

MEMORANDUM

To: Administrators - Grades 6-12

CC: Senior Administration Team
Adrian Alleyne, Manager of Communications
Jennifer Ginter, Product Support Analyst
Cassie Skrypnyk, Records Officer
Martin Monette, Director of Transportation
Consultants
Lindsay Lawrence, Director of Student Services

From: Jón Olafson, Assistant Superintendent – Student Services

Date: August 28, 2026

Re: Winnipeg Transit Bus Passes Information

The Government of Manitoba is partnering with the City of Winnipeg to provide free transit services to youth. Students will be able to access passes through their school as part of a staged roll-out beginning the first week of the 2026-27 school year. Passes are available to be distributed to students in grades 7 to 12 (stages outlined by grade below). Passes will also be available on request for students in grade 6.

Number of passes

The number of passes a school division will be allocated has been determined based on 85% of enrolment. This allocation reflects the expectation that not all eligible students will require or request a pass; however, all students who require or request a pass are eligible to receive one.

Distribution

The department of Education and Early Childhood Learning will distribute passes to schools directly. Schools will distribute passes to students over the course of the first four weeks of school in September 2026 according to the following schedule:

- September 8, 2026: Grades 11 and 12
- September 23, 2026: Grades 9 and 10
- September 29, 2026: Grades 6, 7 and 8

Schools may distribute passes to students in grades 6 to 12, outside the above-noted phased rollout, based on the needs of their students. Schools may determine where passes are available in schools, such as in the main office and in homeroom classrooms.

Wallets/sleeves will also be distributed to schools and will be shipped separate from passes in the coming weeks. These wallets/sleeves are intended to be helpful for students to have easy access to both the transit pass and student ID. Please let students know that wallets/sleeves will be available and use of these is encouraged to protect passes from damage.

Replacement passes

Replacement passes may be distributed to students, but only after the full rollout of passes has been completed, after October 1, 2026. Managing pass replacements carefully during the initial rollout will help the department and school divisions better understand the demand for replacement passes and inform the development of a longer-term replacement pass policy. To help keep the program within divisional allotments and support this evaluation, schools are encouraged to minimize the number of replacement passes issued. We ask that schools emphasize to students the importance of not losing their pass, especially in instances where a student has previously lost one or more passes.

Reporting

The department will be tracking the number of passes distributed and will share this information with the City of Winnipeg as part of the ongoing evaluation of the pilot project. Divisions will be required to provide weekly and monthly reports that contain the number of passes distributed to students and replacement passes issued, by school.

Data collection for this project will be coordinated divisionally. Reporting templates and timelines for schools will be shared in the coming week.

General information

- Passes are valid for a full year and will expire on August 31, 2027.
- Student IDs will not be required for students in grades 6 to 9.
- Students in grades 10 to 12 should carry their pass and student ID together in the wallet/sleeve provided.
- Passes issued to students are not transferable and are for the student's use only.
- As per current Winnipeg Transit policy, children aged 11 and under are able to ride for free when accompanied by a fare-paying customer.
- Additional communication to the public about this initiative, including communication to families from school divisions, will take place on (or shortly after) September 1, 2026.
- Thank you for your cooperation and support of this important initiative.

A brief information meeting for principals will take place September 2, 2026, from 1:30-2:00pm on Teams. Calendar invite to follow.

This memo can be found on:

- ***the GAM TEAMS site under Assistant Superintendent Student Services file>Memos 2026-2027***