

**Darien Public Schools  
Darien, Connecticut**

**POLICY**

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**Series 5300  
Welfare**

**Policy 5395**

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**TRANSPORTATION**

**Statement of Policy**

The Board of Education will provide transportation for students under provisions of state law and regulations. In determining the provision of transportation, the superintendent of schools, or his/her designee, shall consider the guidelines contained in this policy and shall administer the operation so as to:

1. provide for the safety of students, including consideration of hazardous conditions whether or not described in this policy;
2. provide for appropriate supervision for students while on school transportation, consistent with the Board's student discipline policy.
3. assist disabled students by providing appropriate specialized transportation when required by law.
4. enrich the instructional program through carefully planned field trips as recommended by the staff.

**Definitions**

1. "School transportation" means the procedure, program, or implemented plan by which a pupil is transported to and/or from school from his/her residence or the assigned bus stop at public expense, whether by use of publicly owned equipment or by contract. Such transportation shall be over public roads approved and maintained by the municipality or the State of Connecticut or private roads approved pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-220c.
2. "Walking distance" means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the pupil's residence and his/her school from a point at the curb or edge of a public or private road nearest the pupil's residence to a point at the entrance of the

school, or a safe entrance to the school grounds located within one hundred feet of the school building entrance or the bus pick-up area, or the route from the point on the public thoroughfare nearest the residence to the school bus or vehicle embarkation point established by the Darien Board of Education.

3. “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, but not more than 5,380 feet.
4. “Grade K” means kindergarten, or a school program appropriate to a beginning pupil.
5. “Hazard” means a thing or condition, as prescribed in this policy under “Hazardous Conditions” that affects the safety of pupils walking to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area.
6. “Sidewalk” means a portion of the landscape right of way approximately three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes which may be paved or unpaved, and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area or fencing, apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement.
7. “Raised walk area” means a portion of the landscape right of way approximately 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 or fencing, apart from and independent of any painted safety markings along the street pavement.
8. “Walking route” means the route that the student is expected to travel between his/her residence to and from school and/or an assigned bus stop.
9. “Bus stop” shall be defined as a geographical location designated by the Board of Education, school administration or their designee where students can safely wait for purposes of embarking or disembarking a school bus.
10. “Pupil” 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.

### Provision of Transportation

Transportation by private carrier may be provided whenever such practice is more economical than using school district-owned/leased facilities. If parents volunteer, and the administration permits, parents may be reimbursed for transportation of eligible students whenever such practice is more economical or convenient for the school district.

In determining the provision of transportation for resident public and eligible private school students, the following guidelines regarding walking distances will be considered. Distance measurements will be based on the most direct route from the student’s home beginning at a point at the curb, or edge of a public road or highway, nearest the home to the edge of the

school property or bus pickup areas.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Limit</u>
K-5	1/2 mile
6-8	1 mile
9-12	2 miles

Students living within the stated distance limits will receive transportation when, in the opinion of the Board, it is in the best interests of the district to provide transportation.

### **Hazardous Conditions**

The administration shall consider the following guidelines for hazardous conditions when making decisions regarding the transportation of children:

1. Except as provided in Paragraph 7 of this Section, a street or road along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area, having an adjacent or parallel sidewalk or raised walk area shall be deemed hazardous when any one of the following conditions exist:
  - a) For pupils under age ten, or enrolled in grades K through 3:
    - (i) the absence of a pedestrian crossing light or crossing guard where three or more streets intersect; OR
    - (ii) street crossings where there are no stop signs or crossing guards and the traffic count during the time that pupils are walking to or from school exceeds sixty vehicles per hour at the intersection.
  - b) For pupils over age ten, or enrolled in grades 4 through 12, the absence of a traffic light or stop signs or crossing guard at an intersection where three or more streets intersect that has a traffic count that exceeds ninety vehicles per hour during the time that pupils are walking to or from school;
  - c) For all pupils:
    - (i) any street, road, or highway with speed limits in excess of forty miles per hour that does not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where pupils must cross when going to or from school or the bus stop; OR
    - (ii) the usual or frequent presence of any nuisance such as open man-holes, construction, snow plowed or piled on the walk area making walkways unusable, loading zones where delivery trucks are permitted to park on walkways, commercial entrances and exits where cars are crossing walking areas at speeds in excess of five miles per hour, and the like, including such nuisances that are hazardous or attractive to children.
2. Any street, road, or highway , along a designated walking route to or from school and/or

to or from a designated bus pick-up area, that has no sidewalks or raised walk areas shall be deemed hazardous if any one of the following conditions exist:

