can be notified before 4:00 pm.
- The bus will return to the Southeast Elementary Campus.

Southwest Elementary/South Middle/High School

- The behaviour of riders on the bus poses a significant risk to the safe operation of that bus.
- The bus has not reached Deerfoot Trail.
- The bus is not more than halfway through its route.
- The decision comes and the school can be notified before 4:00 pm.
- The bus will return to the nearest campus.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY SOUTHLAND

- The driver of the bus will radio dispatch to indicate that the bus is returning to a specific campus.
- The driver will indicate the reasons for the return, the campus to which the bus is returning, and the name(s)/campus(es) of the offending students (if known).
- Southland will contact the Transportation Coordinator with the above information.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY FFCA

- The campus to which the bus is returning will be notified by the Transportation Coordinator, and will be provided with the reasons for its return and the name(s)/campus(es) of the offending students (if known).
- Each campus with students on the bus will be notified by the Transportation Coordinator and will phone all parents of students on that bus informing them of the delay (see below: #3. Contact Information.)
- The administrator or designate of the campus to which the bus has returned will board the bus and address the situation.
 - If the specific student(s) can be identified as the cause of the unsafe conditions on the bus, they will be removed. **If the said student(s) refuse to exit the bus, the bus driver will contact the bus company to send another bus. If another bus can not be dispatched immediately, the police will be called to remove the student(s).**
 - The administrator or designate at the campus of the offending students will address the situation in a timely manner.
 - If there are no clear perpetrators, the administrator or designate will attempt to settle the situation in a timely fashion to expedite the departure of the bus.
 - Any additional situations that arise during this process will result in the removal from the bus of any offending student(s), and the calling of another campus administrator or designate to deal with same.
 - Subsequent investigation and disciplinary action by campus administrators will be required the following day to address the reasons for the return of the bus.

2. Under the following conditions, the Southland Bus will pull to the side of the road:

Northeast Elementary/Southeast Elementary

- The behaviour of riders on the bus poses a significant risk to the safe operation of that bus.
- The bus is already at its first stop.
- The school cannot be notified prior to 4:00 pm.

North Middle

- The behaviour of riders on the bus poses a significant risk to the safe operation of that bus.
- The bus is more than halfway through its route.
- The school cannot be notified prior to 4:00 pm.

Southwest Elementary/South Middle/High School

- The behaviour of riders on the bus poses a significant risk to the safe operation of that bus.
- The bus is more than halfway through its route.
- The bus has reached Deerfoot Trail, but is not on the Deerfoot.
- The school cannot be notified prior to 4:00 pm.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY SOUTHLAND

- The driver of the bus will attempt to remedy the hazardous situation on the bus and complete the route.
- If unable to create a safe environment, the driver will radio the dispatch to indicate that the bus is pulled to the side of the road, the reason for the stop, and the name(s)/campus(es) of the offending student(s) (if known).

- Southland will contact the Transportation Coordinator with the above information.
- Southland will send a supervisor to attend to the situation, or will instruct the driver of the appropriate actions to be taken.
- Both the bus driver and Supervisor will write up a disciplinary form for each offending student, and provide these forms to the appropriate campus for review the following morning.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY FFCA

- Each campus with students on the bus will be notified by the Transportation Coordinator the following day so parents of students on the bus may be notified of the situation.
- Subsequent investigation and disciplinary action by campus administrators will be required the following day.

3.1 Student Consequences

Student Consequences for any violation on the bus will be handled at each Campus by the PE/AP who will then inform the Parents/Guardians either in writing or by a telephone call.

4.0 Cameras

At the request of the school administration, a camera will be placed on the bus to record the behavior of the students. Cameras may be routinely rotated between buses as a regular means of monitoring behavior on the bus.

5.0 Delayed Service

From time to time, there may be a delay in bus service due to weather conditions, mechanical problems or traffic congestion. In preparation for delayed or cancelled service, parents are encouraged to develop a back-up plan:

- Parents are encouraged to sign up with www.yourschoolbus.com to receive text messages and/or emails regarding delays on your route. Please note this service is only available for Southland routes.
- Make arrangements to car pool. Get to know the other parents on your route, and have their phone numbers handy.
- Familiarize yourself with the other bus routes in your area. Choose a stop that is convenient for you. Routes can be viewed on the website www.ffca-calgary.com. If you need assistance in identifying an alternative stop, please contact the Transportation Coordinator, **in writing**, and submit it to the Central Office.

6.0 Inclement Weather

- In the event of bad weather, the Superintendent or designate, will determine if school will be closed, and/or if the buses will run. Should the decision be made that the buses are not running, the families who have signed up with www.yourschoolbus.com will be notified by text message and/or email. Parents can also receive school closure information through the radio and television stations; or from the website myschoolbusmonitor.ca; or by calling the Transportation Company **Southland late bus line 403-398-6975 Willco 403-242-1176.**

7.0 Large Items

Items that are too large to fit under the seats or held on the students lap will not be allowed on the bus.

