

# APS Bus Transportation Review Questionnaire Summary Results

The questionnaire was available from March 22 to April 12, 2019. Over that time, APS received 2,007 responses. Below is a summary and links to the questionnaire results.

- [About 52% of respondents had students in pre-K through 5; 25% had middle school students; 23% had high school students.](#)
- [1,644 \(82%\) of respondents had students eligible for bus service](#)
- [Majority do not have specialized transportation under an IEP or 504 plan](#)
- [Most students ride the bus in the morning and afternoon](#)
- [Most students walk to their bus stop](#)
- [Respondents cited a variety of reasons for not using the bus though eligible.](#)
- [The top three elements of bus service that are most important when it comes to getting students to and from school:](#)
  - Bus arrives on time to school (69%)
  - Bus stop is within a 10-minute walk from home (69%)
  - Bus ride is not too long (52%)
- [The top challenges and/or opportunities for improvement with the bus system](#)
  - Communication about any delays or other information specific to your student's bus (62%)
  - Creating more efficient bus routes (47%)
  - Use of technology (e.g., Bus locator apps) (45%)
- [The top three criteria for a hub stop](#)
  - Hub stop is located within 1.5 miles of home
  - Bus trip takes less than 30-40 minutes to get to school
  - Plenty of space in the bus waiting area for many students
- [Most of those who answered this question did not support having different school levels use the same bus.](#) Where there was support, respondents chose allowing middle and high school students to ride together.
- [Ranking of preferences for students to use free transit passes](#)
  - Most respondents ranked having a bus stop within a 10-min walk from home as most important.
  - After that, aligning with bell times and frequency of bus service were next most important to respondents.
- [Ranking of operational goals](#)
  - Preferences for policy goals are shown in rank order below. By far, the greatest support is for ensuring that buses get to school on time.
    1. Ensuring buses get to school on time
    2. Limiting the length of the bus ride for students
    3. Ensuring buses are full, but not overcrowded
    4. Being good environmental stewards
    5. Being good financial stewards
- [Knowledge of APS Transportation Policy and Procedures](#)

Most respondents were aware of APS policies about bus eligibility, expectations for student behavior and parental responsibilities for getting students to stops. About half understood APS expectations for driver behavior. Far fewer felt they understood how routes are developed and stops are placed. A minority said they knew where to find information about late buses, or when buses are provided for athletics or extracurricular activities, but that may be related to the age level of students and families not yet needing to know that information. Links to responses are below.

  - [where to go for information and questions about bus service, or to report problems?](#)
  - [who is eligible for bus transportation](#)
  - [how bus routes are developed](#)
  - [how bus stops are established](#)

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- [how students are assigned to bus stops](#)
- [expectations for student behavior on the bus](#)
- [parent/guardian responsibility for getting students to/from bus stops](#)
- [expectations for driver/attendant behavior on the bus](#)
- [how to request special education transportation service](#)
- [how to access late buses](#)
- [when APS bus transportation is provided for athletic and extracurricular events](#)
- [when APS bus transportation is provided for field trips](#)
- [transportation options for students who become ill during the school day and must be sent home](#)



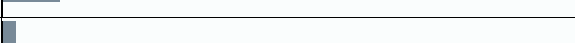
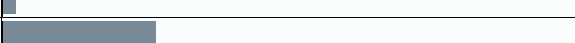

In what grade is your student?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Pre-K	50	2%	
K	185	9%	
First	175	9%	
Second	184	9%	
Third	173	9%	
Fourth	145	7%	
Fifth	134	7%	
Sixth	180	9%	
Seventh	166	8%	
Eighth	149	7%	
Ninth	166	8%	
Tenth	141	7%	
Eleventh	111	6%	
Twelfth	48	2%	
(Did not answer)	0	0%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2,007</b>		


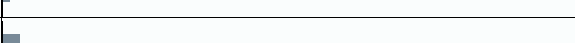

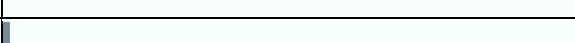
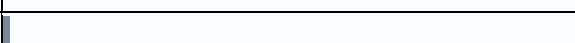
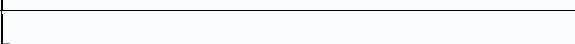

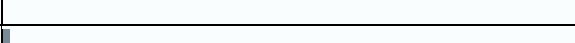
Is your student currently eligible to ride the school bus?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	1,644	82%	
No	363	18%	
(Did not answer)	0	0%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2,007</b>		

Is your student eligible for specialized transportation under an IEP/504 plan?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	74	4%	
No	1,570	78%	
(Did not answer)	363	18%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2,007</b>		





