

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Please see these **IMPORTANT UPDATES IN CONSIDERATION OF THE COVID-19 IMPACTS to bus transportation**. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused such a disruption into everyone's lives, that we felt it was important to make some changes to our normal procedures for bus registration. Please note that as the situation with COVID-19 continues to change, we may make further changes and you will be notified.

- We do not yet know what bus transportation will look like when we return to school. We are waiting on further guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. However, this guidance will likely not be available until late-July or later, as it will be based on the conditions of COVID-19 at that time. What we do know is that there are likely to be adjustments to how we operate school bus transportation. This will likely include wearing masks, and may include assigned seating and use of social distancing on the buses.
- **NEW THIS YEAR - EVERY student in grades K-12 who needs to ride the bus to/from any of the Franklin Public Schools or the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School MUST be registered, even if they receive free transportation due to distance or a Free/Reduced meal eligibility waiver. Students in grades K-6 in excess of 2.0 miles will not be charged a fee. If you are unsure of any fee due, please visit [Unipay's website linked here](#)**
- We recognize you may have difficulty deciding whether or not your student will ride the bus based on the current uncertain circumstances, however, we encourage you to sign up if you think your student might need to ride and wait to make any payment until you are sure that your student will ride.
- Parents/guardians must register their student(s) via this [google form](#) by July 24, 2020, but will not have to complete their payment(s) until August 31, 2020. Please plan accordingly. You will need your student's ID number to register. Likely, your student may know it, however, **for newly registered students**, a separate email will be sent with this information. You may also reach out via email to your school secretary or contact Denise Johnson at [johnsonde@franklinps.net](mailto:johnsonde@franklinps.net).
- The School Committee set the rate this year at the reduced fee of \$325.00 per student with a three student cap. Parents/Guardians who are required to pay a bus fee for their student(s) **must** use the online UniBank payment method.
- **There will be no walk-ins or paper registrations accepted - No cash, checks or money orders will be accepted.** If you are using your checking account information (routing number and account number), there is a \$0.25 processing fee. If you are using a debit or credit card, there will be a processing fee according to the rates provided on the UniPay website. The current fees posted by UniBank start at \$10.00 for those paying by credit card. The larger fee for credit and debit cards is because those transactions flow through the credit card companies (Mastercard, Discover, and American Express). **Again, we have extended the**

window for payments to be made through August 31, 2020, so if you are unsure of your busing needs, please wait to make payment.

- UniPay allows for multiple smaller payments to be made for bus fees. With this option, parents/guardians can sign up to make recurring payments. Each transaction will charge only a \$0.25 transaction fee. The full \$325 must be paid prior to the issuance of a bus pass.
- Bus passes will be available for pick up at your student's school the week of August 24, 2020.
- Bus routes will be posted on or about August 17, 2020.
- Bus routes are subject to change at any time.

Please direct any questions about bus registration to me or to Denise Johnson at johnsonde@franklinps.net, or call (508) 553-4815. Voicemails are being routed to email and your call will be returned as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Franklin Public Schools  
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