



## TRANSPORTATION – COVID-19 SCHOOL BUS POLICY & PROCEDURES

The following bus policy is intended to keep both students and staff safe on our busses. We have worked very hard to make changes to our busses and to our transportation schedule to ensure your children's experience is not uncomfortable, while meeting the Ministry of Education's Cohort recommendations and social distancing efforts on our busses.

### **What is a COHORT when talking about bussing?**

Based on the students pick up and drop off location and the school they attend, children will be assigned to a bus. Each trip will have no more than 27 kids on the bus and two staff. The students will not be permitted on another bus and will stick to the bus they are assigned for the remainder of the year. Any child who is not registered to a bus will not be permitted to ride that bus.

### **Why are we implementing BUS COHORTS?**

As per our own Cowichan Tribes COVID policies, Minister of Education COVID policies and the recommendations and direction from our Health leads, we are working to keep our kid's circle of people as small as possible. The cohort system helps us keep kids to a smaller group as well as better contact trace in the case there is a possible case of COVID-19 on one of the busses.

### **What does this mean?**

The bus cohort system means that students cannot enter or ride a bus that they are not assigned to ride. We understand this will cause possible hardships for some who on occasion had their child catch the bus to a different drop off location to assist in after school care or activities but this year we cannot accommodate those needs.

Below is a breakdown of the changes and responsibilities of parents, staff and students.

#### **Parent responsibility:**

- **Parents are required to sign the attached PARENT AGREEMENT and send that with your child to give to the driver by Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup>.**
- Parents or guardians are to escort their children 12 and under to the bus each day as per 'Pick Up Protocol', (existing transportation policy). They are to wait with their children until their child is loaded on the bus.
- Parents are to ensure that their child is symptom free and in good health to ride the bus. Please do the health assessment to assess your child(ren)'s health each morning prior to bringing your child to the bus stop. Any signs of a cold or flu you are to keep your child home.



## Symptoms include:

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- Fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Diarrhea
- Nausea and vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle ache

**If your child is ill you are encouraged to contact your family doctor or call 811 to seek direction on how to care for your child's symptoms.**

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- As per 'Pick Up Protocol', (existing transportation policy), students aged 12 years or younger will be released to a parent or caregiver, should they not be permitted to ride the bus.
- Parents or guardians will ensure their contact information is always up to date at the school and in the education department. **Please** keep in mind that if your telephone **number changes** at any time throughout the school year 2020/2021, you will need to call the Education Transportation Department at **250 715-1022** or email so we can change the contact information on your application. This is very important that our department has the ability to contact parents/guardians/or caregivers when we are in charge of your child on our buses.
- Children will only be permitted to ride the bus they are registered and will not be permitted to take different busses this school year.

**NO STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT REGISTERED TO RIDE THE BUS WILL BE PERMITTED ON THE BUS. PLEASE BE SURE YOU HAVE REGISTERED YOUR CHILD.**

### Staff and Student Safety:

- Social Distancing Measures - no students to be seated behind the Driver's seat
- Face Shields and Masks will be worn at all times and gloves (when needed) will be worn by the bus driver and bus monitor.
- Hand Sanitizer will be mounted for the bus drivers, bus monitors and for students to use upon boarding the bus
- Masks will be required for **ALL STUDENTS GRADE 3-12** while on the bus- drivers will offer a mask if they don't have one but please send your child with a clean reusable mask each day. Please speak to your child about proper use of the mask as well as storing their mask safely in their bag for the bus ride home.
- Drivers will have extra masks for children for emergency response in the case that a student starts showing symptoms on the bus
- Staff will sanitize the busses between trips and again during lunch and after school.
- Drivers will not report to work if they are ill or show symptoms



## Bus Driver and Bus Monitor role and responsibility:

- The bus monitor will provide each child with hand sanitizer prior to boarding the bus.
- The bus monitor will be taking attendance of the students riding the bus every day.
- The bus monitor will do a Daily Health Assessment of each child to ensure they are not suffering any visible symptoms.
- For any child not permitted to board, the bus the bus monitor will leave the child in the care of their parent/guardian who escorted the child to the bus. For children over 12, they will direct the child to return home.
- The bus monitor, where possible, will exit the bus for riders to board. In situations where the bus monitor cannot exit the bus safely, they will utilize the face shield provided during boarding and checking in students.

**All buses will be cleaned thoroughly, twice a day with high touch areas, such as stairwell railings cleaned at each transfer stations.**

## Before Loading Bus and While On the Bus:

- Due to social distancing requirements our buses will be transporting children between 16-32% of our regular capacity. This will require more trips and longer wait times at the school for some of our children.
- Students should physically distance (2 m/6ft) at bus stops.
- Students will be required to complete the daily health self-assessment with the bus monitor prior to riding.
- Students will use hand sanitizer upon entry and will not be able to enter should they present flu like symptoms as listed above.
- Face masks **are required for students grades 8-12** – masks are available from the Bus Driver if needed but please send your child with a clean reusable mask each day. Please speak to your child about proper use of the mask as well as storing their mask safely in their bag for the bus ride home.
- Students will fill the bus from the back to the front / siblings will be asked to sit together on high capacity routes.
- Students will be asked to sit by the window if seated alone to stay distanced from the aisle and those who may need to pass filled seats.
- Should the student show symptoms on the bus, they will be released to the Principal on site for pickup by their parent/guardian/or caregiver.
- Physical distancing will be utilized by spacing students- one student per seat with no student sitting behind the driver. **Student will be expected to keep their hands to themselves, sit in their assigned seats and no yelling, cover mouth with your elbow (not hand) when yawning, coughing or sneezing.**



# Quw'utsun Syuw'entst Lelum

## TRANSPORTATION PARENT AGREEMENT HEALTH AND SAFETY FORM

Dear Parent and Guardians,

**By signing this form, you agree:**

1. You have read the TRANSPORTATION COVID-19 POLICY AND PROCEEDURES (above).
2. That you commit to escorting and waiting with your child(ren) 12 and under until they are loaded on the bus.
3. To review the health and safety protocols outlined in the TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND PROCEEDURES with your child(ren) and agree that you and your child(ren) will abide by all the health and safety requirements.
4. To conduct the health assessment with your child(ren) daily prior to bringing your child(ren) to the school bus each day, in order to confirm if:
  - a. Your child has any cold, influenza or COVID-19 symptoms detailed in the restart plan
  - b. Your child or household family members has returned from travel outside of Canada in the last 14 days; or
  - c. Your child or household member has been in contact in the last 14 days with a person confirmed to have had COVID-19.
5. That the Transportation Department has updated contact information in the case your child(ren) becomes ill and is required to be picked up.
6. By answering "YES" to any of the points in question #3, your child(ren) will not be brought to ride the bus and you will contact the school to inform the receptionist of their absence.

Students who are sent to the bus while ill will be sent home immediately. Students who are continuously sent to the bus ill will not be permitted to ride the bus until further notice and a discussion with the parent takes place to discuss next steps. Our main goal is to transport our students but we are required to do that following our COVID policy to ensure we are doing all we can to keep all staff and students as safe as possible during this pandemic.

Children under 12 who are sent to the bus more than one time without a guardian or parent escort will not be permitted to ride the bus until our office can meet to discuss. Again this is for the safety of the child we will be enforcing this policy.

NOTE: If your child is experiencing any symptoms of illness, or you answer yes to any of the questions listed above in #3 contact your doctor or call 811 for health care advice/direction.

**Please return this form and send it with your child by September 14<sup>th</sup> to give to the bus driver.**

Huy ch q'u,  
Darin George  
Transportation Manager

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Print Name

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Signature

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Date