7.1 Musical Instruments

Musical instruments that can be held on the students' lap are allowed on the bus. Large instruments (for example the baritone sax) will not be permitted on the bus. Students need to make alternate arrangements to transport large instruments to and from school.

7.2 Skateboards/Scooters/Roller blades/Bicycles

These items are not allowed on the bus. They pose a safety hazard to other passengers on the bus; cause damage to the seats; and are generally too large for students to hold on their lap.

8.0 Noise

8.1 AM/FM Radios/Cassettes

Drivers who use radios or cassettes will ensure the volume is kept at a reasonable level; the station or prerecorded music will be family oriented, and does not use profanity or crude language.

8.2 Noise Makers

Students will not use any noisemakers, play musical instruments or blow whistles while onboard the bus.

8.3 Stereos

Students are not allowed to play their own stereos on the bus, except 'Walkmans' with headsets or earphones. If they do not have a headset or earphones, they must keep it turned off.

9.0 Number Per Seat

When necessary, in accordance with Provincial Standards, students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 will sit three to a seat; Grades 7 - 12 students will sit two to a seat.

10.0 Parent Concerns

Parents are not to approach the driver with their concerns, as it is very difficult for the driver to properly address the concern of the parent with a bus full of students. With all bussing concerns parents are encourage to follow the protocol detailed in the "Being Heard" document.

Concern	Contact	Location
Routes, Schedules	Transportation Coordinator	FFCA Central Office
Student Behavior	Principal Educator	Applicable Campus
Driver Issues	Transportation Provider	Southland Office or Willco Office

11.0 Parent as a Passenger (Not applicable 2009-2010)

A parent wishing to ride the bus, must first receive permission from the school, and present the driver with a Boarding Pass before boarding the bus. Twenty-four hours notice is required for the school to issue a Boarding Pass, and to notify the driver of the ride-along.

12.0 Passenger information

A complete list of all passengers, kindergarten to grade four, who will be riding the bus, the stops they are using, along with their grade, will be given to the driver prior to the start of school. Only first and last name of the students in grades five to twelve will be given to the driver.

12.1 Parent Responsibilities

Due to high volume of changes to routes and bus stops in the beginning of each school year we encourage parents to:

- Arrange to have someone (yourself or a caregiver) meet children at their bus stop.
- Make sure your children know to stay on the bus if they have missed their stop, or are on the wrong bus, or if no one is at their stop to meet them.
- Teach your children to stay on the bus until they see you or their caregiver. Children should talk to the driver if they think something is wrong. They should not get off the bus.
- Provide safety instruction by reviewing and discussing bus safety with their children.
- Discuss with your child (ren) different back-up plans in the event your child misses the bus in either the am or pm. In the case where you have two or more students on the same/different bus or different schools, have a plan in place for all children on what you would like them to do. Review this backup plan regularly throughout the school year.
- Familiarizing their children with the bus route and pick up and drop off location. Please keep your bus route and the Bus Company's phone numbers handy in case of delays or missed buses.
- Providing for their child's safety while getting to and from the bus stop.
- Assisting their child in organizing and securing belongings which will be taken on the bus.

13.0 Riding Different Bus (Not Applicable for 2009/2010)

In order for a child to board a bus they don't usually use, parents are required to request permission, **in writing**, outlining the details including the date(s); their usual routes; the route and stop they wish to use; and the reason for alteration. Requests are to be submitted to the office of the school the student attends with a minimum of 24 hours notice.

Parents are not to assume that permission will be granted, it depends on the students already on board that bus and the capacity of that bus. If permission is granted, the school will issue a Boarding Pass, and the student will present this pass to the driver when boarding.

If a student attempts to board the bus without proper authorization, access will be denied and the student will need to return to the office to contact their parents, or board their usual bus. The bus will not be delayed while the student returns to the office to try to obtain a Boarding Pass.

If a family moves throughout the year, and will be riding a different bus, they are required to contact the Transportation Coordinator, **in writing**, prior to making the change. The Transportation Coordinator will assist the family in finding an existing community stop for them to use. All changes to address/phone numbers must be communicated to your designated school and the Transportation Coordinator.

13.1 Using a different stop AM and PM

It is extremely important that each family completes and returns the Bus Confirmation Form. You **must** notify the Transportation Coordinator at the beginning of each year **in writing** if your child (ren) will use a different bus stop in the morning than in the afternoon. This is necessary to ensure that in the event of a spare driver, the correct information is supplied to the driver.

14.0 Routes

FFCA bus routes strive to remain within the one-hour ride time each way. The bus will travel along the route path between stops that is determined by the bus company. However, under certain circumstances (i.e. road closures) the bus may be redirected at the discretion of the bus company; however no stops will be missed. Routes for FFCA will only operate within the city limits.

14.1 Creating Routes

Community stops are created to service as many families in one area as possible, and to minimize a routes travel times. These community stops may result in the need for parents so choosing, to drive their children to the bus stop. It is impossible to grant door-to-door service due to the distance the buses have to travel.

