

Tukwila School District
Special Needs Transportation Guide
For Students * Parents/Guardians



Tukwila School District Transportation
3825 S 128th ST
Tukwila WA 98168
206-901-8050

Responsibilities

The safe and efficient transportation of your child depends on the cooperation and efforts of you the parent, Student Services, the Transportation Office, the bus driver, the school staff and the student themselves. The following section outlines some of the various responsibilities of those involved.

1. Parent Responsibility

- Assist the school by submitting accurate and timely information to be included on the Transportation Request Form, and Student Emergency Card. Incorrect and untimely information delays the onset of transportation services. This includes childcare information if applicable.
- Inform the school and bus driver of any medical condition or behavior which might affect the student's safety or health on the bus.
- Provide up-to-date emergency information to the school and transportation office.
- Assure that the student is fully clothed, toileted and ready to meet the bus five minutes before the scheduled time. Buses are scheduled to arrive within a few minutes of the designated time each day. The bus driver is not required to wait for a tardy student as this creates late pick up times for other students.
- Assure that, when applicable, an authorized person will be at the bus stop, on time when the child is dropped off so the driver can make custodial transfer of your child to another responsible person.
- Notify transportation, on a daily basis, when your child will not be transported by calling 206 901-8050 between 7:00 am and 4:30 pm.
- Teach your child the school bus safety rules and appropriate bus riding behavior.
- Inform the school and Student Services in advance if you have a change of address or telephone number. If the address change requires rescheduling, a minimum of three working days may be needed to establish a new route and time schedule.
- Provide proper wheelchair or other equipment. (Appendix)

2. Student Services Responsibilities

- Involve the Transportation Office of any special transportation arrangements that may be necessary.
- Update the information contained on the **Transportation Request Form** when necessary. An additional form should be submitted if the pick-up/drop off location changes during the school year.
- Submit timely and accurate updates to the Transportation Office at the end of each year to assist in routing and scheduling for the following year. This includes daycare information where applicable.

3. **Transportation Office Responsibilities**

- Assign each eligible student to a bus. No one may assign a student to a bus or reassign a student to a different bus without the permission of the Transportation Office.
- Curb-to-curb service determines the bus stop locations according to the physical needs of the student and the accessibility of the residence.
- Route and schedule special needs buses. The routing and scheduling plan will ensure the safest and most effective use of the vehicle. Beyond the onset of the school year, a minimum of three working days may be needed to establish a new route and schedule any pick-up/drop off changes.
- Address concerns from parents, school administrators, drivers, and the motoring public regarding special needs transportation.
- Provide the appropriate training and screening for bus drivers.
- Establish and enforce transportation procedures, rules and regulations.
- Inspect all buses in accordance with all state and local statutes and regulations.
- Provide child safety securment systems as needed.

4. **Driver Responsibilities**

- Be on time for the pick-up and drop off. The driver is not required to wait for a student who is not exiting the home when the bus arrives. This procedure must be adhered to because of the number of students to be transported in a fixed period of time.
- Ensure the overall safe operation of the bus.
- Be prepared to provide appropriate first aid.
- Display appropriate care and patience.
- Maintain an emergency evacuation plan, listing each passenger, for use by medical personnel in the event of a vehicle accident.
- Understand and support the privacy and confidentiality of the families whose children they transport.
- Report to the school administration any significant changes in a child's behavior.
- At the school, it is the administrator's responsibility to make appropriate arrangements to assist the driver in loading and unloading students.
- Complete and submit a **Student Conduct Report** if a behavior problem occurs or persists on the bus.

5. **School Responsibilities**

- Work with Student Services in the formulation of an admission, review, decision and completion of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Upon completion of the IEP, Student Services will submit a transportation request to the Transportation Office.
- Assure that the students are ready for dismissal at the time established.
- Notify parents of schedule changes that may affect pupil transportation (i.e., early dismissals, inclement weather, ect.).
- Provide appropriate arrangements for those students needing assistance in boarding and discharging from the bus at the school.
- Notify the Transportation Office if the student arrives at school by means other than the bus and the student requires bus transportation home.

6. **Student Responsibility**

- We expect all students to follow the bus safety rules for the safety of your child and others who ride the school bus.

Procedures

The following procedures were established by the TSD Transportation Office to facilitate safe and efficient transportation for students riding special needs buses. On occasion, the TSD Transportation Office receives requests from parents to deviate from these procedures. The TSD Transportation Office reserves the right to authorize or deny deviations from these procedures based on the need to provide an acceptable level of safety for all students on the bus and an acceptable level of service for those entitled to special needs transportation.

1. Curb-to-Curb Service

Under most conditions special needs transportation provides curb-to-curb service. This means that the bus will pick-up and drop-off at the curb in front of the student's home or daycare. The following are some of the exceptions to this procedure.

- The pick-up/drop-off site will be arranged for consistency. The same stop Monday through Friday. No exceptions.
- In some instances, the pick-up/drop-off location may require the student to cross the roadway. This will be done following the established safe crossing procedures.
- Due to road conditions (dead end roadways, dirt or gravel roadways, or narrow roadways) it may be necessary to place the pick-up/drop-off site at a safe location away from the home or daycare. Every effort will be made to locate the stop as close as possible to the home or daycare. When an escort is appropriate, it will be the responsibility of the parent or their designee to escort the student to and from the pick-up/drop-off location. The bus driver is not responsible to escort the student to or from the home.

