

Guide to Private Bus Service LCCS School Community



January 2017

Overview of Private Bus Program

The LCCS community-led bus program began operation in the fall of 2009 as a privately run service. The bus program was offered to all LCCS students on a first-come, first serve basis. There is a finite capacity based upon the number of buses contracted by the program. The bus program aims to serve five simple objectives:

- 1) Safe travel to and from the school for student members of the bus program
- 2) Timely and orderly transportation both to and from school in reasonable timeframe
- 3) Affordable, reliable bus service to all paying members of the bus community
- 4) Reasonable pickup/drop off locations to suit the needs of our diverse bus community
- 5) Sufficient capacity and flexibility to serve the needs of the entire LCCS bus community

Bus Service Provider: Quest Transportation – a local bus company out of Jersey City. Quest provides several other school communities with bus service and will be providing the private bus service for LCCS during this school year.

2016-17 Bus Costs: **TO BE DETERMINED ***

*Note – the 2015-16 was \$1722 per child (or about \$9.57 per day). The Bus Committee negotiated a new rate for 2014-2015 year of \$9/ per school day totaling ~\$1,620. Once we've confirmed the # of riders and bus capacity for next year, we will confirm the final price for the 2016-17 school year.

This price includes the following:

- √ Round trip bus service from designated bus stops to/from LCCS
 - 180 school days (174 full days and 6 half-days)
 - Bus service runs from September – June (aligned with the normal LCCS school calendar)
- √ Dedicated and professional bus team (Bus driver and Safety assistant per bus) – employees are fully licensed and insured, and have completed full background checks
- √ Standardized bus safety and dispatch procedures (drop off and pick up rosters, bus protocol/rules, etc.)

√ Increased capacity and flexibility for early and late dismissal bus routes

Morning Routes (children must get to LCCS before 8:20 am)

- Bus 101
- Bus 202

Early (3:30 PM) Dismissal Routes

- Bus 101 (same stops as morning route)
- Bus 202 (same stops as morning route)

Late (5:45 PM) Dismissal Route

- Bus 303

Important note: The bus route schedule may need to be adjusted to accommodate when the Think Tank schedules change (every 12 weeks). We will try to minimize disruptions as much as possible and will notify parents in advance.

Payments can be submitted via personal check, cashier's check or money order and sent to the following address:

LCCS Transportation Committee
P.O. Box 13094
Jersey City, NJ 07303

Please make payments out to the “LCCS Transportation Committee”. DO NOT submit payments with your child to school. Do not make payments directly to LCCS since this is a privately run bus service.

Payments can also be made by credit card via PayPal account on the LCCS website by clicking here: http://www.lccsnj.org/for_parents/transportation

An additional service charge of ~ 3% rounded to the nearest dollar will be added to the total payment. The ~3% service charge is the PayPal service charge for processing payments through their system.

Penalties for Non-payment

Situation	Action
5 days past due	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1st Reminder letter sent to parent
10 days past due	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2nd and final reminder letter sent to parent
15+ days past due	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letter will be sent to parents to advise that:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Child will be not be allowed to ride bus○ Parent will forfeit all payments made○ Parent will be given 5 business days to make alternative arrangements

Refunds

The bus pricing is highly dependent on the number of bus riders. Once the pricing is communicated and students sign up for the service, we do not have flexibility with

issuing refunds due to the impact this will have on the overall price. Therefore, we will not be able to issue refunds after you've signed up for the bus service or during the school year.

Morning Bus Pick-Up Procedures

- Each bus route will have a published schedule. Quest will do their best to adhere to the schedule
- Children will be picked up each morning at their assigned bus stop.
- **2 MINUTE RULE!** Drivers will wait for 2 minutes after the posted schedule time for latecomers
- If student misses the morning bus, parent must transport them to school
 - Parent can attempt to drop child at next bus stop, loading will be permitted.
- Should the bus arrive before the scheduled time the bus driver will wait until all children on the roster for that stop are loaded or until 2 minutes past the scheduled time.

