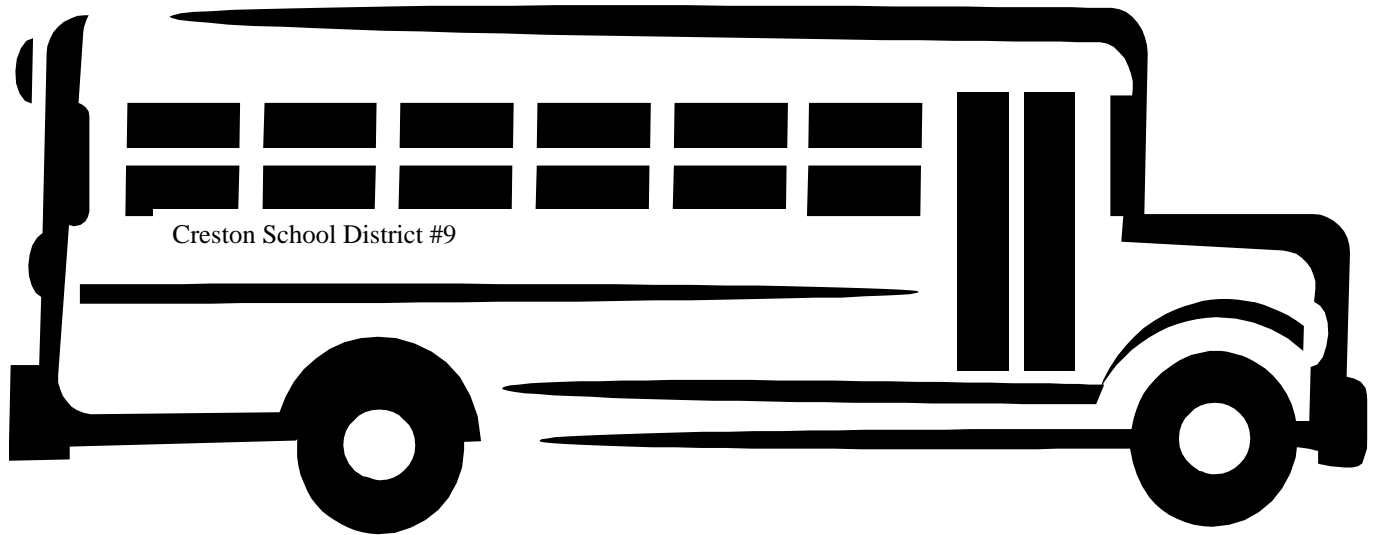


CRESTON SCHOOL  
TRANSPORTATION  
HANDBOOK  
2024-2025



Creston School District #9  
4495 Montana Hwy 35  
Kalispell, MT 59901  
(406) 755-2859

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## INTRODUCTION

Creston School District owns and operates its own bus. Transportation by bus is not mandatory. This is a service for those who wish to ride under the District's established policies.

The Transportation Handbook is prepared as a guide for you. Use it to acquaint yourself with the transportation policies of the District. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school.

After reading the handbook, sign and return the form on the last page indicating that the parents and students have read and understand the policies and regulations.

### A. FUNDING

Funds for operation of the bus are from a district tax levy, state and county reimbursement for eligible riders, and parent fees for ineligible riders.

### B. ELIGIBILITY

The District ensures all eligible riders have a designated stop on the route. Eligibility is based on district residence and distance from your home to school. District residents are considered eligible if the distance from home to school is greater than 3 miles. If an eligible district resident should have to transport a student greater than 1.5 miles to the designated stop on the route, the resident would be eligible for reimbursement from the District and should notify the District.

Out of district residents are, as a general rule, considered ineligible. Families determined to be ineligible will be assessed a fee for bus use; eligible families will have fees waived.

### C. CONTRACTS AND FEES

Any family wanting students to use the bus must sign a contract with the District. Contracts are reviewed for eligibility and mileage by the Board of Trustees. Eligible families will have the fees waived. Ineligible families will be assessed an \$18.00 per month per family fee. Monthly payments are not pro-rated. Parents who sign a contract are obligated to pay for a full month even if their child occasionally walks or rides a bike to school. Bus fees are due by the 10th of each month September through May. There is a provision for an occasional use contract at no fee – occasional use is defined as one time per month or less. Delinquent accounts are given 3 notices and then the account is turned over to the County Attorney. If the family wishes to discontinue use of bus or terminate a contract because of moving or transferring their student, they are asked to notify the Clerk. A contract will then be terminated with partial use in any month constituting a full month's use, plus any fees yet due to be paid to the District.