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Does your student currently ride the school bus on most days?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes-AM	263	13%	
Yes -PM	161	8%	
Yes-AM+PM	1,042	52%	
No	178	9%	
(Did not answer)	363	18%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2,007</b>		




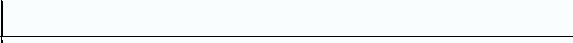

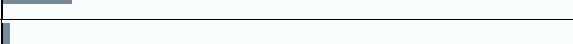
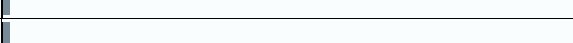


If your student currently rides the school bus, how do they usually get to the stop in the morning:			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Walk	1,204	60%	
Bike	5	0%	
Carpool	6	0%	
Public transit	3	0%	
Driven to stop by parent/guardian/other caregiver	203	10%	
Other (Please specify)	45	2%	
(Did not answer)	541	27%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2,007</b>		







If your student is eligible for bus transportation but does not currently ride the school bus, why not? (mark all that apply)			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Attends before-school activities or AM Extended Day	27	1%	
Attends after-school activities or PM Extended Day	58	3%	
Bus picks up at our stop too early in the morning	32	2%	
Bus drops off at our stop too late in the afternoon	6	0%	
Bus ride to school is too long	14	1%	
Bus ride home is too long	9	0%	
Bus does not get to school on time	8	0%	
Bus stop is too far	23	1%	
Student has bulky items to carry	9	0%	
School is on the way to parent's/guardian's/other caregiver's workplace	22	1%	
Student does not want to ride bus	28	1%	
Difficult to get to bus stop on time	13	1%	
I am not comfortable with my student riding the bus	10	0%	

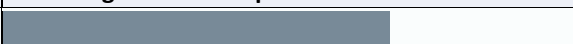



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Prefer to walk or bike	17	1%	
Other (Please specify)	32	2%	
(Did not answer)	1,874	93%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2,182</b>		




Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.








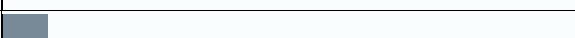
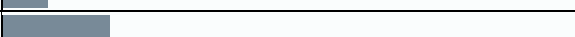
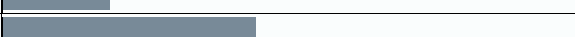

If your student does not ride the school bus, then how do they usually get to school?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Walk	213	11%	
Bike	20	1%	
Carpool	17	1%	
Public transit	8	0%	
Driven to school by parent/guardian/other caregiver	237	12%	
Drives themselves	29	1%	
Other (Please specify)	17	1%	
(Did not answer)	1,466	73%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2,007</b>		


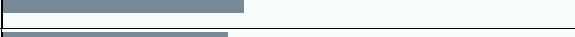




APS provides school buses for students who participate in after-school activities (sports, clubs) at two different times after school: the first is scheduled around 4:30 pm (some elementary schools are a little later) and the second one is scheduled around 6:30 pm. Does your student use one of these buses to get home from after-school activities, games or practices?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes – 4:30 pm	313	16%	
Yes – 6:30 pm	42	2%	
Yes – Other time	56	3%	
No	1,596	80%	
(Did not answer)	0	0%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2,007</b>		

Setting aside safety, which is always our top priority, please choose the top three elements of bus service that are most important to you when it comes to getting your student to and from school.			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Bus arrives to school on time	1,377	69%	
Bus ride is not too long	1,051	52%	
Bus does not pick up at our stop too early in the morning	777	39%	
Bus stop is within a 10-minute walk from	1,376	69%	

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my house			
Late buses are available for after school activities	569	28%	
Other (Please specify)	197	10%	
(Did not answer)	0	0%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>5,347</b>		
Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.			

Where do you see the greatest challenges and/or opportunities for improvement with the bus system?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Creating more efficient bus routes	944	47%	
Establishing bus stop locations	734	37%	
Bus driver training	464	23%	
Communication with families about bus services (eligibility; stops; routes)	871	43%	
Communication about any delays or other information specific to your student's bus	1,249	62%	
Transportation website	169	8%	
Customer service	373	19%	
Use of technology (e.g., Bus locator apps)	910	45%	
Integration with public transit system	362	18%	
Other (Please specify)	243	12%	
(Did not answer)	0	0%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>6,319</b>		
Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.			