Afternoon Bus Drop-Off Procedures

- Each bus route will have a schedule. Quest will do their best to adhere to the schedule for the afternoon drop-offs (given the variations of the # of riders due to different children's afternoon schedules)
- Children will be dropped off each afternoon at their assigned bus stop.
- Students with signed parental consent form may walk home unattended
- **2 MINUTE RULE!** Drivers will wait for approximately 2 minutes for latecomer parents/guardian
- Following the 2 minutes grace period the following procedure will be followed:
 - 3:30pm bus route
 - If bus buddy has permission from the parent to take the child, driver will drop off child with bus buddy
 - For Middle School students whose parents have chosen to sign the consent form: If parent is not at the bus stop their child will be allowed to walk home unattended.
 - Note: Quest Transportation will maintain the lists indicating which students have a consent form on file
 - Driver will proceed to the next bus stop (parents may pick up child at next bus stop)
 - If child is not picked up before the route is concluded the child will be dropped off at LCCS and parent is responsible to pick up

child at school. The bus driver will NOT be allowed to come back to your stop if you were late.

- **Parent will be charged a \$35 bus service fee for return of child to school. The parent will also be charged daily Think Tank fee for any child returned to school.**
- 5:45pm bus route
 - If bus buddy has permission from the parent to take the child, driver will drop off child with bus buddy
 - For Middle School students whose parents have chosen to sign the consent form: If parent is not at the bus stop their child will be allowed to walk home unattended.
 - Note: Quest Transportation will maintain the lists indicating which students have a consent form on file
 - Driver will proceed to the next bus stop (parents may pick up child at next bus stop)
 - If the child has not been picked up at the conclusion of the route, the bus driver will return one last time to the child's regular bus stop. **A \$10 bus service fee will be charged for this return stop.**
 - If the child is not picked up at this return stop within 2 minutes of arrival the bus driver will proceed to the Jersey City Police Station at 8 Erie Street, Jersey City, NJ and drop off the child at the station. The bus driver will NOT be allowed to come back to your stop if you were late.
 - **Parents will be charged a \$35 bus service fee for the drop off of a child at the Jersey City Police Station**
 - A warning letter will be issued for the first absent pick up
 - A final warning letter will be issued for the 2nd absent pick up
 - If a third absent pick occurs the child will no longer be allowed to ride the bus. No refunds will be available should a child be removed from the bus roster due to absent pick-ups.

New Bus Riding Policy for Pre-K Riders

Now that LCCS added Pre-K program to the regular K-8 classes, we are happy to extend LCCS Bus service to new Pre-K students. The following are the guidelines specific to the Pre-K riders:

- All Pre-K students are allowed to use the Bus Service, whether or not they have older siblings signed up to the service.
- Pre-K students are required to get on and get off the bus before everybody else.
- Pre-K students are required to be seated in the front row close to the bus aid. This is needed to make it easier for the bus aid to supervise the young riders and insure their safety.
- A school administrator will be assigned to meet pre-K students at the bus stop and walk them to their class rooms.

Bus Conduct Expectations

Because school bus passengers' behavior can directly affect their safety and the safety of others, the following regulations apply at all times when students are riding a school bus.

1. Riders shall follow the instructions and directions of the bus driver and bus attendant at all times. The bus attendant if needed for disciplinary reasons can assign a seat to a student.
2. Riders shall remain seated at all times with their seatbelt while the bus is in motion and shall not obstruct the aisle with their legs, feet, or other objects. When reaching their destination, riders shall remain seated until the bus stops and only then enter the aisle and go directly to the exit.
3. Because serious safety hazards can result from noise or behavior that distracts the driver, loud talking, using inappropriate language, yelling, singing, whistling, scuffling, throwing objects, eating, drinking, standing and changing seats are prohibited actions which may lead to suspension of riding privileges.
4. Riders should be courteous to the driver, bus attendant and to fellow passengers.
5. Riders shall help keep the bus and the area around the bus stop clean. Riders shall not damage or deface the bus or tamper with bus equipment.

