



CUSTOMER FAQ



What is FirstAlt?

FirstAlt, powered by First Student and the leader in school bus transportation solutions, is an innovative solution for school districts looking for alternative transportation services to meet the evolving needs of their students. FirstAlt provides a safe and reliable transportation option for students with special needs, students experiencing homelessness, hard to serve trips and out-of-district students. FirstAlt delivers an efficient way for districts to support all their transportation needs with one provider.

What kind of services will FirstAlt provide?

FirstAlt provides trip servicing equipment such as car seats, booster seats, buckle guards, safety vests and we can provide vehicles which accommodate wheelchairs.

What kind of vehicles does FirstAlt utilize?

FirstAlt will utilize approved wheelchair vans, minivans, SUVs, and sedans. FirstAlt does not use vans with a capacity of 10+.

Is FirstAlt like Uber, Hop Skip Drive or Zum?

FirstAlt is different from ride-sharing companies. We aggregate existing, sometimes multiple, service providers to ensure that all drivers fulfill all FirstAlt, state, local, and school district requirements, including First Student's additional extensive behavioral training before they can transport any children. That includes drug and alcohol testing, which is not required or can be required by ride-share companies. Combined with our leading position in school bus transportation, First Student has the most experienced management team in the industry.

Is the FirstAlt solution designed so students will have the same driver every day?

Yes. FirstAlt's goal is to ensure that every student rides with the same driver every day, as it provides comfort, stability, familiarity, security, and trust for our students and their families.

Why is First Student getting into the alternative transportation market?

It's simple: transporting students is what we do, and increasingly districts are looking to alternative transportation services and which usually brings with it the added complexity of working with several vendors to serve their special needs students. With FirstAlt, districts have a "one-stop shop" for all their transportation needs, reducing complexity and driving efficiencies.

How does it work if our district wants to add FirstAlt?

Since you are already contracted with First Student to provide student transportation for your districts, it's a very simple process. FirstAlt will create a simple pricing amendment for FirstAlt services that we can easily add to your existing First Student contract. Once a pricing amendment is in place, we can review student and route information to determine how FirstAlt can best help the district.



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The safety of our students is the most important factor. What can you tell us about FirstAlt, and the vehicles used so we know it's as safe as your yellow bus service?

Each vehicle must complete an initial FirstAlt vehicle inspection, receive an initial and annual mechanical inspection, and complete daily pre-service safety checks.

How are drivers vetted and what type of training do they receive?

All drivers are vetted to current First Student Safety Standards and must complete an onboarding process consisting of but not limited to:

Drug Testing

- Drivers must complete a pre-service drug screening and be enrolled in a qualified drug and alcohol testing program which requires random, reasonable suspicion and post-accident testing.

Background & MVR Checks

- Drivers must pass a pre-service check and will be enrolled in a continuous background/MVR monitoring program.

Driver Training

- All drivers will complete required pre-service and in-service training which includes information from First Student's Professional Driver Development Program and aspects from our FirstServes program. We have incorporated strategies from our comprehensive special needs program, created in conjunction with Dr. Allison Blackburn from Cincinnati Children's Hospital and nationally recognized experts in special education to all our driver training.
- Unlike other alternative transportation services, FirstAlt training focuses specifically on transporting students with special needs.

District Specific Requirements

- In some cases, drivers must complete additional district-specific requirements such as TB testing, fingerprint background checks, etc. FirstAlt will work with the district to determine what those requirements might be and ensure compliance.

What insurance will drivers have?

All service provider and their drivers that perform trips for FirstAlt, will be covered under First Student's insurance policy from the pick-up of the first student until the drop-off of the last student. FirstAlt will be responsible for making sure all district insurance requirements are met, and all drivers are aware of First Student's insurance coverage.

For special needs students, familiarity with their driver is essential. Will the same driver pick up the student each day?

Yes. FirstAlt's goal is to ensure that every student rides with the same driver every day as it provides comfort, stability, familiarity, security, and trust for our students and their families.



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Where does FirstAlt find service providers and drivers?

FirstAlt utilizes professional drivers who work for local transportation companies.

Will FirstAlt contracted vehicles and drivers be easy to identify?

Yes. Every vehicle will have a FirstAlt decal located on the lower passenger side of the windshield. Drivers will also have a Digital ID badge which will include a driver's photo and verification that the ID is current and valid. Every driver will also have a visible FirstAlt driver badge which will be worn for the duration of the route.

How does FirstAlt communicate with parents about their student's transportation?

A FirstAlt team member will call the parents or guardians listed on the student's profile to verify that their information is still current and provide them with transportation information such as pickup time, driver/vehicle information, and phone numbers to reach FirstAlt. In the event of a delay of service or route change, FirstAlt will proactively reach out to the parents and/or district.

How are changes or cancellations communicated?

FirstAlt will reach out to the parent or guardian to make them aware of any changes, such as new pickup times, drivers and/or vehicles. Parents can (and should) contact FirstAlt when there is a change to their student's transportation needs, such as when a student will not need transportation for a particular day. Any parent requested route changes will need to be approved by the district.

To learn more

Email us at: firstalt@firststudentinc.com

Visit our web site at: www.FirstAlt.com