Please check the top three criteria that are most important to you when locating a hub-style stop:			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Plenty of space in the bus waiting area for many students	861	43%	
Car parking availability nearby	812	40%	
Secure bike parking nearby (racks or other secure facility)	255	13%	
Hub stop is located within 1.5 miles of my home.	1,087	54%	
Bus pickup time is less than 40 minutes before bell-time (For farthest distances in County)	630	31%	
Bus trip takes less than 30-40 minutes to get to school (For farthest distances in	892	44%	

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County)			
No significant other activity at the location (e.g. at a school whose start time is the same as the bus pick-up time)	437	22%	
Other (Please specify)	242	12%	
(Did not answer)	0	0%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>5,216</b>		

Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

**To improve bus service efficiency, some school districts have students of different levels (elementary, middle, high) riding the same school buses if the schools are near one another and have similar start times. Would you support this practice for APS and, if so, which combinations of levels would you support?**

	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Elementary and middle school students together	429	21%	
Elementary, middle and high school students together	289	14%	
Middle and high school students together	669	33%	
Elementary and high school students together	161	8%	
I do not support this practice.	932	46%	
(Did not answer)	0	0%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2,480</b>		

Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.





**In partnership with Arlington County's Transit Bureau, APS is exploring the possibility of offering free transit passes to high school students so they can ride transit instead of the school bus. Rank which of these would be most important in your decision about having your high school student use transit instead of the school bus, with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least important.**





	1 = Most Important	2	3	4 = Least Important	Weighted Rank (Score)
Bus stops are within 10-minute walk from my home	808	427	351	271	1 (5486)
Bus stops are within a 10-minute walk from the school	280	788	516	273	2 (4789)
Schedules are aligned with bell times	434	316	576	531	3 (4367)
Buses come AT LEAST every 20 minutes around morning start time and dismissal time	335	326	414	782	4 (3928)
Did Not Answer					150
<b>Total Responses</b>					<b>2007</b>





APS Transportation Policy E-5 focuses on school bus services. For example, it defines how bus eligibility is determined and prioritizes the various types of transportation services APS provides (e.g., to/from school, field trips, after-school buses, etc.). It does not, however, include operational goals for the bus system. The following bus system goals have been proposed for inclusion in APS' Transportation Policy. Setting aside safety,


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which is always our primary goal, how would you rank the remaining goals (with 1 being the top priority)?						
	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Weighted Rank (Score)
Ensuring buses get to school on time	1263	442	176	73	53	1 (8810)
Limiting the length of the bus ride for students	462	951	342	129	123	2 (7521)
Ensuring buses are full, but not overcrowded	163	339	851	349	305	3 (5727)
Being good environmental stewards	62	170	332	629	814	4 (4058)
Being good financial stewards	57	105	306	827	712	5 (3989)
Did Not Answer						0
<b>Total Responses</b>						<b>2007</b>




As an APS parent/guardian, do you know where to go for information and questions about bus service, or to report problems?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	1,155	58%	
No	852	42%	
(Did not answer)	0	0%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2,007</b>		





As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to who is eligible for bus transportation?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	1621	81%	
No	364	18%	
(Did not answer)	22	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		





As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to how bus routes are developed?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	389	19%	
No	1594	79%	
(Did not answer)	24	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		





As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to how bus stops are established?			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	379	19%	




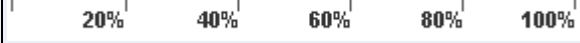
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No	1603	80%	
(Did not answer)	25	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		

<b>As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to how students are assigned to bus stops?</b>			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	686	34%	
No	1294	64%	
(Did not answer)	27	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		

<b>As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to expectations for student behavior on the bus?</b>			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	1510	75%	
No	476	24%	
(Did not answer)	21	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		





<b>As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to parent/guardian responsibility for getting students to/from bus stops?</b>			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	1497	75%	
No	484	24%	
(Did not answer)	26	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		

<b>As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to expectations for driver/attendant behavior on the bus?</b>			
	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	1020	51%	
No	960	48%	
(Did not answer)	27	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		





<b>As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to how to request special education transportation service?</b>			
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	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	483	24%	
No	1491	74%	
(Did not answer)	33	2%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		





**As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to how to access late buses?**

	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	640	32%	
No	1340	67%	
(Did not answer)	27	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		





**As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to when APS bus transportation is provided for athletic and extracurricular events?**

	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	635	32%	
No	1343	67%	
(Did not answer)	29	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		

**As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to when APS bus transportation is provided for field trips?**

	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	1188	59%	
No	792	39%	
(Did not answer)	27	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		

**As an APS parent/guardian, do you understand APS policy and procedures related to transportation options for students who become ill during the school day and must be sent home?**

	Responses	%	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	236	12%	
No	1745	87%	
(Did not answer)	26	1%	
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2007</b>		

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