Written bus "warnings"

Bus warnings can be written by the bus attendant when any of the above rules or regulations are broken. Bus warnings are given to a parent to address child misbehavior and re-enforce the rules. Depending on the seriousness of misconduct, the warnings may be submitted to school and/or committee for disciplinary action. Disciplinary action could result in assigned seating, suspension from bus or permanent removal from bus riding privileges.

Switch from Late 5:30pm Bus to After-School Bus - Procedure Update

Effective 3/24/2014, you will have the flexibility of switching your child from late 5:30pm bus to 3:30pm bus or 12:30pm bus on half days due to family emergency, doctor appointments etc. Please limit to two (2) requests per family per Think Tank Session. Your request should be submitted in writing not later than 3 days before the requested day. Any additional requests exceeding 2 permitted requests per Think Tank session will be handled by school administration on a case-by-case basis depending on a family emergency situation.

Please note you will not be able to switch from regular 3:30pm bus to late 5:30pm bus due to safety concerns; the procedure change only applies to the route switch and not the bus stop.

In order to request a switch, please send an e-mail with your request to school administrators charlotte-kreutz@lccsnj.org, ada-culbreth@lccsnj.org, danielle-robinson@lccsnj.org and copy lccsbusgroup. The request is considered granted upon confirmation from school. Please follow the e-mail template to ensure all details have been included in the request.

If you have any questions – please feel free to email the bus committee at: lccsbusgroup@googlegroups.com.

Regards,

LCCS Bus Committee

Email Template for Change from 5:30 pm Late Bus to 3:30 pm After-School Bus *

Instructions: This form must be sent via email 3 days before the requested day only to all the recipients below. No deviations from the student(s) regular route and bus stop. All fields in the body of the email MUST be completed. Note - This form can only be used for a one day switch. If you wish for more than one day, you will need to send multiple emails.

Send email to: charlotte-kreutz@lccsnj.org, ada-culbreth@lccsnj.org, danielle-robinson@lccsnj.org, lccsbusgroup@googlegroups.com

Subject: Request for change from 5:30 pm Bus to 3:30 pm After-School Bus for [Student(s) Names]

----- Body of email -----

Today's date:

From: (Parent/Guardian's name)

Mobile/daytime phone number:

Date of Bus Change:

First Student's Name:

First Student's Grade and Homeroom Teacher:

Second Student's Name:

Second Student's Grade and Homeroom Teacher:

Student(s) Regular Bus Route (either 101 or 201):

Student(s) Regular Stop:

Individual picking up student(s):

Mobile/daytime phone number:

Backup/Emergency contact:

Mobile/daytime phone number:

I agree to have my child/children take the 3:30 bus (12:30 pm on early dismissal days). I confirm that either a parent or authorized caretaker will be present at the bus stop to pick up the child/children. I understand that if no one is at the bus stop to pick up the student(s), the student(s) will be taken back to LCCS for the parents to pick up at the school. **

* 12:30 pm on early dismissal days

** Students with signed parental consent form may walk home unattended.

Important Tips

Communicate with the main office! – Make sure you call, email or send a note with your child when your plans change. If your child will not be on the afternoon bus, please notify school (Ada Culbreth) at the main office on the day of the change, before 1:30 pm – Ada-Culbreth@lccsnj.org or (201)332-0900 ext.10 leave a message if it goes to voicemail. DO NOT EMAIL THE BUS GROUP.

Involve Your Child! – Make sure your child knows if he/she is on the bus every day. This will help remind them where they are supposed to be when the bus is ready to be boarded.

