

Series 3000 - Business and Non-Instructional Operations

5. Non-Instructional Operations

G. Auxiliary Agencies

(1) Transportation

General

The Board of Education shall provide for the public schools an appropriate transportation system, within guidelines set forth in this policy, which will enable all qualified children of school age to be transported to schools as required. School bus transportation is for students only. The Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for the school transportation system and shall develop and administer it to cost effectively:

- A. Safely transport students.
- B. Supplement and reinforce desirable student behavior patterns.
- C. Assist disabled students appropriately.
- D. Enrich the instructional program through carefully planned field trips recommended by the staff.

The transportation system shall be planned and operated in compliance with the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut and all regulations of the State Department of Education and the State Department of Motor Vehicles regarding the operation of school buses and motor vehicles.

The Board of Education will, in a manner not inconsistent with Section [10](#) 186 of the Connecticut General Statutes, furnish by transportation or otherwise, school accommodations so that each child over five and under 21 years of age who resides within the jurisdiction of the Board and is not a graduate of high school or vocational school (or who is not otherwise legally excluded from school) may attend the public schools maintained by the Board pursuant to Section [10](#) 220 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Suffield Public Schools will not provide transportation to out-of-town schools except as required by State Statutes, without specific permission from the Superintendent.

Transportation by private carrier or through district owned buses shall be provided at the discretion of the Board of Education. Parents may be reimbursed for transportation of eligible students whenever such practice is more economical or convenient.

Federal Compliance

Transportation will be provided for homeless students to and from the school of origin as required by the Every Student Succeeds Act. These services shall be provided throughout the regularly scheduled school year and day as determined by the Board.

Transportation will be provided for an eligible student who attends a district school out of the student's attendance area because his/her home school has been identified as in need of

improvement, the student is a victim of a violent criminal offense occurring in or on the grounds of the school the student attends or the student attends a school identified as persistently dangerous.

1. Definitions

- A. "**School transportation**" means the procedure, program or fully effective and implemented plan by which a student is conveyed, at public expense, whether by use of publicly owned equipment or by contract to or from his/her residence to or from the school in which he/she is enrolled by the Board.
- B. "**Parent**" means parent and/or guardian.
- C. "**Student**" means any individual of school age enrolled in a public or nonprofit private school located within the school district or contiguous school district as the case may be.
- D. "**Bus stop**" means a geographical location designated by the Board of Education or school administration where students can safely wait for purposes of boarding or debarking a school bus
- E. "**Walking distance**" means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the student's residence and his/her school from a point at the curb or edge of a public road or highway nearest the student's residence to the nearest allowable access of the school, or the bus pickup area; or the route from the point on the public thoroughfare nearest the residence to the school bus (or vehicle) embarkation point (bus stop) established by the Board.
- F. "**One mile walking distance**" means a reasonable measurement of a route to be traversed extending from the point of measurement at least 5,280 feet.
- G. "**Grade K**" means kindergarten, or a school program appropriate to a beginning student under age six.
- H. "**Raised walk area**" means (1) a sidewalk or (2) a portion of the right of way at least three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes, which may be paved or unpaved, distinguished by some elevation above the street pavement level and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area, and fencing, apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement.
- I. "**Walking route**" means the most direct route which the child would normally be expected to travel between his/her residence and the school to which he/she is assigned by the Board.
- J. "**Hazard**" means a thing or condition, as prescribed in Section 6 below, affecting the safety or students walking to and from school or the bus stop.

2. Eligibility for School Transportation

Students will be eligible for school transportation if one or more of the following criteria is present. The Board may at its discretion provide transportation to students who do not meet these criteria.

- A. The walking distance for the student is in excess of the guidelines established by the Board which shall not exceed the following maximum distances:
 - 1) For students enrolled in grades K through 5, up to one (1) mile;
 - 2) For students enrolled in the equivalent of grades 6 through 8 up to one and one half (1½) miles; and

- 3) For students enrolled in grades 9 through 12, up to two (2) miles.
- B. The walking route does not exceed the limits set forth in paragraph (A), but presents a hazard; and the hazard is not eliminated by and abated by the Board.
- C. The student is physically disabled, or mentally challenged, or a preschool student.
- D. The student, per the provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act, is classified as a homeless student, attends a school identified as in need of improvement, is a victim of a violent criminal offense, or attends a school identified as persistently dangerous.

Reasonable transportation or prescribed walking routes or the sum of both shall not exceed one hour each way from home to school or returning.

