

# Austin Peace Academy

Nationally Accredited Islamic School

## **SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM**

August 08, 2007

Dear Parent:

*Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu!*

In December 2006, APA conducted a survey amongst all parents to explore the feasibility of a school-provided transportation system beginning the 2007-08 academic year to serve the needs of the growing Austin Muslim community. Following an overwhelmingly positive response to a school bus service, APA School Board started working actively on this ambitious project.

***Alhumdu lillah***, we are pleased to announce that the much-awaited school transportation will become a reality during the coming academic year. APA has entered into an agreement with Durham School Services, a nationally recognized company that has been in the business of school transportation for fifty years, to provide transportation for our students.

### **APA Bus Service – North Austin Route**

*Insha Allah*, the first phase of the program will begin on August 13, 2007, with one bus serving students living in the northern parts of the city. The bus route and timings were developed in coordination with the bus company, taking into consideration our school start and end times, as well as traffic pattern. The selection of the bus stops was based on home addresses of participating students. Student pickup and drop off will be at the same location.

**The bus routing will consist of four pickup/drop off points as given below. Please be advised that the timing and order of the route may change, if necessary, after start of the bus program to optimize service.**

#### **Morning Bus Schedule**

6:45 AM	Louis Henna Blvd/A.W. Grimes stop (Walgreens Parking Lot)
7:00 AM	Parmer Ln/Avery Ranch stop (CVS Parking Lot)
7:10 AM	Parmer Ln/Amherst stop (Walgreens Parking Lot)
7:20 AM	Parmer Ln/Metric Blvd. stop (Ryans Parking Lot - Behind 1 <sup>st</sup> National Bank)
7:30 AM	Parmer Ln/Harris Ridge Blvd. (Walgreens Parking Lot)
7:50 AM	Bus arrives at APA

## **Afternoon Bus Schedule**

3:25 PM	Bus leaves APA
3:40 PM	Parmer Ln/Harris Ridge Blvd. (Walgreens Parking Lot)
3:50 PM	Parmer Ln/Metric Blvd. stop (Ryans Parking Lot - Behind 1 <sup>st</sup> National Bank)
4:00 PM	Parmer Ln/Ganymede (Near Parmer/Amherst)
4:10 PM	Parmer Ln/Avery Ranch stop (CVS Parking Lot)
4:25 PM	Louis Henna Blvd/A.W. Grimes stop (Walgreens Parking Lot)

When the bus arrives at the bus stop, students must be present at the stop at that time. **Under no circumstances will the bus wait extra time for any student at the bus stops.**

Since the bus arrival times could be affected by traffic, accidents, etc., we advise that you be present at your designated bus stop a few minutes prior to the scheduled bus time.

## **Program Cost**

The fee per student will be \$100 per calendar month. For a first sibling, we will offer a discount of \$50; for second and additional siblings, there will be a discount of \$75. APA is offering a highly competitive rate for the students; it is indeed subsidizing the bus service, particularly considering the deep discount offered to siblings. This fee structure is very reasonable, considering the cost of gasoline, vehicle depreciation, time spent driving to school, etc.

Given below is a summary of the fee structure.

One child:	\$100
Two children:	\$150
Three or more children:	\$175

Please note that payment for the bus must be made in advance and is non-refundable. Payment must be made at the school office before the first school day of every month.

## **Bus Registration**

Till date, 26 students have signed up for the bus. Please be advised that **seats are limited** and are available only on a First Come First Serve basis. Therefore we urge you to reserve a seat by signing up for the bus service by completing the attached Bus Registration Form as soon as possible.

## **Parent – Bus Company Meeting**

During the Parent Orientation Day on Saturday August 11<sup>th</sup>, Fred Martinez, Regional Vice President, Durham School Services, will introduce the bus service and answer questions.

## **Additional Bus Route(s)**

Following this initial phase, we will rollout similar programs to service southern parts of the city as it becomes feasible, *Insha Allah*.

Enclosed are Important Information about APA Bus Program, APA-Parent School Bus Agreement, Bus Registration Form, and Details about Durham School Services.

Should you have additional questions about the school bus program, please contact APA office at (512) 926-1737.

