

IPSWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

REGULAR EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

1. Registration

Initial bus ridership information was compiled from the Ipswich Public Schools Return to School Commitment Survey. Families that indicated that they would need transportation on that survey can expect that their student will be transported by bus on the first day of school. They should assume there will be a seat on the bus for their student and they should report to the bus stop on the first day of school. Bus drivers will be provided a list of names of those students who have been assigned a seat on their route. All others, who would like to be considered for transportation should submit their request on the IPS Bus Wait List. The waitlist can be found on the Ipswich Public Schools website, www.ipsk12.net. (Home page, bus routes, IPS Bus Waiting List). Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that the district will be able to assign all students requesting transportation to a bus route this year. The school department anticipates that it will be able to assign seats to some of those students on the waitlist once initial ridership is determined. The intention is to assign seats to as many students as possible. Students who will be issued seats after the first day of school will be notified by the school department as soon as a decision on ridership is made.

2. Bus Fees

The School Committee voted to suspend bus fees for the 2020-2021 school year.

3. Seating Limitations

Due to COVID-19 there will be limited space available and not all students who wish to ride the bus may be able to do so. As an example, a typical bus normally carries 50+ students but for 2020-2021 the bus will be operating at approximately half-capacity as it is limited to carry a maximum of 23 students. Only one student will be allowed in each seat but siblings will be allowed to sit together.

4. School Bus Safety Tips

Due to health and safety requirements students must wear masks at all times on the bus. Masks are to be provided by the family of the student. There is no exception to this policy. While lining up to load the bus, students and parents/guardians must follow social distancing. There will be mandated seating on the bus in order to maintain social distancing. Buses will be loaded from the back of the bus toward the front. As weather permits bus windows will remain open. In consideration of the health and safety of other students and the bus driver if your students shows signs of illness, please do not allow them to ride the bus.

5. Student Identification

Students will be issued bus passes after the first day of school. Students riding district buses will be required to carry their bus pass and show it every day. It is very important that this year, for the first few weeks of school, the students provide their name to the bus driver as they enter the bus. Drivers will be taking note of who is on the bus each day. This will allow us to recognize the children by their stop, help them to find their assigned seat each day, and inform the school if students who have registered for the bus are not riding.

6. Attention to Posted Routes

This year's bus routes may be very different from those you are familiar with. Due to cohort assignments and variances to typical procedures, **pick up/drop off times and bus stops have been changed from previous years. DO NOT ASSUME THAT YOUR TIME AND STOP WILL BE THE SAME AS IT WAS IN PREVIOUS YEARS.** We recommend that you find the nearest stop to your address on the bus routes posted. During the first few weeks of school plan on arriving at your stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up/drop off time. This year, more than any prior year, specific timing of the routes will take a little longer than as we work through the issues of seating students in accordance with COVID regulations.

7. Patience is Required

Our goal is to provide safe and expedient bus transportation to school for as many of our students as possible. Unfortunately, we will not be able to be as accommodating to families as we have been in the past due to the limitations on available seating and social distancing. Please remember that we will strive to be as responsive as possible during these very challenging times.