



TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible for transportation to school?

The policy of the Marple Newtown School District is to provide transportation to grades 1 through 12. The policy for walking to school is as follows:

- Grades 1 through 5 may walk up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to their school or respective bus stops. This distance is well below the State mandate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles for elementary students.
- Grades 6 through 8 may walk up to $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles to their school or respective bus stops. The State mandates up to 2 miles for secondary students.
- Grades 9 through 12 may walk up to $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to their school or respective bus stops. State mandates up to 2 miles for secondary students.

What happens in the event of snow or other emergency?

Decisions involving weather conditions are difficult because they need to be made approximately two hours before the buses leave the compound. The safety of our children is our primary concern. Decisions are based on advice from the local weather bureau, local and state police departments, emergency highway personnel, and members of our own staff who are assigned to check key road areas. When hazardous conditions develop, parents can listen to KYW Radio 1060 (our emergency number is 454), check the district website for announcements, call the District's inform-a-phone 610-359-4280, or will be notified by phone through the District's Global Connect system. Please do not call the individual schools or the transportation office that are overloaded with these calls, and busy planning for the safe transportation of the students.

When schools are closed for inclement weather, no transportation will be provided for students enrolled in any public or non-public school. When it is determined to be unsafe to transport students, it is unsafe for all students. When there is a delayed opening due to inclement weather, all public and non-public students will be picked up at the delayed time. (Example: If there is a two hour delay, all students will be picked up two hours later than the normal bus stop pick up time. If your bus stop pick up time is 7:00 AM, add two hours and the pick up time will be 9:00 AM).

Are there late buses for after school activities?

Marple Newtown School District does not provide "late buses" and/or "activity buses" from any schools, public or non-public. All students requiring transportation need to be on the buses at the regular departure times for their respective school. There will also be no transportation by Marple Newtown buses to CCD, Hebrew School, or other religious training programs.

Can I send my child home with another student?

In the event of emergencies or child care conflicts, district parents wishing to send their children home with another student (either walking or taking the bus) are required to send a note to school no later than 12:00 PM on the day of the event. Exceptions will be made in the event of emergencies regarding this policy. This will prevent potential overloading of the buses. Students attending non-district schools are not allowed to have friends ride home with them that are not residents of Marple Newtown School District.

Can my child be dropped off at a location other than his/her home bus stop?

Any parent requesting transportation other than that listed on the bus pass must contact the Transportation Department for prior approval of changes.

The bus drives right past my house. Why can't it stop at my house?

The higher frequency of stops makes the motoring public impatient. This results in people driving around the bus, a dangerous situation. It also delays the bus by increasing the number of stops and makes the student ride time longer. Stops are placed to be convenient for groups of students in the neighborhood.

I can't see the bus stop from my house.

Marple Newtown School District provides transportation for over 5000 students. We are not able to position bus stops so that all parents are able to see the stop from their home.

We live on a cul-de-sac. Will the bus come down our street?

Except for special education circumstances, buses are generally not routed into a cul-de-sac. Cul-de-sac stops are considered unwise for the following reasons:

- Different styles and sizes of buses make maneuvering in a cul-de-sac difficult
- The rear of the bus has potential to swing around close to the sidewalk
- Parked cars and other obstacles create road hazards that may not be seen until entering the cul-de-sac with the possibility of a point of no return
- Possibility of property damage to mailboxes and landscaping

Why do some children have to cross the street to board the bus?

We are not able to route buses so that all children can board the bus on the door side. We suggest that children wait on the side of the street where they reside. The bus will stop traffic in all directions to accommodate students that need to cross the street.

My child carries a large musical instrument and/or heavy backpack. The bus stop needs to be closer to our home.

Bus stops are centrally located for all students along a route. Bus stops are not changed to accommodate one or more students because that may displace other students further from their home.

I leave for work early and can't watch my child get on the bus. Why can't the bus stop at my home?

In order to be consistent and fair in placement of bus stops, we are not able to establish stops based on personal circumstances.

Why is my child's bus late?

Weather, traffic, driver absenteeism, maintenance difficulties and unforeseen incidents are responsible for delays in arrival of school buses. We do everything humanly possible to have all buses running on schedule each and every day. Please allow 20 minutes before calling transportation for information concerning a late bus.

Why can't you call when you know the bus will be late?

There are as many as 50-60 students on each bus. It would be impossible to contact everyone in such a short time frame and many parents are not home or are waiting at the stop for their child.

Why are there only a few students on some buses and my child's bus is crowded?

Decisions regarding each bus route are made by careful planning based on information from school registration, previous similar routes and Department of Transportation data. Distance from school, number of buses and drivers, and grouping of students and neighborhoods are all factors that are considered. Consequently, sometimes it is just not possible to have the exact number of students on every run.

Why is there an address stop on the route if buses don't make home stops?

Home stops may occur for a special needs student on a regular route, mid-point on a long street, on a four lane road, or a State declared hazardous road.