We believe that the school transportation system will greatly benefit our current students in addition to enhancing the value of APA to the fast growing Austin Muslim community. We greatly value your comments and suggestions, and thank you for your continued support of Austin Peace Academy.

*Wassalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu*

Sincerely,

**APA School Board**

[apa\\_board@yahoo.com](mailto:apa_board@yahoo.com)

# Austin Peace Academy

## Nationally Accredited Islamic School

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT APA BUS PROGRAM**

- Participating parents must sign the APA-Parent School Bus Agreement FOR EACH CHILD taking the school bus.
- Students who are not signed up for the bus service are NOT ALLOWED to take the school bus on a 'daily' basis since they need to be pre-registered for the bus service, with the names of authorized persons for pickup of the student(s), on file with APA and Durham.
- A parent or a teacher may use the school bus, but only on a 'seat availability basis'. There will be a nominal fee of \$5.00 per person one way.
- Parents (or authorized persons) of students who will use the bus service must remain with their child(ren) until they board the bus in the mornings and be present at the designated stops when the bus arrives in the afternoon.
- If a parent or an authorized person is not present at the bus stop to receive the child, the child will be taken to Durham's central office located at 2101 Crystal Bend Drive, Pflugerville. There will be an hourly charge for custody of the child. It is important that the parent or an authorized person be present at the bus stop to receive the child.
- When the bus arrives at the bus stop, all students must be present at that time at the stop. **Under no circumstances will the bus wait extra time for any student at any of the bus stops.**
- If a student misses the bus at his/her bus stop, he/she can board the bus at the next scheduled bus stop.
- We plan to have adult supervision (an APA teacher, parent, or volunteer) on the bus to monitor the students who use the bus service. However, such arrangement cannot be guaranteed.
- Boys and girls will be seated in separate rows, preferably on opposite sides of the center aisle.
- While Durham cannot guarantee a female bus driver, as per our request Durham will make every effort to provide a female driver.
- Students using the bus will be held to the disciplinary policies of APA when inside the bus as well. Any student violating the disciplinary standards will be prohibited from using the bus service.
- If the bus arrives late at school, students taking the bus on that day will NOT get a 'tardy' attendance.
- The bus service is very economical for parents. Even if a parent drives to school daily only for either drop off at mornings or pickup at afternoons, we estimate the cost of gasoline alone will be more than \$100. This is excluding car mileage and depreciation, time spent driving to and from school, etc. (*Driving approximately 15 miles one way, monthly gasoline cost will be approximately \$100. Assumptions: 20 school days/month; 30 miles/day; \$3.00/gallon; 20 miles/gallon efficiency*).

# Austin Peace Academy

## Nationally Accredited Islamic School

### **APA – PARENT SCHOOL BUS AGREEMENT**

I fully acknowledge that Austin Peace Academy is offering the school bus program solely on a non-profit basis, and only as a convenience to its students. I understand that Durham School Services is responsible for the safe transport of the students and carries all applicable liability coverage.

I hereby indemnify Austin Peace Academy and its administrators, staff, officers, and volunteers from any and all liabilities that might arise from use of the school bus service, including but not limited to, during transport on the bus and at the pickup/dropoff points.

---

Student Name

---

Parent Name

---

Date

# Austin Peace Academy

Nationally Accredited Islamic School

## BUS REGISTRATION FORM

Name of Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Student(s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Bus Stops

Desired Bus Stop: 1<sup>st</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

- (1) Loius Henna & A.W. Grimes
- (2) Parmer Lane & Avery Ranch
- (3) Parmer Lane & Amherst
- (4) Parmer Lane & Metric Blvd.
- (5) Parmer Lane & Harris Ridge Blvd

Registration Fees: 1 child \_\_\_\_\_ \$100      2 children \_\_\_\_\_ \$150      3 or more children \_\_\_\_\_ \$175

Authorized pickup person(s) at the drop off location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Relationship Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_ Name Relationship Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_ Name Relationship Phone Number

## **DETAILS ABOUT DURHAM SCHOOL SERVICES**

### **❖ How long has Durham School Services been in service?**

Durham is a nationally recognized company that has been in the business of school transportation for 50 years. Visit [www.durhamschoolservices.com](http://www.durhamschoolservices.com) for information on Durham School Services.

