

Letter for current riders

Email subject line: 2021-22 busing update

May 20, 2021

Dear PSD families,

This communication is for parents/guardians of students who are currently receiving busing services. This is an update about transportation for the next school year.

Busing during the 2021-22 school year will be prioritized for enrolled PSD students who are currently being bused and remain eligible for busing in the 2021-22 school year. **You do not need to request services or take any action steps at this time unless any of the following applies.** Families have from now until Wednesday, June 30 to [submit a request](#).

Important note: Current bus riders [must request busing services](#) if any of the following applies:

- They are changing addresses from 2020-21 to 2021-22,
- They are changing schools from 2020-21 to 2021-22, or
- They are moving from PSD Early Childhood Education to PSD kindergarten at a neighborhood school.

The PSD Transportation Department will notify families about students' bus routes sometime after Aug. 1 and prior to the first day of school. Families will get a pop-up notification after submitting their request. Changes can be made to an application in ParentVUE up until the June 30 deadline.

Busing is not provided for students who attend a school of choice or PSD-authorized charter school. If your student is eligible for busing at their neighborhood school but is switching to a school of choice, they will not receive busing. Alternate bus applications will not be accepted for students in the walk area.

As of May 2021, the health department has given PSD approval to place additional students per seat but there will be some limitations due to PSD's bus driver shortage. The Transportation Department is planning currently that riders will wear masks this fall and that some seats will be left empty around those who have an approved medical mask exception. PSD will continue monitoring public health guidance and make adjustments over time.

[Click here](#) to go to the Bus Request form online.

Those with questions may email busrequest@psdschools.org.

Thank you for your continued partnership.

Sincerely,

The Poudre School District Transportation Department

Letter for students who weren't bused in 2020-21

Ut. WEmail subject line: Request busing for 2021-22

May 20, 2021

Dear PSD families,

This is an update about transportation services, as you plan for fall 2021.

This week, PSD opened a [bus request process](#) for the 2021-22 school year. Families have from now until Wednesday, June 30 to [submit a request](#). Please note that submitting a request does not automatically guarantee transportation.

Those who submit a request must be eligible to receive busing. PSD transports students, who live within the district's geographic boundaries, to and from their neighborhood school when their residences are in excess of the following distances from their neighborhood school:

- High schools: 2 miles;
- Middle schools: 1.5 miles; and
- Elementary schools: 1 mile.
- [Read more in District Policy EEAA. >>](#)

Families will get a pop-up notification after submitting their request. Changes can be made to an application in ParentVUE up until the June 30 deadline.

Busing is not provided for students who attend a school of choice or PSD-authorized charter school. If your student is eligible for busing at their neighborhood school but is switching to a school of choice, they will not receive busing. Alternate bus applications will not be accepted for students in the walk area.

The PSD Transportation Department will notify families about whether their student is approved for busing sometime after Aug. 1 and prior to the first day of school. As of May 2021, the health department has given PSD approval to place additional students per seat but there will be some limitations due to PSD's bus driver shortage. The Transportation Department is planning currently that riders will wear masks this fall and that some seats will be left empty around those who have an approved medical mask exception. PSD will continue monitoring public health guidance and make adjustments over time.

[Click here](#) to go to the Bus Request form online.

Those with questions may email busrequest@psdschools.org.

Thank you for your continued partnership.

Sincerely,
The Poudre School District Transportation Department

Blurbs for newsletters

Need busing in 2021-22? PSD bus request process now open

- Students who currently receive transportation services for the 2020-21 school year will be prioritized for busing for next school year. Their families do not need to take any action steps at this time unless the following changes apply, and Transportation will notify families of route information sometime after Aug. 1 and before the start of school. If a current rider will have a change in addresses, change in schools or is moving from Early Childhood Education to kindergarten, they need to submit a bus request to be considered for services.
- Families will get a pop-up notification after submitting their request. Changes can be made to an application in ParentVUE up until the June 30 deadline.
- Students who did NOT receive busing in 2020-21 must submit a request.
- Requesting transportation is not a guarantee of service.

