

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 196
Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Public Schools
Educating our students to reach their full potential

Series Number 707 Adopted December 1976 Revised June 2021

Title Student Transportation

1. **Transportation Eligibility** – District 196 will transport students within the parameters set by state statutes and regulations. Students who are not eligible according to the guidelines in this section may refer to Section 14, Fee-For-Service Transportation Option. The following students are eligible for transportation.
 - 1.1 Elementary School Students (kindergarten through grade five) – Elementary school students who reside more than one mile from their attendance area school.
 - 1.2 Middle School Students (grades six through eight) – Middle school students who reside more than one and one-half miles from their attendance area school.
 - 1.3 High School Students (grades nine through 12) – High school students who reside more than one and one-half miles from their attendance area school.
 - 1.4 A student’s distance from school, as referred to in this policy, is defined as the shortest distance from the student’s residence (where the front of the property meets the street), by reasonably safe walkway, street or highway that is accessible to the public, to the assigned entrance of the student’s attendance area school. If any portion of where the front of the residential property meets the street is outside this distance, the student will be provided busing to and from school.
 - 1.5 If the district deems student access to school unsafe, the guidelines above may be adjusted. Refer to Section 4 of Administrative Regulation 707.2AR, School Bus Safety, for details.
 - 1.6 Transportation for Elementary School Students in Daycare
 - 1.6.1 Transportation will only be provided to the elementary school in the attendance area that the daycare is located.
 - 1.6.2 Daycares will be considered the same as other residential properties in determining distances and bus stop locations.
 - 1.6.3 Transportation will be provided if the daycare meets the eligibility guidelines as stated in section 1.1 above and following the guidelines for bus routes as stated in Section 3 below.
2. **Safety** – The safety of students is the primary concern of the District 196 transportation program.
 - 2.1 Student Behavior – Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to follow the same behavioral standards while riding school district vehicles as are expected on school property or at school activities, functions or events, and additional specific transportation safety rules. All school rules are in effect while a student is riding a district vehicle or at a school bus stop.

- 2.1.1 Students will be informed of and required to abide by transportation and other district student behavior rules to help ensure the safety of students and transportation employees. Any student who violates the rules may be denied school or transportation privileges with notification of his or her parent or guardian. (See Administrative Regulation 503.3AR, Student Behavior Expectations and Responses for Behavior, for more information.)
 - 2.1.2 If a student's transportation privileges are revoked temporarily or permanently because of the student's misbehavior, the student's parent or guardian will be responsible for transporting the student to and from school.
 - 2.1.3 The policies in Section 2.1.2 above will be adjusted, as required by federal and state laws and regulations, for special education students who have individual education plans (IEPs). For more information, see Section 6 below or Administrative Regulation 503.3.1AR, Students Receiving Special Education Services: Responses for Behavior.
 - 2.1.4 Nonpublic and charter schools shall notify students receiving transportation services from District 196 of their requirement to comply with the school bus conduct and discipline policies of District 196 described in Administrative Regulations 707.2AR, School Bus Safety and 503.3AR, Student Behavior Expectations and Responses for Behavior.
- 2.2 Safety Training
- 2.2.1 The district will develop and implement programs to inform students and the public about safety issues related to student transportation.
 - 2.2.2 The district will provide students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 10 with age-appropriate school bus safety training on the following concepts:
 - 2.2.2.1 Transportation by school bus is a privilege and not a right;
 - 2.2.2.2 District policies for student conduct and school bus safety;
 - 2.2.2.3 Appropriate conduct while on the school bus;
 - 2.2.2.4 The danger zones surrounding a school bus;
 - 2.2.2.5 Procedures for safely boarding and leaving a school bus;
 - 2.2.2.6 Procedures for safe street or road crossing, and
 - 2.2.2.7 School bus evacuation.
 - 2.2.3 Safety Training Timeline
 - 2.2.3.1 All students enrolled in kindergarten through grade five who are transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first or second week of school must receive school bus safety training by the end of the third week of school.
 - 2.2.3.2 The district will provide school bus safety training to students enrolled in kindergarten through grade three twice during the school year.

- 2.2.3.3 All students enrolled in grades six through 10 who are transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first or second week of school must receive training by the end of the sixth week of school.
- 2.2.3.4 Students in kindergarten through grade 10 who enroll in school after the second week of school and are transported by school bus will undergo school bus safety training or receive bus safety instructional materials within four weeks of the first day of attendance.
- 2.2.3.5 The district may provide kindergarten students with school bus safety training before the first day of school.
- 2.2.3.6 Safety evacuation drills for student passengers will be conducted at least twice a year.
- 2.2.4 The district may also provide student safety education for bicycling and pedestrian safety for students in kindergarten through grade five.
- 2.2.5 The district will make reasonable accommodations for the school bus safety training of students known to speak English as a second language and students with disabilities.
- 2.2.6 The district's curriculum for transportation is maintained and available for review in the District Transportation Department.
- 2.2.7 A copy of the district school bus and bus stop rules will be available on the district website. Parents and guardians are asked to review the rules with their students.
- 2.2.8 Nonpublic and charter schools using district transportation are responsible for bus safety training for their students.
- 2.2.9 The district may make a school bus available for school bus safety training to nonpublic and charter schools in the district which have students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 10 who are transported by school bus at public expense.
- 2.3 The District 196 Coordinator of Transportation is designated to serve as the district's School Transportation Safety Director.
- 2.4 A description of district funds expended for school bus safety activities for student transportation is kept in the District Transportation Department and is available for review.
- 3. **Bus Routes** – Bus routes will be established so no student rides the bus for more than one hour and 15 minutes one way.
 - 3.1 Bus stops will be established at suitable places so students can be transported within the eligibility guidelines described in Section 1 above. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children get to and from their assigned bus stop.