- a) For pupils under age ten, or enrolled in grade K through 3:
    - (i) any street, road, or highway possessing a traffic count of sixty or more vehicles per hour at the time that pupils are walking to or from school; OR
    - (ii) any street, road, or highway possessing a speed limit in excess of thirty miles per hour.
  - b) For all pupils:
    - (i) the presence of man-made hazards including attractive nuisances, as stated in 1(c)(ii) above; OR
    - (ii) any roadway available to vehicles that does not have a minimum width of approximately twenty-two feet; OR
    - (iii) any roadway available to vehicles that, when plowed free of snow accumulations, does not have a minimum width of approximately twenty feet; OR
    - (iv) any street, road, or highway where the line-of-sight visibility together with posted speed limits do not permit vehicular braking/stopping in accordance with the Connecticut Drivers Manual or Department of Transportation, Division of Design Standard, or other reasonable standard.
3. Any walkway, path, or bridge, along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area, in an area adjacent or parallel to railroad tracks shall be considered hazardous unless a suitable physical barrier along the entire pedestrian route is present and fixed between pupils and the track; and any crossing of railroad tracks carrying moving trains during hours that pupils are walking to or from school or to and from a designated bus pick-up area shall be deemed hazardous unless:
- a) a crossing guard is present; OR
  - b) for pupils under age ten, an automatic control bar is present at crossings; OR
  - c) for pupils over age ten, a bar or red flashing signal light is operational.
1. For pupils in grades K through 4, the following conditions shall be deemed hazardous:
- a) a lake, pond, stream, culvert, water-way, or bridge shall be deemed a hazard in the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier fixed between the pupil and the water; OR
  - b) any area adjacent to a roadway, sidewalk, or bridge, along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area, having a drop of three or more feet per four feet of travel length on either side of the established lanes, in the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier.

5. For pupils in grades K through 8, walking to or from school or the bus stop at any time prior to one-half hour before sunrise or any time one-half hour after sunset shall be deemed hazardous.
6. For all students, walking along any street, road, walkway, sidewalk, or path designated as a walking route that passes through an area that has a history of aggressive acts of molestation resulting in actual or threatened physical harm or moral degradation during the hours when pupils ordinarily walk to or from school shall be deemed hazardous.
7. It shall not be a “hazard” or “hazardous condition” for a pupil whose residence abuts a public street, road or highway to (1) wait for the bus on the private property where the pupil resides for the school bus, until the school bus’s flashing red lights are activated to stop traffic so that the student can enter onto or cross the public street, road or highway to get on a school bus; or (2) exit a school bus that is stopped on the public street, road or highway, when the bus’s flashing red lights are activated to stop traffic so that the pupil can enter onto or cross such street, road or highway to access the private property where the pupil resides.

#### Applicability and Exceptions

1. This policy is applicable to public roads approved and maintained by the municipality or state of Connecticut, or private roads approved for passage of school transportation vehicles in accordance with C.G.S. Section 10-220c.
2. Special Education pupils and pupils eligible for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act shall be judged on an individual basis, and provided appropriate transportation.
3. The Superintendent of Schools may grant an exception to any guideline set forth in this policy where a peculiar condition or combination of conditions render such condition(s) a hazard based upon reasonable judgment, or where under the circumstances, other conditions exist under which the safety of students necessitates a variance from the guidelines within this policy.

#### School Bus Safety

The safety and welfare of all students shall be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to student transportation. Students in each school shall be instructed in safe bus riding practices and emergency evacuation drills shall be conducted to thoroughly acquaint all students with the procedures in emergency situations, in accordance with state law and regulations.

#### Complaint Procedure

1. All complaints concerning school transportation safety shall be made in writing to the Superintendent of Schools or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall maintain a written

record of all such complaints, and shall conduct appropriate investigations of the allegations in a timely manner. The investigation shall include 1) the review of the complaint raised with appropriate personnel responsible for transportation of students and 2) the opportunity for the parent or other person making the complaint to meet with the Superintendent to discuss the complaint and any possible resolution thereof.

2. Annually, within thirty (30) business days of the end of the school year, the Superintendent of Schools or designee shall provide the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles (“Commissioner”) with a copy of the written record of complaints received during the previous twelve (12) month period.
3. The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall make a written report of the circumstances of any accident within the Board’s jurisdiction and knowledge, involving a motor vehicle and any pedestrian who is a student, which occurs at a designated school bus stop or in the immediate vicinity thereof, to the Commissioner within ten (10) business days thereafter on a form prescribed by the Commissioner.
4. If a complaint covered by Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes, is not resolved by the Superintendent, the Superintendent shall inform parent or guardian, or an emancipated minor or a pupil eighteen years of age or older, of his or her right to request a hearing regarding the complaint. Such hearing, if requested, shall be held in accordance with Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as it may be amended from time to time.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

- 10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education re: school attendance. Hearings. Appeals to state board. Establishment of hearing board. Readmission. Transfers.
- 10-187 Appeal from finding of hearing board
- 10-220 Duties of boards of education.
- 10-220c Transportation of children over private roads. Immunity from Liability.
- 10-221c Development of policy for reporting complaints regarding school transportation safety
- 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 pupils in nonprofit private schools within school district.
- 14-275 Equipment and color of school buses.
- 14-275b Transportation of mobility impaired students.
- 14-275c Regulations re: school buses and motor vehicles used to transport special education students.

Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies

14-275c-16 Pupil Instruction

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