

## School Bus Ridership Continues to Lag as 54% of Parents Choose to Drive Kids to School This Year

*With 67% of Students Returning to Full-Time, In-Person Learning This Year and Concerns High About the Delta Variant, Cars.com Offers Five Tips for a Safe and Successful School Drop-Off*

CHICAGO, Aug. 19, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- [Cars.com](https://www.cars.com) (NYSE: CARS), a leading digital automotive marketplace and solutions provider, finds that 67% of parents in a recent [national survey](#) conducted by Cars.com say they will send their kids to in-person school in the fall, compared to just 39% in 2020. For those returning to the classroom, school buses and public transit continue to take a backseat as many parents opt to transport their children to school by car, citing COVID-19 concerns as the primary decision driver.

"While many parents are eager for the return of in-person learning this fall, nearly 90% are concerned about the delta variant and, as a result, are choosing different modes of transportation for their school-aged children," said Jenni Newman, editor-in-chief for Cars.com and mom of two boys. "It's not surprising that parents are prioritizing health and safety, and by driving their kids themselves, parents feel they can better protect their family — even if it means longer drop-off lines or for many, a disruption to their family's daily routine."

Compared to the 54% of parents who will drive kids to school themselves this fall, 38% plan to send their kids on the school bus, 12% will walk, 9% are part of a carpool and 7% will use public transit. For the parents who previously took advantage of the school bus, 55% cite COVID-19 as the main driver in their decision to find alternative transportation, and nearly a quarter of respondents are using their personal vehicles even though it negatively impacts their daily routine.

For those planning to carpool or send their children on public transit, 78% of respondents/parents will sanitize their car and use hand sanitizer, up from 68% in 2020.

- 69% will wear masks, down from 79% in 2020.
- 27% will travel with fewer people in the car, compared to 50% who said the same in 2020.

As parents plan for the start of school — whether they are driving their own children or carpooling with neighbors — Newman shares the following top vehicle features to ensure a safe ride this school season:

- Consider [vehicles with captain's seats](#) — keep them separated, such as in the [2022 Nissan Pathfinder](#).
- Embrace **hands-free sliding doors** so passengers don't have to touch the handle like the one found in [Cars.com's best minivan for 2021](#), the [2022 Kia Carnival](#).
- Look for cars with **ample storage** so that you can keep a small cleanliness kit next to each seat like the [2021 Honda Odyssey](#), which ran away with this category in the 2021 Minivan Challenge.

To find and connect with a local dealer to sell your car or get more [carpooling tips](#), visit [Cars.com](https://www.cars.com).

<sup>1</sup> *Cars.com survey conducted July 28, 2021; 1,050 responses.*

### About Cars.com

CARS is a leading digital marketplace and solutions provider for the automotive industry that connects car shoppers with sellers. Launched in 1998 with the flagship marketplace site Cars.com and headquartered in Chicago, the Company empowers shoppers with the data, resources and digital tools needed to make informed buying decisions and seamlessly connect with automotive retailers. In a rapidly changing market, CARS enables dealerships and OEMs with innovative technical solutions and data-driven intelligence to better reach and influence ready-to-buy shoppers, increase inventory turn and gain market share.

In addition to Cars.com, CARS brands include Dealer Inspire, a technology provider building solutions that future-proof dealerships with more efficient operations and connected digital experiences; FUEL, which gives dealers and OEMs the opportunity to harness the untapped power of digital video by leveraging Cars.com's pure audience of in-market car shoppers, and DealerRater, a leading car dealer review and reputation management platform.

The full suite of CARS brands include [Cars.com](https://www.cars.com)™, [Dealer Inspire](#)®, [FUEL](#)™, [DealerRater](#)®, [Auto.com](#)™, [PickupTrucks.com](#)™ and [NewCars.com](#)®. For more information, visit [www.cars.com](https://www.cars.com).

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