

## **6860: Pupil Transportation Services**

(Cross reference to 6560)

Transportation, once daily to and from school, is a privilege for all pupils who qualify according to the policies as herein defined. These qualifications are set in accordance and consideration of the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and local conditions and are intended as a guide to parents, students and school officials. The school district is eligible for reimbursement from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts only for those pupils who reside more than a mile and a half from the school which they attend.

6860.1 It shall be the annual responsibility of the administration, in cooperation with bus contractors and building principals to prepare and communicate bus routes and schedules in accordance with the guidelines and policies established by the school committee.

6860.2 The late bus routes are in place to provide equal opportunity to all students participating in after school and extra-curricular activities. Late bus routes are not intended to duplicate the normal bus routes in levels of service or convenience to the students or parents of the District. The late bus routes are intended to be main line routes only and the normal walking distances for students as addressed in our policy shall not apply to the late bus routes. Late routes will provide safe drop off points for all students; however, the safe passage from that point to the student's home or final destination shall be the sole responsibility of the parents or guardians.

6860.3 The transportation of students with special needs shall be in accordance with the specifications of their educational plan, conform to applicable state requirements and be arranged accordingly through contract by the administration.

6860.4 Elementary students who reside 0.8 miles or more from their assigned school shall be eligible for transportation services. Bus stops for qualified elementary students shall not be greater than 0.8 miles from their residence. Distances shall be measured beginning at the property line of the student's residence and extending over regularly traveled ways to the designated bus stop or the place where riders are dropped off at school, whichever is applicable.

6860.5 Middle and secondary students who reside 1.5 miles or more from their assigned school shall be eligible for transportation services. Bus stops for qualified middle and secondary school students shall not be greater than 1.5 miles from their residence. Distances shall be measured beginning at the property line of the student's residence and extending over regularly traveled ways to the designated bus stop or the place where riders are dropped off at school, whichever is applicable.

6860.6 The right of a student to transportation to and from school is a qualified right dependent on the pupil's good behavior as defined in Policy #6560 - Conduct on School Bus.

6860.7 Transportation services shall be offered only on public roads.

6860.8 On roads formally designated by the committee as hazardous because of speed or volume of traffic, or other physical conditions, students in all grades shall walk no farther than 3/10th of a mile to or from the designated bus stop. The committee shall advise the appropriate town of said hazards and encourage the town to take steps necessary to remedy the condition if possible.

6860.9 While the parent is responsible for the safety of the student between the residence and the designated bus stop, every attempt should be made to designate locations for the bus stops which are as safe as possible under local conditions and as considerate as possible of the continuous and smooth flow of commuter traffic.

6860.10 Students are encouraged to use the same bus stop for both AM and PM stops. If, because of day care requirements, a different PM stop or different PM route is needed said service may be provided both on a space available and a regular basis only. A student needing a different route for one day may be provided said service in the event of a legitimate family emergency. A student attending the Regional

High School may, for the purpose of providing day care or for transportation to a site of employment, ride any bus that provides that service. This right is restricted to the availability of space on the requested route. The transportation provider for the District will have the exclusive right of determining available space. Any request for deviation from this policy must be made through the office of the Assistant Superintendent of Schools 48 hours in advance of the requested change.

6860.11 No bus shall carry more students than its stated legal capacity; however, recognition shall be given to the need for "adult seating" on secondary and middle school runs.

6860.12 Routes shall be designed so that students spend the least amount of time necessary in traveling from the designated bus stop to their assigned schools.

6860.13 Transportation of the student between the designated bus stop and the assigned school shall be as continuous and orderly as possible.

6860.14 No student shall be charged for transportation services to and from school, or any field trip authorized to enhance the educational curriculum.

6860.15 Students attending approved private schools within the geographical boundaries of the school district will be accommodated on the most appropriate regular route as scheduled for students attending the public schools.

6860.16 To encourage conservation of energy, the Committee will allow District personnel to ride District school buses (Special Ed. excepted) to and from their school of employment, upon written approval of the Superintendent, provided:

1. Employee makes written request.
2. No re-routing or addition of bus stops is required to accommodate employee.
3. There is sufficient room on the bus.
4. The request does not prevent employee from meeting contractual obligations.

Applicable General Laws:

- 1) General Laws, Ch. 71, Sec. 7A and 16C
- 2) General Laws, Ch. 71, Sec. 47
- 3) General Laws, Ch. 71, Sec. 71A
- 4) General Laws, Ch. 76, Sec. 1
- 5) General Laws, Ch. 71B, Sec. 8 and 11
- 6) General Laws, Ch. 71, Sec. 68
- 7) General Laws, Ch. 74, Sec. 8A

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Revised: February 7, 2002 (Added last sentence to 6860.11)

Revised: November 13, 2003 (Removed identification of kindergarten as a separate category for designation of walking distances.)

Revised: April 14, 2005

Revised: September 27, 2007 (added "and communicate" to 6860.1; underlined answers to most frequently asked questions)

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