### **❖ What criteria does Durham use to hire its drivers?**

- Driver applicants must disclose at least 10 years employment history.
- Criminal background checks (no felony record or pattern of misdemeanors, or crimes of “moral turpitude”).
- Motor vehicle Record check (no DUI, no serious violations, not more than two moving violations in 36 months, not more than 2 vehicle accidents in 36 months).
- Must pass and achieve a “Recommended” score on an Employee Safety Inventory test that evaluates safety “attitude” before a driver applicant can be interviewed. If the applicant fails the safety Inventory, they cannot be hired as a driver and must wait at least 6 months before reapplying.
- 20 hours of classroom training, 16 hours of behind-the-wheel training.
- No Commercial Driver license required. Durham will train, certify and assure the passing of state testing and are issued a Class B “CDL” and receive a “Passenger” and “Student” endorsement required by the state to transport school children.
- Previous employment reference checks must be positive.
- Department of transportation reference/inquiry must reveal no drug/alcohol testing failures or no “DOT” accidents on record.

### **❖ How does Durham ensure that their Drivers are safe?**

- Safety exceeds all other considerations at Durham School services.
- Any accident that may result in at least \$1.00 in damage must be reported.
- Failure to report an accident is cause for immediate termination.
- Intense Safety training sessions during training are conducted for new-hires.
- Durham maintains a Safety Training Supervisor, Safety Trainers and an Operations Supervisor on site, full-time to monitor, pursue and correct any safety issues.
- Monthly safety meetings are conducted at which attendance is mandatory for all Drivers.
- Drivers are required to inspect the bus before and after each trip to ensure the bus is safe to operate. Certain items that do not pass inspection will “ground” the bus out of service and replacement will be issued.
- Durham has a low tolerance for accidents. Any single accident, depending on the degree of severity, negligence, or injury involved could result in termination.
- Durham retrain all drivers who have been involved in an accident, regardless how minor or whether it is a “preventable” or “non-preventable accident”.
- All injury or incidents involving students or any passenger must be reported immediately via the radio for assistance and investigation. Failure to report an injury or incident that could result in injury is cause for immediate termination.
- All drivers must be certified by a physician and must pass a DOT physical examination and be issued a DOT “Medical Card” to be eligible to drive.
- Durham conducts pre-employment, random, post-accident, reasonable suspicion and Random drug and/or alcohol testing for all drivers, Aides and management personnel.
- Failure of any of the above tests result in immediate termination and referral to a Substance Abuse Professional.

❖ **Are the drivers periodically tested?**

Yes, in addition to drug/alcohol testing, all drivers must maintain all licensing, certifications and license endorsement to be eligible to drive.

❖ **Can Durham refuse to transport any student for any reason such as disciplinary issues?**

Yes, repeated behavioral or safety violations by students will result in “suspension” from bus service.

❖ **Can Durham ensure that the bus driver will be a Muslim?**

No, Durham cannot ensure that the driver will be a Muslim.

❖ **Will the bus driver be a male or a female?**

Durham hires both male and female drivers who are qualified for this position.

❖ **Do parents enter into an agreement with APA or Durham?**

APA contracts Durham to provide bus service; as such agreement is between APA and Durham as it pertains to the logistics of the service. However APA may require an agreement between APA and parents, as it deems necessary.

❖ **Who is responsible for students’ safety; at the bus stop and inside the bus?**

While the parent is responsible for student safety at bus stops, Durham will take all measures to transport students safely and is wholly responsible for the safety of the students on board the bus. Students as well are responsible for safe actions and behavior while on board the bus to prevent jeopardizing themselves, other students, or the driver.

❖ **Can Durham guarantee pickup and drop off times?**

While Durham will make all attempts to arrive at the bus stops at the appointed times, it cannot be responsible for delays due to reasons beyond its control such as weather, heavy traffic, accidents, vehicle breakdown, etc.

❖ **Who is responsible for overall liability over Durham?**