Pick-up and Drop-off Times

The pick-up/drop-off times assigned at the beginning of the school year reflect the TSD Transportation Office's best estimate based on a number of variables. These are estimated times only. In addition, as students are added or deleted from bus routes, the actual pick-up/drop-off times will change. The most effective method for parents to confirm accurate pick-up/drop-off times is to talk directly to the bus driver.

Bus routes are scheduled to accommodate the arrival and dismissal times for each school and to maximize the efficiency of the transportation for ALL STUDENTS transported to and from school. The TSD Transportation Office cannot honor requests to lengthen or shorten a student's bus ride to accommodate daycare schedules or parent work schedules.

Private Driveways and Parking Lots

- School buses do not use private driveways in the course of providing transportation services.
- The Transportation Office in all instances will avoid entering condominium/apartment parking lots. In these cases the pick-up/drop-off will be placed at a safe location close to the entrance, student's home or daycare.

2. Loading/Unloading

At the Pick-up/Drop-off Location

It is the responsibility of the driver to load and unload the students at the pick-up/drop-off location. Parents and childcare providers are strongly encouraged to communicate to the bus driver any information about the student that would help facilitate safe loading and unloading. Parents and childcare providers should be careful not to interfere with the driver while they are performing their duties.

Parents/guardians should not send students to the bus with food or drink to be consumed on the bus.

At the School

When it facilitates a smoother transition to and from the bus, school personnel are encouraged to help load and unload ambulatory students from seats equipped with any of the child safety restraint systems or safety

vest. The bus driver and assistant have the ultimate responsibility to check these restraints before leaving the school. Only the driver should load/unload and secure students in wheelchairs.

Transporting Wheelchairs without Students

Drivers are instructed by the TSD Transportation Office not to transport a wheelchair without the student except in an emergency. Transporting a wheelchair without the student often affects the driver's ability to properly serve other wheelchair students on subsequent bus routes or results in the chair being left unattended outside of the student's home. An example for an emergency would be a situation where the student is taken to the hospital during the school day, leaving the chair at school.

3. Student Behavior

School Board Policy

It is the TSD's responsibility to provide safe transportation for students who ride school buses to and from school and on school-related trips. In the absence of a teacher or school administrator, the school bus driver is responsible for ensuring that students behave in a safe and responsible manner. Any behavior which interferes with the safe transportation of students must be reported. This policy applies to all students for whom bus transportation is provided by the TSD. Behavior problems involving special education students are dealt with in accordance with their disability and applicable Federal, State and local laws and regulations.

Notwithstanding the student's disability, the procedures outlined in the policy are applicable to special education students. Specifically, drivers are to use the **Student Conduct Report** to refer inappropriate behavior to school administrators, and when applicable, administrators are to follow a progressive discipline procedure.

Dangerous Behavior on the Bus

The following are the TSD Transportation Office guidelines for bus drivers responding to unsafe behavior on the bus.

- Any unsafe behavior should be reported to the school administrator as soon as possible. A **Student Conduct Report** should be submitted as follow-up.
- When the behavior of a student on a special education bus poses imminent serious danger to the student and/or others on the bus, the driver should immediately report to the Transportation Office or call 911 for police response.

4. Securement Devices

Formerly Car Seats and Booster Seats – Now referred to as Personal Securement Device

TSD does utilize personal securement devices and seat belts, and does so according to State and Federal guidelines. See the appendix for student wheelchair/equipment requirements.

Safety Vests

Safety vests may only be used at the direction of the TSD Transportation Office after consultation with the school staff and parents in safety situations.

- A safety vest is designed for students with behavioral or emotional disabilities who need to be restrained while on the bus. The safety vest is equipped with a zipper in the back that, when properly attached, is not accessible to the student. The safety vest is attached with a strap mounted to the bus seat. The strap stays on the bus and the safety vest is hooked to the strap by the way of four mounting rings.
- A trunk support vest is designed for physically handicapped students who need trunk-support in order to sit on the bus. The vest fastens over the shoulders, around the torso and under the crotch with Velcro. Like the safety vest, the vest is attached with a strap mounted to the bus seat.

Wheelchairs

Check all boxes that apply to determine if the wheelchair meets requirements for transporting on a school bus.

- ☐ The wheelchair to be transported meets national and mandated requirements for safety.
- ☐ The wheelchair frame is structurally intact.
- ☐ The brakes are fully operational.
- ☐ The tires, if inflatable, are properly inflated.
- ☐ Wheelchair has lap belt to secure student.
- ☐ Lap board or tray must be removeable and secured separately.
- ☐ Special wheelchairs will need to be inspected by transportation.
- ☐ List make and model.

Make: _____

Model: _____

School Bus Steps

To assist staff and students to prepare to ride a school bus, the following information has been compiled. Students need to be able to negotiate bus steps with varying heights and depths:

- Step height at a maximum of 14 inches.
- Step depth at a maximum of 17.25 inches.
- Step number at a maximum of four.
- Handrail may be on either side of the steps.

Please realize that we cannot guarantee which type of bus a student may be transported in. If a student cannot board the bus using the steps, even with assistance from parent/guardian/school staff member, a mobility device will be necessary.