[Click here](#) to go to the Bus Request form online.

More information is available on the [Transportation web page](#). >>

Frequently Asked Questions

Will I receive an email confirmation once I submit a busing request? *No email confirmation is sent. Families will get a pop-up notification after submitting their request. Changes can be made to an application in ParentVUE up until the June 30 deadline.*

When will I find out if my student will be bused? *Requests will be reviewed, and the PSD Transportation Department will notify families whether they have services after Aug. 1 and before the start of school. If they are confirmed for services, they will receive information about their bus route. There is not a set, single date by which families can expect to hear back at this point, as that will depend on the request and routing process over the next few months. Families will be able to see their application's status in live time on the [bus request site](#).*

I noticed that riders who received services in 2020-21 do not have to submit a request if there are not certain changes (address, new school, etc.). Why is that? *During the 2020-21 school year, because of significant rider reductions due to COVID-19 guidelines for busing, Poudre School District guaranteed busing for students for whom transportation is legally required (i.e. those with Individualized Transportation Plans (ITP) and some foster students), as well as McKinney-Vento students experiencing homelessness.*

Once all students were shifted to full-time, in-person learning in March 2021, principals worked with families and the Transportation Department to evaluate circumstances in which a need was identified and added additional riders, as possible. Looking forward, the rationale for prioritizing busing services in the 2021-22 school year for riders who are currently bused is that the students currently bused receive services either because they are legally required or due to an already-identified need. In most instances, family circumstances have not changed significantly.

How will seating on buses look in 2021-22? *For the 2021-22 school year, the community may see more riders on elementary school buses than in the 2020-21 school year, when ridership was reduced significantly due to COVID-19 guidelines. This is due to the fact that the health department approved additional riders per seat, and a bus holds up to three per seat. In a more “typical,” pre-COVID environment, PSD seats about two middle or high school students per bench because they are larger than their preschool and elementary counterparts. As a result, the PSD community may not see a significant increase in the numbers of middle and high school riders per bus, between the 2021-22 and 2020-21 school years.*

What COVID-19 protocols will be in place on buses in the 2020-21 school year? *As of May 2021, the health department has given PSD approval to place additional students per seat, compared with earlier on in the 2020-21 school year. That said, there will be some limitations due to PSD’s bus driver shortage. The Transportation Department is planning currently that riders will wear masks this fall and that some seats will be left empty around those who have an approved medical mask exception. PSD will continue monitoring public health guidance and make adjustments over time.*

Will PSD still leave empty seats around a student with an approved medical mask exemption? *Yes. As of May 2021, the PSD Transportation Department is planning to continue the 2020-21 school year protocol of having nine empty seats (three to the front, three behind, side to side) around a student with a medical exemption for a face covering. As the district has done throughout the pandemic, PSD will continue to monitor public health guidance and make adjustments.*

How does the driver shortage affect the number of routes in PSD? *In a “typical,” pre-COVID year, the Transportation Department was running about 136 routes and reduced that to about 95 during the 2020-21 school year due to COVID-19 busing guidelines and the bus driver shortage. As of May 2021, PSD is planning to run about 100 routes in the 2021-22 school year and does anticipate busing more students in the 2021-22 school year than in 2020-21.*

PSD has communicated the driver shortage in the past. What has the district done to try to hire more drivers? *The bus driver shortage is impacting districts across the state and nation – not only PSD. PSD has experienced bus driver shortages of about 10-15 drivers in previous years, but this year’s shortage of about 35-40 drivers is the most significant yet. The PSD Transportation and Human Resources departments collaborated to increase the pay for drivers and offer a retention bonus to any current or new driver who is hired by July 31. Recruitment bonuses were also instituted. PSD is also marketing the open positions across platforms.*

Why is PSD implementing a bus request process? The district didn't have one prior to COVID-19. Instituting a request process enables the Transportation Department to assess the current demand for services and provide busing based upon those needs.