



2020-2021 Student Transportation ✓ Planning Checklist

What You Should Consider When Planning for ‘The New Normal’

Reopening schools in ‘the new normal’ brings with it a lot of uncertainty. Each district must plot a course towards this fall, taking guidance from the CDC and state guidelines, while balancing unique needs and regional priorities.

With various social distancing measures influencing school operations for the 2020-2021 school year, there are **many new considerations** — and **old issues that may be exacerbated** — in transportation planning for next year.

Here is a checklist of key considerations to keep in mind as you create your student transportation plan for a post-COVID back to school.

Teams To Share Checklist With: Student Support Services Transportation & Operations Special Education

What To Consider If:

Your district moves to a blended learning model, alternating schedules, longer school year with extended breaks, or another way to approach the school calendar.

Many districts are proposing different learning models and schedules in order to ensure safe social distancing. These options, which include staggering student start and stop times or attendance days, hybrid learning models and/or a year-round schedule, will require flexible and robust student transportation services to supplement trips that may be inefficient for a bus to make — especially as buses move to less students per trip.

✓ In all scenarios, including a return to a pre-COVID schedule:

- The economic instability of the past few months ensures a significant increase in McKinney-Vento students. You will be supporting a larger-than-usual population of McKinney-Vento students in the beginning of the year.

✓ If you move to a hybrid learning model:

- Small groups of students will need to be moved between the main campus and satellite locations.
- Students may balance distance and classroom learning, needing transportation mid-day or on alternating days.

✓ If you move to a modified or staggered schedule:

- Smaller groups of students will be making more frequent trips. With staggered start times - plan to pick up and drop off students when there is overlap.
- High-needs populations (students designated McKinney-Vento, foster, in students with IEPs or ELL) will likely remain on a full-day schedule. You will need to support their needs in addition to the staggered general education start and end times.
- In addition, student needs may shift if they're having a difficult time with a particular lesson or content area; they may come in more often during that time, temporarily changing their route times.

✓ If you extend your school year:

- Driving year round puts more stress on your fleet and bus drivers. You may need to recruit and hire more drivers.
- Fleet vehicles may need repair or maintenance during the school year. You will need to shift maintenance time to school breaks.
- You will need to ensure your bus drivers are willing to commit to a year-round schedule.



What To Consider If:

Your district continues distance learning for the 2020-2021 school year.

- Meal services will continue — you will need to create a plan for getting students to meal distribution centers or delivering food to their houses.
- You will need to deliver education technology to students, and swap devices when they need repairs or updating.
- You may need to deliver physical education resources.

More Considerations:

COVID-related student transportation challenges, regardless of what the 2020-2021 school year looks like.

The CDC guidelines for reopening schools recommend only one child to a bus seat and skipping bus rows. Depending on your district, your fleet may accommodate far less students per route.

- If your district requires students to spread out on buses or in vans, you will need to balance the new capacity with a greater frequency of trips.
- Create guidelines and communicate them to students and parents.
- Find ways to support children who don't stay in their seat on the bus, or otherwise find it difficult to practice social distancing.
- Create cleaning and disinfecting protocols between each trip, adding the time into each route.
- Create a plan to support immunocompromised children who may need a transportation solution where they're not exposed to other children.
- Calculate if your current fleet can handle new demands and what you will need to supplement with other transportation solutions.
- ✓ **Considerations with current bus driver shortages:**
 - Ensure drivers are willing, and healthy enough, to be exposed to great numbers of children a day.
 - Ensure drivers comply with mask and PPE regulations (if your district requires it).
 - Create a plan for hiring/recruiting more drivers if you lose drivers to the above reasons, as well as what you can do if bus drivers call out sick or shortages spike.

That's a lot to consider! HopSkipDrive can partner with you to help.

We're the **safe, reliable student transportation solution** for schools, districts, counties and more.

HopSkipDrive **complements** traditional student transportation with a cost-efficient, flexible way to meet **alternative or non-routine** transportation needs, or provide necessary capacity under new social distancing guidelines.

Our tech-enabled, easy-to-use solution connects schools and districts who need rides with a **highly-vetted network of CareDrivers**. A dynamic driver supply grows with your needs and rides are always guaranteed.

For example, we can fill in when it's not efficient to use a bus for smaller groups, if you need help with frequent trips, if you have students with shifting needs, when immunocompromised students need a little extra care, and much more.

In addition, our **COVID-Safe Ride Standards** are the most stringent in the industry. Our standards include differentiators like plastic dividers between CareDrivers and riders and anonymous COVID-19 exposure reporting to help you proactively manage any COVID-19 cases.

We're more than just a vendor; HopSkipDrive also offers consulting and solutions packages to help you plan and coordinate student transportation. Work with our team of experts who are education leaders with deep experience leading schools, designing new school models and leading innovation in student transportation.

