BusZone FAQs

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Parent-Facing Questions

What is BusZone and why might I need it?

BusZone consists of a parent-facing application and a dispatcher portal for school districts. The self-service application enables parents to see the location of their child's school bus on a smartphone, tablet, or personal computer. The web-based dispatcher portal allows school districts to manage their bus substitutions and gives them the ability to send informative messages to parents about late-running buses, closures, etc.

BusZone is compatible on both Android and iOS, and can be downloaded from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store.

How does it work?

BusZone leverages the Zonar V4™ Telematics Control Unit to locate and track school buses. Parents create zones on a map within the app around their pick-up/drop-off locations for proximity-based alerts.

How often is map data updated? Will parents receive the notifications in near-real time?

Yes, parents will receive notifications in near-real time. With Rapid Response, the Zonar TCU creates a point every 10 seconds which is then relayed to the BusZone application.

Can parents see the bus they select run the entirety of its route?

Parents can see the bus throughout the route as long as it is within the active time window.

If the parents selected more buses than what their kids ride, can they see and track any bus?

Parents can select as many buses as they need. For a zone to work, it needs to be matched with a bus, student, and days of the week.

If multiple buses go through the zone, do parents see each bus that goes through the zone or only their bus?

Parents will only see the bus they paired with that zone.

Can districts automate the zone creation for parents?

No, parents are responsible for creating their zones. Districts can create zones around schools or bus loops for arrival/departure alerts.

What if the bus enters the zone multiple times? Will the parent receive an alert every time the bus enters/exits the zone?

Yes, the parent can receive an alert every time. If they do not want to, they can setup certain time periods where they only want alerts (for example, alerts are activated 10 minutes before and after their child's scheduled pick-up time only).

If a child has more than one pick-up/drop-off location throughout the week, can a parent create multiple zones?

Yes, parents can create multiple zones based on their child's schedule. When creating a zone, a parent must enter the address or intersection. They will then name the zone and select the bus that is associated with that stop.

How large and small can the zone be?

The minimum zone size is 50 yards. The maximum zone size can reach up to 500 yards.

Is the information private and secure?

Yes, the data exchange between the mobile app and back-end services use HTTPS (like a bank or online store) which means that all communications between your web browser and the site is encrypted and secure.

Can parents share the data with other caregivers?

Yes, the primary parent can choose which student, buses, and schedule to share with other caregivers. Caregivers or secondary users cannot follow additional information other than what is shared with them.

Bus Substitutions

How are bus changes captured?

Bus changes are captured in the BusZone back-end portal. Dispatch simply selects the "Bus Substitution" tab to edit the bus or route that needs changed. Once the change has been saved, this will automatically update the parent's application to follow the correct bus for the day. The parent application returns to its default once the route has been completed.

Is there historical data on the bus exchanges?

No, Zonar does not currently have a report that shows a historical log of bus substitutions and who they were made by.
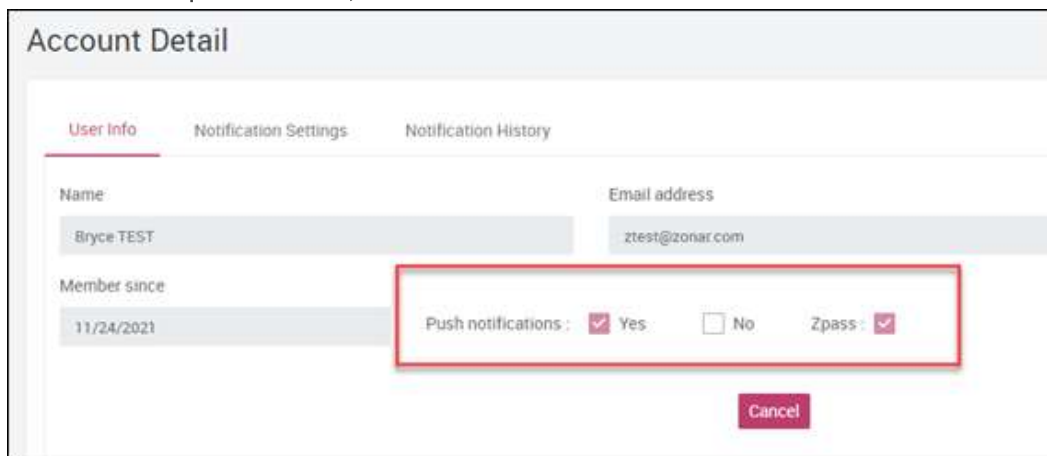
Will bus substitutions revert to the next day?

Yes, bus substitutions will revert the next calendar day.

Bus Tracking

Parent states they're not getting notifications when the bus enters/leaves the school.

- Confirm that the parent has notifications turned on. From the Main menu, select **SUPPORT**, then **Support Assistant**. Search for the parent name, then click **Edit**.

- Confirm that the parent has school notifications turned on.

- Confirm that the parent is following the correct key. Click the **Notification Settings** tab in Account Detail.

- Confirm that the bus crosses into the school zone by clicking on the map button under Action in the Schools section.

Sometimes the zone is too small and doesn't cover the area where the buses go.