Bus Buddies! - All families are strongly urged to establish a bus buddy system for afternoon drop off. Bus buddies are 2-3 families who share cell phone numbers and are willing to receive a call from one another in the **rare** emergencies that they have been

delayed by auto or public transportation traffic and will miss pick up of their child. Adult bus buddies can agree to take the child home until the parent arrives.

Important contacts

Situation	Contact:
Emergency/Unforeseen Illness/Work or Family Crisis - and you need to change your child's bus schedule because of this	(201) 332-0900 – extension 10 to speak to Ada Culbreth
You've been delayed by work/traffic, etc. and may miss the pick-up of your child at the bus stop	Your bus buddy cell phone #
You want to provide feedback regarding the bus service or have any questions	Email: lccsbusgroup@googlegroups.com A member of the LCCS Bus Committee will be monitoring this email account and will respond to your email.

Feedback/Suggestions:

If you have feedback on the bus service, please let us know! Please email the bus committee at lccsbusgroup@googlegroups.com directly.

Frequently asked questions

- 1) *Can my child ride the bus 1-way only?*
 - Yes, your child may ride the bus 1-way. However, bus service is available only as a one price package. Given the number of riders we have and the capacity of the buses, one price package is the only way to keep the bus price reasonable. By paying the package price, it will also give you the flexibility of moving to 2-way if needed.
- 2) *How long will my child be on the bus typically?*
 - The length of each child's ride will vary depending on your bus route and your specific stop. However the LCCS Bus Committee has worked hard to try and ensure that no child will typically be on the bus for more than one hour.
- 3) *Who runs the bus service for LCCS?*
 - The bus service is managed by the LCCS Bus Committee a group of parent volunteers. The LCCS Bus Committee is committed to meeting the objectives as outlined in Section 1 above. Please contact the lccsbusgroup@googlegroups.com if you have any questions.
- 4) *Who is the company we contract bus service with?*
 - The company under contract is Quest Transportation
- 5) *How was the price of the bus calculated?*
 - The price of the bus per child was calculated to make it equitable for all LCCS students. The total cost of the full bus service is divided by the number of students riding for a per rider cost.
- 6) *How many bus routes are there in total?*
 - Three routes that have been called Route 101, Route 202 and Route 303.
- 7) *Can I change my child's bus schedule when I enroll in the next session of THINK TANK day(s)?*
 - Yes. The bus committee will be working with Charlotte (Think Tank Coordinator) to adjust the bus schedules as needed. This would be considered a "permanent" bus change for the new THINK TANK season. Please make every effort to finalize your THINK TANK sign-ups as early as possible so that we can plan ahead of time. New afternoon bus routes will be communicated if changes need to occur.
- 8) *Can I change my child's bus schedule if a THINK TANK day is cancelled?*

- If a THINK TANK club is cancelled permanently for that session, you will be allowed to make a permanent change to your child's bus schedule. You must notify (new hire name) at the main office if you will no longer be sending your child to THINK TANK because of a cancelled club.
- 9) *If my child has a doctor appointment etc. can he take 3 pm bus on a particular day instead of 5:30 (or vice versa – switch from 5:30 to 3 pm bus)?*
- Yes, a new procedure has been implemented on 3/17/2014 that allows you to make a switch from 5:30 to 3 pm. Please limit to two (2) requests per family per Think Tank Session.
 - The switches from 3pm to 5:30 pm have to be pre- approved by Charlotte Kreutz.
- 10) *Why are there limited stops on the 5:30 bus route?*
- In order to control costs and ensure that children are not on the bus for more than 1 hour, we had to combine the two bus routes (101 and 202) into a consolidated 5:30 route. When determining the combined bus route stops, the # of riders per stop was the main factor to minimize disruption to the majority (i.e. if one stop had 10 riders vs. another stop with 1 rider, we chose the stop with 10 riders as the combined stop). In addition, where it was convenient, we tried to make a new stop that was in between 2 morning stops (i.e. so that the combined stop was $\frac{1}{2}$ way in between the 2 morning stops so as to minimize disruption).