

## Watch for more kids walking or rolling to school starting September 2

(Penticton, BC – Monday, Aug. 25, 2025) – Expect to see more students walking or rolling to school this year thanks to a number of new 'Safe Routes to School' initiatives designed to improve traffic safety and encourage active travel.

"We've been working for many months with the school communities and it's exciting to see these concepts being expanded in Penticton," says Kristen Dixon, general manager of Infrastructure. "One new program we are excited to see this year is the Walking School Bus, being offered by the Safety Village, at Skaha Lake and KVR Elementary schools. Guided by adult leaders, kids can join the 'bus' to walk safely to and from school."

Registration is now open for the Walking School Bus program, operated by Penticton Safety Village. For further details and to sign up, visit [penticton.ca/safe-routes](https://penticton.ca/safe-routes).

Other initiatives that residents can expect to see in local school zones include the following:

- **Kiss & Go Zones:** This is a short-term stopping area where drivers can park for no longer than two minutes while the student exits the vehicle. This maximizes a section of desirable parking close to the school.
- **K-3 Drop-Off Zones:** This is a designed zone for Kindergarten to Grade 3s, allowing vehicles to park to walk younger children to their doors for pickups and drop-offs.
- **Drive to Five Zones:** This concept includes setting up a designate location 500 metres away from the school, where parents can drop off or pick up their kids. This encourages walking for short distances, while helping to reduce congestion near the front of the school.

"As we plan to welcome students back to school on September 2nd, we are reminded that their safety on the journey to and from school is a responsibility we all share," says Todd Manuel, Superintendent of Schools. "With many students planning to walk or bike to school as part of the Safe Routes to School initiatives, we kindly remind everyone in our community to slow down, stay alert, and share the road with care. We are looking forward to a great school year and truly value your continued support in helping keep our students safe."

The City of Penticton has now completed Safe Routes to School studies at five elementary schools and are now beginning work with the school communities at Wiltse and Queens Park Elementary schools.

The latest Safe routes to School studies were completed at Columbia Elementary and Skaha Elementary, with each making site-specific recommendations that includes improving pedestrian crossing and sidewalks, installing new bike and scooter racks, adding Kiss & Go locations, suggesting Drive to Five zones and implementing a walking school bus program. For more details on each school, visit [penticton.ca/safe-routes](https://penticton.ca/safe-routes).

## **Back to school safety reminders**

Class is back in session starting Tuesday, Sept. 2, with Penticton RCMP and the City's Bylaw Services team monitoring high-traffic areas. For everyone's safety, remember the following:

- Speed limits of 30 km/h are in effect at all times, unless otherwise posted.
- Give yourself extra time to get to your destination and be alert.
- Do not make U-turns anywhere within a school zone.
- Park and stop only in designated areas.
- Vehicles approaching both directions must stop for school buses when their red lights are flashing.
- Watch for children, especially near crosswalks and intersections.
- Always have your children enter or exit vehicles onto sidewalk side of car. Never allow children to cross mid-block.

To plan your school drop-offs, view maps and tips at [penticton.ca/backtoschool](https://penticton.ca/backtoschool).

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