3. Eligibility for Out-of-Town Transportation

- A. Any resident of the school district under 21 years of age who is not a high school or vocational school graduate and who is attending a state vocational school shall be eligible for transportation.
- B. A student who is placed by a Planning and Placement Team for special education reasons in either a public or private educational institution out of town shall be provided the necessary transportation.
- C. A student who transfers to an out-of-district school under a cooperative arrangement because their District home school has been identified as in need of improvement under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

4. Duties of the Superintendent

It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent or his/her designee to manage and supervise the school transportation service and, in connection therewith, to do the following:

- A. Determine eligibility for school transportation in accordance with these guidelines and Section 10 186 of the General Statutes and in compliance with applicable portions of the Every Student Succeeds Act pertaining to homeless students and school choice.
- B. Establish school transportation routes and designate locations for pick up points (bus stops).
- C. Develop, circulate and enforce codes of behavior for those children who are transported to and from school via school transportation.
- D. Develop procedures for responding to requests pertaining to matters of school transportation or other school accommodations.
- E. Give due consideration to requests for extension of school transportation service.
- F. Perform all other duties and responsibilities related to the furnishing of school accommodations by school transportation or otherwise in a manner not inconsistent with Section [10](#) 186 of the Connecticut General Statutes or these guidelines.

5. Routes and Services

Regard for the safety of students is a basic element of these regulations.

Consistent with the foregoing, all students may be required to walk to school with the following exceptions:

- A. Grades K through 5 students living more than 1 mile from school.
- B. Grades 6 through 8 students living more than 1.5 miles from school.
- C. Grades 9 through 12 students living more than 2 miles from school.

Students shall walk to the nearest bus stop up to the following maximum distances:

- A. Grades K through 5 1 mile
- B. Grades 6 through 8 1.5 miles
- C. Grades 9 through 12 2 miles

Whenever possible, bus stops should include several students in a common area, or group stops.

1. On streets with sidewalks, stops should not be less than $\frac{1}{4}$ mile apart and stops at neighboring houses will not occur, unless there are special circumstances as outlined elsewhere in this policy.
2. On streets without sidewalks that are deemed hazardous in other areas of this policy, bus stops may be house to house stops.
3. On streets that are not deemed hazardous, stops may be group stops along the road or at the intersection of another non-hazardous street.

Bus stops may be located at more frequent intervals to reduce student congestion at the stops, or for other reasons of safety as determined by the Board.

Cul-de-sacs and Do Not Use/Enter Streets

Bus stops should be located at the intersection of the cul-de-sac and the main road whenever possible, unless the length of the cul-de-sac is greater than the permitted walking distances as indicated in this policy or unless the main road is deemed hazardous as otherwise noted within this policy. This also applies to bus stops for looping branch roads if in cul-de-sacs and dead end roads.

Consistent with State of Connecticut Regulation Section 14-275C-18, entitled "Operation of School Buses", backing of the school bus shall be avoided, whenever possible. When backing maneuvers cannot be avoided, children shall be retained inside the bus. If there are children outside the bus, no backing maneuvers shall be made unless a competent adult observer is on hand to direct the maneuver from a point behind the driver's side of the bus and clearly visible in the driver's mirror.

When a school bus enters a cul-de-sac, children will be picked up (before the turn is made) on the boarding side of the bus, on the way into the cul-de-sac, and dropped off (after the bus has maneuvered the turn) on the opposite side of the street.

Certain streets within the town may be designated Do Not Use/Enter Streets because factors including lack of necessary space to turn around, topography, street width, and industrial activity make access unsafe.

School transportation services are provided exclusively for the benefit and safety of the student population, and are to be used only in support of programs authorized by and under the auspices of the School Board.

Children may ride buses other than their own or be allowed to get off the bus at a stop other than their assigned stop only at the convenience of the school district in accordance with bus safety regulations. A written request must be submitted by the parent to the Principal of the school for his/her official approval each time a child is to take a bus other than his/her regular one or to get off at a stop other than their assigned stop.

Students may be assigned to multiple buses at the request of a parent or guardian. These requests must be submitted to the school and must be approved by the Superintendent or designee prior to implementation.