### D. ROUTE

The bus route is set in June and approved by the County Transportation Committee. The route cannot be changed without approval of the Committee. Designated stops on the route are assigned to each family at the beginning of the school year and may be adjusted by the Principal based on safety or need. Students may not board or depart the bus at a stop other than the one designated for them. Any stops at other than those designated are not allowed. The bus will not go into the Many Lakes area but will pick up and drop off students at the pull-out.

### E. BUS PASS

Occasionally a family may wish to use a stop other than the stop designated on the contract, if

this situation should occur, a parent must call or send a note to the office. A bus pass will then be issued to the student. Students may not board or depart the bus at a stop other than their own without a bus pass. *NOTE: Students who do not have a bus contract will not be issued bus passes.*

## F. SCHEDULE

A definite time schedule is established for the bus route and will be adhered to as closely as possible. Pupils must be on time; the bus cannot wait for those who are tardy. It is recommended that students arrive at the bus stop five minutes prior to the designated bus pickup time. If the schedule is changed because of mechanical problems each family will be telephoned. Local radio stations will be notified if school is canceled.

If a child does not arrive at home on schedule, the parent should **CALL THE SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY**. If the delay is caused by other than bus problems, the school staff will initiate an immediate search for the missing child.

## G. PHONE

A cellular telephone will be on the bus for emergencies. If a parent has a genuine emergency and calls the school, the school office will contact the bus driver to pass the information along.

## H. PASSENGER RULES

### BEFORE BOARDING THE BUS

1. Be on time and waiting for the bus at the approved school bus stop.
2. Stay off the road while waiting for the bus.
3. Wait in an orderly manner. Misbehavior at bus stops will have the same consequences as misbehavior in school.
4. Wait for the school bus to come to a complete stop before attempting to board.
5. Do not run toward the bus in an effort to be the first to board. Form a line prior to boarding.
6. Cross the street ten (10) feet in front of the bus only after making sure the bus is stopped, the flashing red lights are operating and all traffic has stopped.
7. Size of bags or backpacks on the bus may be limited due to space considerations at the discretion of the bus driver.

### WHILE RIDING THE BUS

1. The driver is in full charge of the bus and students. Pupils are expected to comply promptly with his / her requests.
2. At the discretion of the driver, each student may be assigned a seat and held responsible for that seat if necessary. Where passenger load is lightened, students may be permitted to move to a second assigned seat.
3. Unnecessary conversation with the driver is prohibited.
4. Outside of ordinary conversation, classroom conduct is to be observed by students. Any pupil who is guilty of inappropriate behavior or language, of abusing or showing disrespect toward the driver or other pupils forfeits the right to ride on the bus.
5. Littering is prohibited (in the bus or out the windows).
6. Safety dictates that **NO PORTION OF THE BODY BE EXTENDED OUT THE BUS WINDOWS.**
7. Students will not get on or off, or be out of their seats while the bus is in motion.

8. Any damage to the bus must be reported to the driver at once. The bus driver is responsible for reporting the damage to the Principal and/or attending to its repair.
9. In the event that the bus driver does not assign seats, there will be no reserving of seats by students for other students.
10. Students will adjust windows only when instructed to do so by the bus driver.
11. Smoking and tobacco chewing are prohibited.
12. Food and drinks may not be consumed on the bus.
13. Students will not exit from the emergency door unless an emergency exists or a bus evacuation exercise is being conducted.
14. Students are expected to wear warm clothing during cold weather.
15. No student shall have any part in the operation of the bus.

#### WHEN LEAVING THE BUS

1. Students will unload from the bus only at their approved bus stop.
2. Do not run or push while unloading from the bus.
3. Stay away from the wheel-wells and side of the bus, especially when departing toward the rear of the bus.
4. Walk ten (10) feet in front of the bus making sure the bus is stopped, the flashing red lights are operating, and all traffic is stopped.
5. Go directly home from your bus stop.

\*Note\*: students may not board or depart from the bus at a stop other than their own without a bus pass! Bus passes are available from the school office. Parents must send a note or call the office.

#### I. DISCIPLINE

The bus driver has the responsibility and authority to take responsible measures relative to behavior problems on the bus, including communicating the problem to the Principal, and in extreme cases, not allowing the student to ride the bus. Such action will be reported immediately to the Principal and the parents of the pupil involved will be informed by the Principal. The driver will keep the Principal informed of discipline problems from their beginning, so the Principal has the necessary information to communicate with the parents, or to respond to communications from the parents regarding behavior problems on the bus.

