



EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY

Transportation Update | January 2017

This year has been a challenge for many families in regards to bus transportation. The most frequent concerns include bus overcrowding, late buses, student behavior, and substitute driver competency.

Over Winter Break, we met with management of MTN to further develop ways to address these issues. Eagle Ridge Academy was able to recruit an additional driver; the additional driver and route will assist in timing consistency and overcrowding on the routes identified as having the greatest need.

New Route

We thank you for your patience in the lengthy driver recruitment process. The new route (Lavender) will relieve the congested population on the Gray Route as well as reduce the time students spend on the bus. In addition, the stop at the the Eden Prairie Mall will be moved from the Orange Route to the new route. This will improve the accuracy of the timing on the Orange Route. We anticipate the start date of the new route to be Wednesday, Jan. 25.

Please view the new route and time changes to the Gray, Lavender, and Orange Routes on the [Transportation Page](#) of The Academy's website using the password EagleRide1. New bus tags for the students moving to the Lavender Route will be issued the week of Jan. 17. Please check your child's back pack for a new bus tag. Students in grades K-5 should have their new bus tag attached to their back pack for the start of the new route on Jan. 25, and students in grades 6-12 should have their bus pass available for the driver to view upon boarding the bus. Any questions regarding the new route may be addressed to Karen Conner, kconner@eagleridgeacademy.org.

Student Behavior

This year the number of bus behavior reports per students are comparable to last year, yet we have received reports from families that the student behavior is worse than in the past. This is most likely because of the inconsistency in reporting student behavior. Thus, our Dean of Student, Mrs. Erin Johnson, will regularly review bus video to look for inappropriate student behavior on the bus even when not reported. When observed, students will be disciplined per bus behavior procedures.

Please know that it is not the bus drivers' primary responsibility to observe student behavior. I want our drivers to keep their eyes on the road, not on the students. Drivers will NOT observe all behavior. We rely on students to report the misbehavior to Mrs. Johnson at ejohnson@eagleridgeacademy.org. We believe the extra step of Mrs. Johnson viewing the video will help eliminate poor behaviors.

Bus GPS

Eagle Ridge Academy will begin piloting a GPS app, [Here Comes the Bus](#). The app allows parent to track the location of your child's bus. The fact is, buses will be late in the metro area, but the app gives families the information. This will decrease your reliance of calling the school or MTN for bus location. We will begin piloting the app on one route with a handful of families.



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Driver Concerns

We have shared and documented with MTN all driver concerns. Please know that MTN employs and supervises their drivers. Your first contact for any driver issues should be to Ms. Kari Mitchell at kmitchell@metrotn.com.

Route Change Request and Reporting Transportation Concerns

Beginning Jan. 20, we ask that you use our [Route Change Request](#) and [Report of Transportation Concerns](#) as the formal way to communicate these items. Reporting by email and or voice mail is not the most effective way. Mrs. Conner and I will review all data and requests received by via these forms on a weekly basis. You may still use phone or email if there is an urgent need or emergency.

We appreciate your continued feedback and encourage you to seek answers through the school. As we look toward the 2017-2018 School Year, ERA will be changing our approach to gathering information for routing. The new process will be communicated this spring, and we believe the new process will help alleviate some of our current missteps.

Sincerely,
Jason Ulbrich