6. Hazardous Conditions

"Hazard" means (1) exposure to molestation considered morally degrading or physically harmful, or (2) an unsafe thing or condition or a possible source of peril, danger, duress, or difficulty presenting a problem, the solution of which is beyond the ordinary capability of a child of a given age or attainment or including specifically the following:

1. A walking route along a street or road having an adjacent or paralleled raised walk area is a hazard where any of the following conditions exist along said walking route:
 - a) Speed limits for motor vehicles are in excess of 40 miles per hour and there are no pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where students must cross said street or road in going to and from school;
 - b) The usual or frequent presence of any nuisance, such as open manholes or construction; snow plowed or piled on the raised walk area making such areas unusable; loading zones where delivery trucks are permitted to park in alleys; commercial entrances and exits where cars are crossing raised walk areas at speeds in excess of five (5) miles per hour, and the like, including such nuisance which is dangerous or attractive to normal children;
 - c) For students enrolled in grades K through 5, absence of pedestrian crossing light, or crossing guard where three or more streets intersect, and at a street crossing where there are no stop signs or crossing guards and the traffic count during the time that students are walking to or from school or bus stop exceeds 60 vehicles per hour at the intersection; and,
 - d) For students enrolled in grades 6 through 12, absence of a traffic light, or stop sign, or crossing guard at street crossings where three or more streets intersect, and have

an average traffic count which exceeds 120 vehicles per hour during the time that children are walking to and from school.

2. Any street, road, or highway which has no sidewalks or raised walk areas shall be deemed hazardous for students enrolled in grades K through 5, unless all of the following conditions are met:
 - a) There exists no line of sight obstruction caused by a hill, curve, structure, out cropping, land form, planting, snowbank, or other obscuring object or structure which may be safely negotiated by vehicles only at speeds under 15 miles per hour.
 - b) The line of sight visibility together with posted speed limits permit vehicular braking/stopping distances in accordance with the Connecticut Driver's Manual.
 - c) Manmade hazards including attractive nuisances are absent.
 - d) The roadway available to vehicles, when plowed free of snow accumulation, has a minimum width of 20 feet.
3. Any walkway or path in an area adjacent to and paralleled to railroad tracks shall be considered a hazard, unless suitable physical barriers along the walking routes are present and fixed between the tracks and the walking route (such as guard railings). Tracks that carry moving trains during hours that students are walking to or from school will be deemed hazardous unless the following conditions exist:
 - a) A crossing guard is present; or
 - b) An automatic control bar is present at crossings used by children under age 10, or a bar, or red flashing signal light is operational when the crossing is used for students over ten years of age.
4. A lake, stream, culvert or waterway will be deemed a hazard in the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier fixed between the walking route and the water for students in grades K-5.
5. Any street, road, walkway or path designed as a walking route for school students which passes through an area which has a history of aggressive acts or molestation resulting in actual or threatened physical harm, or moral degradation, during the hours when students ordinarily walk to and from school.
6. A situation shall be considered hazardous wherein students enrolled in a grades K through 5, are required to walk to or from school or to or from a bus stop at any time prior to one half hour before sunrise or after one half hour after sunset.

7. Appeals

Any parent, guardian, student at majority, or any agent or officer whose duty it is to compel the observance of the laws concerning attendance at school may appeal any administrative decision concerning school transportation in the following manner:

- A. Discuss the matter with the Principal of the school to which the student is assigned.

B. If no resolution is reached under (1) above, discuss the matter with the Coordinator of Transportation or designee.

C. If no resolution is reached under (2) above, discuss the matter with the Superintendent.

Any parent, guardian, student at majority, or officer whose duty it is to compel the observance of the laws concerning attendance at school, who believes that the Superintendent, or his/her designee, is not furnishing school accommodations, by transportation or otherwise, to himself or herself or to his/her child in a manner consistent with the laws of the State of Connecticut or these regulations may, in writing, request a hearing before the Board to show the Board the manner in which the Superintendent has so failed to furnish such accommodations.

The Board shall hold a hearing within 10 days following receipt of such request.

The hearing before the Board will be in compliance with the provisions of Section [4 177](#) to [4 180](#) inclusive of the Connecticut General Statutes.

A stenographic record or tape recording shall be made of such hearing.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[14-275](#) Equipment and color of school buses

[14-276a](#) (c) Town/school district may require its school bus operators to have completed a safety training course.

[10 76d](#) re transportation for special education program services.

[10 97](#) Transportation to vocational schools.

[10 186](#) Duties of local and regional boards of education re school attendance. Hearings. Appeals to state board. Establishment of hearing board.

[10 220](#) Duties of boards of education.

[10 220c](#) Transportation of children over private roads. Immunity from liability.

[10 273a](#) Reimbursement for transportation to and from elementary and secondary schools.

[10 280a](#) Transportation for students in non profit private schools outside school district.

[10 281](#) Transportation for students in non profit private schools within school district.

[14 275a](#) Use of standard school bus required, when.

[14 275b](#) Transportation of handicapped students.

[14 275c](#) Regulations re school buses and motor vehicles used to transport special education students.

[14 280](#) Letters and signals to be concealed when not used in transporting children. Signs on other vehicles.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001, P.L. 107-110, 42 U.S.C., Sections 11431-11435

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SUFFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Suffield, Connecticut