#### J. BUS CAPACITY

The district makes every attempt to have the bus available to all Creston families wanting to use the bus. The current bus is rated at 78 passengers. The rated capacity of a bus in the State of Montana is based on three (3) passengers per seat. Students will be required to sit three (3) per seat if the bus load requires it. Should the bus meet maximum capacity, it is the policy of the District to provide transportation to eligible district students first, and then to approved out of district students. To reduce passengers the following elimination process has been developed:

1. Out of district;
2. Ineligible district living 0.5 miles or less from the school;
3. Ineligible district living 0.75 miles from the school.
4. This process will continue in 0.25 mile increments until load limit is reached.

#### K. DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

Any driver of a school bus shall be qualified to drive the school bus by compliance with the

following requirements:

1. Have a minimum of five (5) years of licensed, conviction-free driving experience.
2. Is the holder of a valid commercial license with passenger endorsement;
3. Has filed with the District a satisfactory medical examination report signed by a licensed physician of the State of Montana on a form approved by the United States department of transportation.
4. Has completed a standard first aid course or equivalent and holds a valid certificate from an authorized instructor. The issuance of this certificate shall be governed by rules and regulations established by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
5. Has complied with any other qualifications established by the Board of Public Education;
6. Has filed with the County Superintendent a certificate from the Trustees of the District for which the school bus is to be driven certifying compliance with the driver qualifications enumerated above.

The local school district has the right, in accordance with written district policy, to set qualifications in addition to the state requirements.

The driver shall wear a seat belt during the course of the route.

#### L. SUBSTITUTE DRIVERS

Substitute drivers are required to meet the same qualifications as regular drivers.

#### M. APPEARANCE AND ATTITUDE

The appearance and attitude of a driver is a reflection upon him/herself and appropriate clothing and attitude are expected in the performance of duty.

#### N. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If there is an infraction of the bus regulations, a bus discipline report will be sent home to parents. A copy of the report is included in the Handbook.

First Incident: The student and parents are notified with the report. This note must be signed and returned to the Principal the following day to allow communication.

Second Incident: The student will be suspended from riding the bus for (1) day. In addition to the report, parents will be notified with a telephone call.

Third Incident: The student is suspended from riding the bus for (1) week. Parents will be called.

Fourth Incident: The student will not be allowed to ride the bus for 30 days. Parents will be called.

If after a fourth report, a problem still exists, the student will be suspended from riding the bus, a conference with parents/guardian, the principal and the bus driver will be called. The student will be allowed to ride the bus only after a minimum ninety (90) day suspension and if proper corrective measures have been worked out.

#### O. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

If a parent has a complaint about the bus, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. Contact the bus driver and discuss the problem.
2. If you are not satisfied, contact the Principal for a conference.
3. The decision of the Principal may be appealed to the Board of Trustees if authorized by Montana law and District Policy.

Updated 4/12/2024

EXAMPLE OF BUS DISCIPLINE REPORT

**Creston School District #9  
Bus Discipline Report**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Route: A.M. \_\_\_\_ P.M. \_\_\_\_

Driver: \_\_\_\_\_ Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/>	Failure to wear seatbelt	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Failure to remain seated while bus is moving	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Loud talking, shouting, screaming	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teasing or annoying other riders	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Throwing objects in or out of the bus	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Showing disrespect to the driver	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fighting	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Using profanity/vulgarity	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obscene gestures	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Littering	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Property damage	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Putting the safety of others or self at risk	

\_\_\_\_ First Incident: The student and parents are notified with this report.

\_\_\_\_ Second Incident: The student will be suspended from riding the bus for (1) day.

\_\_\_\_ Third Incident: The student is suspended from riding the bus for (1) week.

\_\_\_\_ Fourth Incident: The student will not be allowed to ride the bus for 30 days.

If after a fourth report, a problem still exists, the student will be suspended from riding the bus, a conference with parents/guardian, the principal and the bus driver will be called. The student will be allowed to ride the bus only after a minimum ninety (90) day suspension and if proper corrective measures have been worked out.

For further information please contact: Rachel Stevens, Principal, 755-2859.

Sign and returned this form to school.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**CRESTON SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK**  
Sign and return this page to the school office.

**CRESTON SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK**

I have read and understand the Creston School District Transportation policies and regulations  
AND have discussed them with my children.

Parent/ Guardian (s) signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Print Name**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Print Name**

Student(s) name(s):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments or Suggestions: