

# Battle River School Division



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Dear Families of Battle River:

This spring the Government of Alberta announced a mandatory change in how School Transportation will be offered to families, starting in September of 2024.

Here in Battle River, we have decided to begin implementing these changes for the school year that begins in September 2023. We want to provide transportation service to as many students as possible, as soon as possible.

Currently, all students who live more than 2.4 km from their designated school are eligible for transportation. Moving forward the distance criteria has been reduced. That means:

- transportation will be available to all students in Grade K to 6 who live more than 1 km from their designated school.
- transportation will be available for all students in Grade 7 to 12 who live more than 2 km from their designated school.

This change is good news for lots of families! It means about 135 more rural children and about 750 more children in the City of Camrose are now eligible for busing.

In order to accommodate these additional riders, the BRSD Transportation Department is making big changes. Here are answers to some of the questions we expect many families will have:

## **How does a family determine if they are now eligible for student transportation?**

- You can use Google maps to determine the distance from your house to your children's designated school. If the distance is more than 1 km (for elementary students) or 2 km (for Grade 7 to 12 students) please register your children for transportation. Even if you live in town, transportation will be available to families who meet the new eligibility criteria.

## **How do I register for busing? When can I sign up?**

- Please register by using the online Transportation Registration form located on the BRSD website <https://www.brsd.ab.ca/families/transportation/registration>
- ***Busing registration will open on Monday, June 12.***

**When is the deadline to sign up?**

- These changes make it much more important that students register for busing. In order to successfully design new routes and pick-up / drop-off times, the Transportation Department needs to have information from parents as soon as possible. ***The deadline to sign up for busing for September 2023 is July 31, 2023.***

**Can I register my child for busing for a portion of the year (eg just the winter months?)**

- Children must be registered for the full year, in order to ensure we always have a seat available to them on the bus. We do not have the capacity to add more seats for a portion of the year.

**If my child already rides a rural school bus, do I have to register them for next year?**

- Current rural students transported by BRSD will be included in our plans for next school year IF rural address AND school of attendance remains the same. No registration is required.
- you must register if the student's physical address or school of attendance changes.

**If my child already rides the bus, what will change for them?**

- Your child's bus may make more stops, to pick up additional students.
- There may be a bus stop within a community, to accommodate students who live within a town and are now eligible for busing.
- As is the case each year, individual pick-up and drop-off times may change.
- Separate from these newly announced eligibility changes, BRSD Transportation was already making some changes to bus route designs for next year, so you may find a change to a route or even the number of routes available in your area.

**If I currently drive my child to meet a rural bus enroute, in order to attend our school of choice, what will change?**

- Please fill out the cross boundary application form that is available on the BRSD website. Where possible we will accommodate every cross boundary request that we can, but we are aware that some buses may no longer have space available for these additional riders. You may not receive confirmation of whether or not your student is able to be transported until the middle of September.

Right now, the BRSD Transportation Department team is working hard to make all the necessary adjustments and get ready to welcome all our new riders. If you have questions the best way to contact us is by email at [transportation@brsd.ab.ca](mailto:transportation@brsd.ab.ca).

We want to thank you in advance for your patience and understanding as we adapt to these changes!

Kristi Edwards, Director of Transportation