TIMS Fall Planning

Back to School Checklist & Talking Points

**Collecting AM/PM Bus Ridership Status for Students in August**

* Yes, No, Alternate (if applicable), Specialized Transportation, Contract, Walk Zone, etc.

**New Students** – mostly incoming KI but also all students who register over the summer. A transportation form or questions about AM/PM transportation should be included in student registration procedures.

**Students Changing Schools** – Primarily 5th to 6th and 8th to 9th but also students switching to Early College or a STEM Program at a different building. Special Needs Programs and Special Classroom locations could also change year to year. These are the main groups of students who can slip through the cracks and cause chaos at Open House when newly promoted students are not assigned correctly for the start of school.

* Each district should prioritize collecting ridership info for all students changing schools.

**Students Staying in Same School** – if the student hasn’t moved and isn’t being promoted to a new building, most districts assume end of year ridership (Yes, No, Alt) will remain in place for the next year. Other districts have all students confirm current assignments for next year so they can plan accordingly. This will also help reduce problems at Open House and the first few days of school.

**Students with Address Changes** – when a student moves and changes addresses with the school system, they need to be asked again about transportation status. “Do you need a bus ride to/from your new house?” This is especially true if the student will be changing schools because of the address change. “Do you need a bus ride to/from your new house and your new school?” Reassessing Transportation Status following an address change needs to occur over the summer as well as with every address change during the school year.

* Do not assume ridership will always be the same following a school or address change.

**Deadlines for Day 1 Bus Requests**

Current student information should be collected before the end of the school year. There should also be a deadline for Day 1 Bus Requests for any students registering over the summer, changing addresses or needing to update their AM/PM requests. Ideally, the deadline would be several weeks before school (Ex: August 11th or July 31st) so the Transportation Department has time to finalize routes, secure enough drivers and possibly complete practice runs prior to the first day of school.

If school starts on Monday August 28th, the deadline cannot be Wednesday August 23rd. Please work with local administration to establish realistic deadlines that will help minimize problems the first week of school.

**School Bell Times, Arrival/Departure Windows and School Supervision Before/After the Bell**

Schools will sometimes change Bell Times for the upcoming year and this information may not make it to the Transportation Department. It is important that you confirm Fall Bell Times as you develop and plan Bus Routes for the first day of school.

Meet with each school and outline the Fall Bell Times and Arrival/Departure Windows for School Bus Transportation. For multi-tier districts and for the use of double-runs from the same school, explain the concept of the Early\Late Windows and how this will help manage routes by pairing longer and shorter runs together between two schools or two or more tiers.



**Earliest AM Drop Off:** refers to the earliest time students may be dropped off at the school with staff present for supervision. When can car riders or any student enter the building?

**Latest AM Drop Off:** refers to the latest time the school would like for students to arrive. Typically long enough before the bell to allow for breakfast, bathroom, etc. Some schools want everyone there 10min before the Bell, others want students to arrive 20-30min before school starts.

**PM First Load:** refers to the usual time the first wave of buses will depart from the school. Usually 5 to 10min after the dismissal bell.

**PM Last Load:** refers to the latest possible time students may remain on school grounds (w/ staff supervision) while they await the arrival of a bus from the previous tier or to return from their first load of a double-run.

**Early College, Special Needs Students, Alternative Schools and Modified Day Schedules**

In addition to the regular to/from school bus riders; most districts also manage irregular bus routes for Alternative School Students, Students with Modified Schedules or Specialized Transportation Needs and most Early College programs begin the first week in August and not the last week of August. You should meet with PowerSchool Staff, Special Needs Liaisons and/or the Student Assignment Coordinator to discuss the variety of specialized/irregular services needed for the upcoming school year.

**Start Early!**

Try to have all of this data and information collected and ready by April or May so you can start working on Fall Routes before Summer School Planning consumes most of your time.

TIMS Summer Planning

Summer School Checklist & Talking Points

Summer School Bus Routing requires much of the same information as Fall Planning.

* Student Ridership Requests – Yes, No, Alternate, etc.
* Deadline for Stop Requests and time to complete summer bus routes from the final list.
* Summer School Bell Times and Bell Time Windows

In addition to the normal Bus Ridership and Arrival/Departure Times information, Summer School Programs often combine children from multiple schools at a single school location. Therefore it is important to ask the following information…

* Which Schools will host Summer Programs this year?
* Students from which others school(s) will be assigned to these programs?
  + (Ex: 304, 308 and 320 will need bused to School 316, along with 316 Summer Students)
  + Which students from all 4 schools will need Summer Transportation to School 316?
  + Can schools provide a preliminary list of potential Summer Students and/or Bus Riders?
  + When will the Transportation Department have the final list of Bus Riders for each Summer Program?
* When does each Summer Program begin?
* How many weeks are the programs?
* How many days per week?
* What can Transportation do to help gather Summer Ridership Info?
* What can the Schools do to help gather Summer Ridership Info?

Please work with the Summer School coordinator to help outline the plan for the different summer programs and all the information Transportation Requires to develop Bus Routes. Summer School Routing is complex and more intense with a much quicker turnover time compared to Fall Planning. School Assignments tend to be highly irregular and bus routes often require more time to develop across multiple school zones and districts.