14.2 Creating Stops

Bus stops are chosen based on the following criteria:

- safety

- roadway is passable for bus traffic
- time and distance of the route
- minimizes backtracking
- number of families in the community, and the size of the community

Bus routes will generally travel along major arteries utilizing Calgary Transit Stops wherever possible. Due to the distance the buses have to travel, community stops are created to accommodate as many families in one area as possible.

In some cases, communities are not easily accessible by buses, and require more time than the route can allow, so these families will have to use the nearest neighboring community stop. The stop for that community will be chosen based upon the number of students who board the bus, and the most viable access point for all the families who live in that community.

14.3 Route Inquires

Parents with questions about their community stops will submit their inquiries **in writing** to the Transportation Coordinator at the Central Office.

14.4 Timeline For Changes To Route

There will be no changes to the FFCA Bus Routes until after 15 school days into the New Year, except to address the arrival times at the school and safety concerns. After the 15 school days, the Transportation Coordinator will review all inquiries, and decisions will be made based upon the criteria outlined in Sections 14.1 and 14.2. Routes will be changed in order of priority. This process will take two to four weeks. Parent requested changes will be implemented (i.e. stop locations), only after arrival times are adjusted, student counts are reasonable and that payment has been received for those students riding the bus. **No route changes will be made for families with outstanding fees.**

15.0 Road Closures

In the event of a road blockage where the bus is unable to access the drop off, the driver will radio the bus company and inform them of the situation. The bus company will then contact the school. The driver will continue with the rest of the stops on the route. After all drop offs or pickups are complete, the driver will attempt to return to the stop. If the passageway is still blocked, the driver will notify the bus company. The bus company will contact the school. The driver will return the student(s) to the school if this occurs when dropping students off in the afternoon or if in the morning the bus company will contact the school who will in turn contact the parents to advise them of the situation. The school will contact the families and make alternate arrangements for the students to find their way to or from school.

16.0 Food Items

The bus is an extension of the classroom so therefore FFCA'S policy of eating certain foods on the bus will be the same as the classroom rules. Littering will not be tolerated; if this becomes an issue for bus drivers then it will be reported to the designated school

with the possible action of a food ban implemented. Certain foods have been banned on the bus due to choking hazards and allergies as follows:

DRY PACKAGED NOODLES Ichiban ect
PEANUT PRODUCTS
POPCORN
RAISINS
SUNFLOWER SEEDS
GUM
SUCKERS

17.0 Bus Food Ban Procedure

Purpose: To create a set of conditions under which students may be allowed to consume food on their bus ride home, and to specify the consequences for abuse of this privilege.

Rationale: The length of the bus routes, and the fact that some students are having to travel on a bus for approximately one hour having had no opportunity to eat since 12:00, support the advisability of giving students permission to have a snack on the bus ride home. It is a privilege that FFCA would like to extend to students, who must in turn recognize that they need to be responsible for the removal of any garbage that is created by virtue of this benefit.

Procedure:

1. In the afternoon of the first day of school year, and at the end of the first school month to accommodate ongoing registration, each bus driver will review bus behaviour expectations, including this document, with the students on his/her bus. A seating plan will be created.
2. The bus driver will communicate with the students processes for monitoring their garbage on the bus. (Possible suggestions include: walking the aisle before anyone can leave to ensure garbage is picked up, creating zones on the bus and making each member of the zone responsible for its cleanliness, and making the whole bus responsible for the cleanliness of the entire bus.)
3. Garbage on the bus will be defined as being **problematic** when it requires a significant amount of the driver's time and effort.
4. In order for an entire bus food ban to take place, the steps below must occur within approximately 20 school days.
 - ✓ On first occurrence, the students will be provided with a reminder by the bus driver consisting of a review of the bus expectations for garbage and the consequences for non-compliance. The bus driver will write up a bus discipline report form for each campus represented on the bus and indicate that this is the first warning.
 - ✓ A second occurrence will be dealt with in the same fashion, with the indication that this is the second and final warning
 - ✓ Each affected campus will make an announcement, or call those on the bus to the office, to remind them of the bus expectations for garbage, and that one more occurrence will result in a food ban.

- ✓ A third infraction will result in the students being told that there will be an entire bus food ban starting the next bus ride (a.m. or p.m.). The bus driver will write up a bus discipline report form for each campus about this and indicate that an entire bus food ban has been given.
 - ✓ The bus driver will inform the students that the ban will be lifted when there is evidence that the ban has been respected for one straight week.
5. After one week, the bus driver may lift the ban at his discretion and will write up a bus discipline report form for each campus indicating this.
 6. If the garbage becomes problematic for a second time, the students will only get one warning, with all the appropriate communications to the students and each campus.
 7. If the garbage continues to be problematic within approximately 20 days, the bus will be put on another food ban, and all communication will be completed as before.
 8. The duration of the entire bus food ban will be extended by a week every time a new food ban becomes necessary. (i.e. 1st time = 1 week, 2nd time = 2 weeks, 3rd time = 3 weeks, etc.)

18.0 Luggage Racks

Luggage racks will be used for soft items\articles only. This is an issue of safety and the transportation company\bus driver will implement this rule as needed.