Parent states they're not getting notifications when the bus enters/leaves their personal zones.

- Confirm that the parent has notifications turned on.
- Confirm that the parent is following the correct key.
- Confirm that the bus is tracking in Ground Traffic Control.
- Confirm that the bus crosses through the zone by clicking on the map button under Action in the Zones section.

Sometimes the zone is too small and doesn't cover the area where the buses go.

## Parent states they're not able to track the bus in the app.

- Confirm that the parent is following the correct key.

- Confirm that the bus is tracking through Ground Traffic Control.
- Confirm that the EXSID in Ground Traffic Control matches the "GPS Vehicle ID" in BusZone.
- Confirm the parent has set up a personal zone.

  Buses are trackable for 2.5 hours. If a parent doesn't have a zone created, the bus will only be trackable for the first 30 minutes and the last 30 minutes (commonly unknown fact).

I want to change the bus assigned to a key; how do I do that?

- For <u>same day changes</u>, use the **Bus Reassignments** tab to make changes. From the Main menu, click **Operations** then **Bus Reassignments**.This is usually used for "temporary" changes, like a bus being down for maintenance.
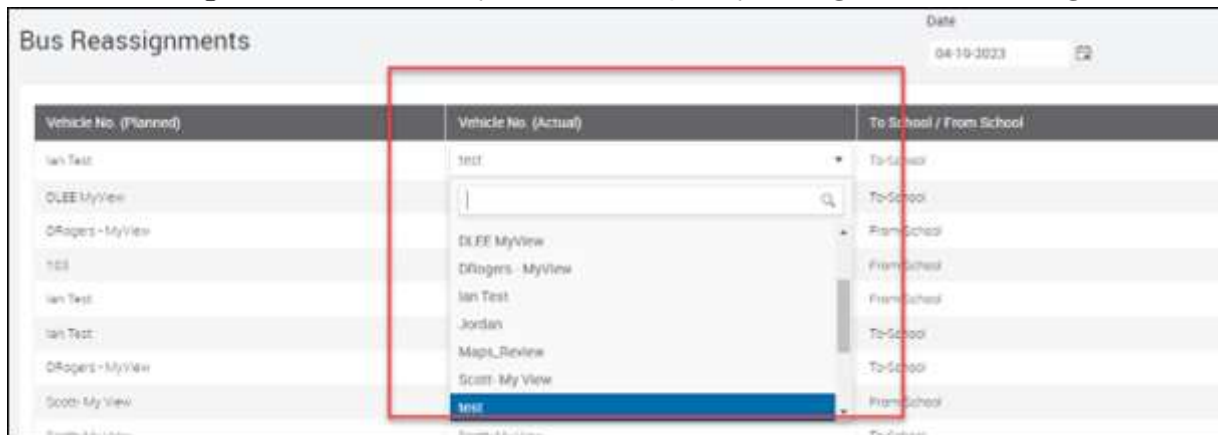
- For <u>permanent changes</u>, click **SET-UP**, then **Vehicle->Keys Mapping** to permanently change the bus. This is usually used when a bus is retired or routes change.

  It is common for buses to need temporary changes that span multiple days. If you change the bus assignment in key mapping, ensure you're changing it back when the substitution is over.

When I'm uploading students in bulk, I'm receiving error messages.

- Verify the following columns are in the .csv file: First name, Last name, Card no, Student ID, School name, Grade, School year.

  Card no is a necessary column, but the cells can be left empty.

- Max student import is 7000. Confirm the file size isn't larger than this.
- Occasionally excel can have hidden formulas/logic. Try copying and pasting the data into a new blank file and re-upload, or clear formatting/format to number which should remove formulas.

Transition/Setup

Even though BusZone is route agnostic, can it still be integrated with a routing system?

No, Zonar BusZone relies on proximity-based alerts based off the Zonar TCU in each bus.

Is the Student ID unique for each student?

Yes, the student ID is unique for each student in the district.

Will parents see this as a route number or a vehicle number?

This all depends on the district. When setting up a "Key" on the back-end portal, the district determines if they want to relay the route or bus number.

Will the vehicle be a GPS number or a VIN number?

The vehicle can be labeled however the district would like. Zonar prefers that districts keep the vehicle name/number the same as how it is in Ground Traffic Control.

Ridership

Parent states they're not receiving scan information for their student.

- Confirm Student ID in BusZone matches Unique ID in ZPass
- Confirm parent has ZPass notifications turned on.
- Confirm there are recent scans from the student in Ground Traffic Control.

Parent states they can't find their student when first signing up.

- Check the spelling of the student's name, especially if they use apostrophes or dashes. Phone keyboards have multiple different apostrophes, and the parent must be using the correct one. If they can't figure it out, delete the apostrophe in Bytecurve.
- Confirm there is a student profile created and confirm the Student ID matches.

Support Information

Are there parent instructions for this app?

Yes, here is a link to the BusZone Parent User Guide (https://support.zonarsystems.net/hc/en-us/articles/9776974204429-BusZone-Parent-User-Guide).

Should Zonar be the first line of support for parents?

Zonar recommends that parents reach out to their district for questions regarding setup, bus or schedule information.