



# Bus Stop Procedures and Routing Criteria

Glenview School District 34 serves over 300 bus routes within the community each day. Bus stops and routes are designed with consideration of safety, efficiency, and ride times.

## How are the locations of bus stops determined?

Bus routing is designed with buses traveling main roads through neighborhoods and with students picked up and dropped off at central locations. Bus stops are located at corners or intersections whenever possible and are usually central to where students live.

## Why are bus stops usually established at corners or intersections?

### Safety:

- Students are generally taught to cross at corners rather than in the middle of the street.
- Traffic controls, such as stoplights or signs, are located at corners. Motorists tend to be more cautious as they approach intersections. Impatient motorists are also less likely to pass buses at corners than along a street. Cars passing school buses create the greatest risk to students who are getting on or off the bus.
- In the winter, salting and sanding is usually done at corners, providing safer stopping for buses and cars.
- Buses use their eight-way light system and stop arm when picking up and dropping off students. Corner stops allow ample time for the driver to activate the yellow warning lights before getting to the stop.
- Bus drivers, especially substitutes, can see corner stops much more easily than house numbers so they can keep their focus on their driving. House numbers are located in a variety of places on houses and are often not easily visible from the street, especially in bad weather and before dawn or after dusk.

### Efficiency:

- Ride times for students are shorter if buses are kept on main roads and are not sent down every street. Route changes for new students can be more easily accommodated when stops are at corners.

## Why can't my driver adjust my bus stop if he/she does not mind doing so?

The District 34 office maintains emergency lists of all students riding the buses, including the students' assigned bus stops. In the event of a bus accident or other emergency, the District uses these lists to verify the students on the bus with first responders. As a result, the District must know the location of all students' bus stops and cannot allow bus drivers to create or modify stops without authorization.

Additionally, routes will often require substitute drivers throughout the school year. Substitute drivers utilize the route and bus stop sheets given to them by the District office to drive the route and will only stop at designated bus stops. If your students are not at their assigned bus stops, they may be missed.

## How are routes determined?

The order of pick-ups and drop-offs is designed to be as efficient and timely as possible. Given this, students who are at the first stop in the morning may not necessarily be the first stop in the afternoon if there is a shorter, more efficient way to complete the route.

Both the distance from school and the number of stops made determine the length of the bus ride. It takes a considerable amount of time to make 30 stops for 50 students, and as a result, the District makes every effort to minimize the number of bus stops by locating them central to where students live.

Additionally, an area with a high volume of students may require more than one bus to be routed within the same neighborhood to ensure timely bus routes. These buses may cross the

same streets in the neighborhood, but they will not pick up students at the same stops.

### **How far will students need to walk to the stop?**

According to the School Code of Illinois, bus stops may be up to 1.5 miles from a student's house. While the District does not require students to walk this far to a bus stop, students may need to travel one or more blocks to the closest centralized bus stop, depending on the students' grade level. Bus stops will be more frequent and located closer to students' houses on elementary and intermediate routes. Middle school students may be expected to walk further to the closest bus stop.

### **How do I know if I am eligible for free transportation?**

Students are eligible for free transportation if they live more than 1.5 miles from the school of attendance. Students may also be eligible for free transportation if they live less than 1.5 miles from the school of attendance and within an approved hazard area.

### **How are hazard routes determined?**

Students that live less than 1.5 miles from school may still be eligible to receive free transportation if their walk to school is deemed hazardous. When determining hazard eligibility for pupil transportation, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) will consider four types of hazards that students walking to school encounter: (1) the distance between a walkway and roadway, (2) walking on a roadway, (3) crossing a roadway, and (4) crossing railroad tracks.

When determining the hazard eligibility of a specific location, IDOT utilizes one of four rating systems that correspond to the hazard. In order to be approved by IDOT, the Board of Education must conduct an investigation of each specific location or intersection that will be considered. If the investigation yields the specified point values for the target locations, the Board may submit an application to IDOT requesting that these locations be considered serious safety hazards.

No area within 1.5 miles of a school may be considered a hazard area and eligible for free transportation without approval from the Board of Education and IDOT.

Parents that believe they live within a qualifying area that has not yet been investigated by the Board of Education must submit their request in writing to the District 34 Transportation Department. District staff will review requests as they are submitted, but final approval by IDOT may take longer than six months.

### **What if I am not eligible for free transportation?**

Parents may choose to pay for bus service on an annual basis for students not eligible for free bus service. However, paid ridership is dependent on the availability of seats on an existing bus. Paid riders will be picked up at the closest existing stop on a route; under no circumstances will additional stops be added for paid riders. Additionally, no stops will be made within a 0.5-mile radius of the school building. Parents are responsible for ensuring their children travel safely to the existing stop to which they are assigned.

The bus fee is set annually by the Board of Education, and it cannot be pro-rated, waived, or refunded. Additionally, the full fee must be paid annually for each child riding the bus; there are no fee waivers or discounts for families with multiple children. Payment in full and a completed application received by July 1<sup>st</sup> will be eligible for a \$50 discount.

### **What other factors are considered when creating bus stops?**

Combinations of the following criteria are also considered when establishing bus stops:

- Length of walk to the stop.
- Is the stop on a residential street or a main arterial road?
- Does the child have to cross a busy street to get to the stop?
- What is the age of the student?
- Does the route require that the bus do a turn-around at the stop location?

### **What criteria are not considered requirements when creating a bus stop?**

- It is not possible to provide bus stops that are within sight of all students' homes or daycares unless house stops are made for all students. Most families that live even one house from the corner cannot see the corner bus stop without coming out of the house. We do encourage parents to be out at bus stops to promote proper pedestrian and bus stop behavior.
- A house stop will not be made simply because the bus goes past a student's house. Many routes travel past students' houses on the way to or from school. Adding additional stops negatively impacts the efficiency of a route and will often result in a route that is consistently late to school. Additionally, the higher frequency of stops made by the bus often result in impatient motorists driving around the bus causing a greater safety concern than the distance a student must walk to the bus stop.
- A house stop would not necessarily be made because there is only one student at the stop. Other students may be assigned to the stop, but ride infrequently. Additionally, stops are made at corners for efficiency and to accommodate other students who may move into the neighborhood.
- A bus stop will not be made within a cul-de-sac. A school bus requires 115 feet to safely turn and cul-de-sacs typically do not have enough room for safe access. Driving into a cul-de-sac often forces the bus to backup, which is not compliant with bus driver procedures in the State of Illinois.
- Weather conditions are not part of the criteria for a bus stop change. We encourage parents to plan appropriately on inclement weather days.
- The District does not guarantee bus stop locations from year to year. As neighborhood enrollments change, the District must change bus stop locations to ensure centralized stops and to maintain efficient routes.