

Transportation Update for 2022/2023 School Year

Hello Marion Families,

As we approach the new school year we want to inform you of some upcoming changes for our school transportation that will be in place at the beginning of the year. With the national bus driver shortage, many districts around the state and the country are implementing new transportation policies focused on student safety, route efficiency and reliability to ensure we have our students in the classroom five days a week. Below are a few of the changes and new initiatives that Marion City Schools will incorporate starting on August 15 with our transition day for Pre-K, Kindergarten, sixth and ninth grade students and then all other students on August 16.

Bus Route Changes

In order to help with efficiency and safety, some of our routes and bus stops will change for the 2022-2023 school year. State law says that districts must provide transportation to K-8 students who live more than two miles from their building. Students can be required to walk up to a half mile to a bus stop. Districts are not required to provide transportation to high school students. At Marion City Schools we have prided ourselves in providing transportation to all grade levels as well as staying well below the state guidelines in terms of walking distance. This year however, there will be changes to some of our routes and walking distances to help ensure efficiency and reliability with transportation.

High school and middle school students are currently required to live more than a half-mile from the school building to be eligible for transportation. Going forward only high school and middle students that live more than a mile from their school will be eligible for school transportation. All high school and middle school students that reside within one mile of their building will not be eligible for school transportation.

Currently, elementary students must live more than a quarter-mile from their school to be eligible for school transportation. This will increase to up to three-quarters of a mile depending on location. Most students living within three-quarters of a mile of their school building will not be eligible for school transportation.

Once bus stops are established that fall within the new criteria, eligible transportation students could be required to walk up to a half-mile to a bus stop. All walking paths are determined by the routing software used by the district called, Transfinder, which allows for mapping safe walking paths to buildings and takes into account railroad tracks, busy roadways and sidewalk accessibility among other factors.

Last year about 6% of the student population were considered walkers, and while we know that the number will increase slightly to around 11%, we know that these small changes will improve the efficiency and reliability of our routes on a day to day basis.

It is important to note that students who have qualified for door to door transportation will see no changes for the upcoming school year, and students who have open enrolled in the district are not eligible for transportation.

Please fill out this short [Transportation opt-in form](#) if you student will be eligible for transportation for the 2022-2023 school year.

Bus Safety

The safety of our students in our buildings and during transportation is our number one priority. This year we will be implementing a few new initiatives to enhance our commitment to safety.

Our first goal is to have a bus aide on every single school bus for each route. The bus aide is able to assist and monitor all students at pickup, discharge, and transfer points, as they get on and off the bus as well as monitor behavior of the students, making sure they are adhering to bus rules and regulations. We have a number of bus aide positions available now and applications can be submitted here: [Apply Now](#).

Finally, Hooty, the school bus safety owl, will return this year for bus safety training at each elementary school throughout the year. Students will learn to S.O.A.R with Hooty, by being Safe, Orderly and Respectful in and around the school bus.



General Transportation Updates

Marion City Schools will be getting four brand new school buses (three conventional and one wheel chair accessible) over the new school year as we continue to improve safety, efficiency and reliability of transportation throughout the district.

Bus routes for the 2022-2023 school year will be finalized and posted to the MCS app, our transportation [webpage](#) and sent out via email the week of August 8th.

We are still in need of a few bus and van drivers for the upcoming school year. Interested individuals can [apply here](#). MCS offers fully paid CDL training for those interested in becoming a bus driver for the district and you can register [here](#). Pay is \$15.50 an hour for all classroom and onboard training. Need more hours while training? You will have the option to work as a bus aide while training for your CDL.

If you have any questions about Marion City Schools transportation, you can contact the department at: 740-223-4398.