- 3.1.1 Elementary school students (kindergarten through grade five) will be picked up and dropped off at a designated school bus stop within one mile of their home or daycare. (Students who ride the bus home from school after participating in after-school activities will be dropped off in accordance with Section 4 below.)
 - 3.1.2 Middle school students (grades six through eight) will be picked up and dropped off at a designated school bus stop within one and one-half miles of their home. (Students who ride the bus home from school after participating in after-school activities will be dropped off in accordance with Section 4 below.)
 - 3.1.3 High school students (grades nine through 12) will be picked up and dropped off at a designated school bus stop within one and one-half miles of their home. (Students who ride the bus home from school after participating in after-school activities will be dropped off in accordance with Section 4 below.)
 - 3.1.4 Except to transport special education students, buses will generally not be routed down cul-de-sacs because of the safety threat to small children and property caused by the bus turning around and/or backing up in a small area. However, in compliance with Sections 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 above, school buses will be routed down cul-de-sacs which are one mile long or longer.
- 3.2 Exceptions – Except for the cases noted below or an emergency, a student will only be released from the school bus at his or her designated bus stop or at school.
 - 3.2.1 Students may be picked up or dropped off at a destination other than their normal bus stop only when requested in writing by the student's parent or guardian and approved by an appropriate school administrator. A written request must be submitted each time a different drop-off or pick-up point is desired.
 - 3.2.2 The district will provide transportation to and/or from the residence of an elementary school student's daycare provider only if the residence meets transportation eligibility guidelines as noted in Section 1.
 - 3.2.3 The district will provide transportation for high school work program students between the student's school and work site.
4. **After-School Transportation from School to Home** – Transportation may be provided on a limited basis for students in grades K through 12 who stay after school to participate in school activities. Bus stops will be established at suitable places so students can be transported within the eligibility guidelines described in Section 1 above. When this service is available, students will be dropped off at a designated school bus stop within one mile of their home.
5. **Charter Transportation** – Schools and district departments may request charters through the Transportation Department for transportation other than between home and school.

6. **Transportation for Special Education Students/Students with Disabilities** – The transportation program for students with disabilities will encompass all authorized transportation services, district and contracted, required to transport students with disabilities. Such students include, but are not limited to, district students who have temporary or permanent physical, mental and/or emotional disabilities.
7. **Transfer Student Transportation** – Students who attend a school other than the school in their attendance area on the basis of approved district transfers may be transported within the guidelines of Policy 502, Student Transfers.
8. **Nonpublic and Charter School Student Transportation**
 - 8.1 Transportation service will be provided to and from school for district students who attend nonpublic and charter schools within district boundaries, and for district students who attend nonpublic and charter schools outside district boundaries, if requested, in accordance with state statute.
 - 8.2 District administration shall annually, and as necessary, consult with the appropriate nonpublic and charter school administration about transportation operations, however, final decisions are within the sole discretion, control and management of the district.
9. **Transportation of Persons Other Than Students** – Except for the cases noted below, only students assigned to the school bus by the district shall be transported on the school bus.
 - 9.1 District 196 employees are permitted to ride school buses for official purposes only.
 - 9.2 Other people are permitted to ride school buses only with the consent of the principal or designee.
10. **Employee Transportation of Students** – District employees may transport district students in their own, a district-owned, or a contracted (rented) Type III vehicle (car or van) for scheduled activities such as cocurricular activities, field trips and other circumstances, as approved by an administrator.
 - 10.1 Transportation of students by district employees in their own or rental vehicles may be allowed if the employee and the vehicle meet federal, state and district guidelines, as described in Administrative Regulation 707.12AR, Transportation of Students by Employees in a Type III (Car or Van) Vehicle.
 - 10.2 A van or bus converted to a seating capacity of 10 or fewer and used by an employee to transport students on or after August 1, 1999, must have been originally manufactured to comply with the passenger safety standards.
 - 10.3 The district will not knowingly allow an employee to transport students in a Type III vehicle if the person has been convicted of an offense that disqualifies him or her from operating a school bus.
11. **Students Transported in Vehicles Other Than Those Provided by the District**
 - 11.1 It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility (or the responsibility of the adult student age 18 or older) to provide transportation between school sites when students need to go from one school site to another for educational reasons during the school day. The district will permit students to travel between school sites (with the exception described in Section 11.2 below) if the student's parent or guardian, or the adult student age 18 or older, signs the district's release of

liability form (Procedure 707.13P, Release of Liability for Students Transporting Themselves Between School Sites During the School Day).

- 11.2 Students will not be permitted to drive to or from a building housing elementary students except to drop off or pick up a student who attends school in that building, or to participate in a specific program (such as mentoring or tutoring) with staff or students in that building.

12. **Bus Maintenance**

- 12.1 All district-owned buses and vans will be maintained in safe operating conditions through a systematic preventive maintenance and inspection program, and will be inspected annually by the Minnesota State Patrol.
- 12.2 Daily pre-trip inspections of vehicles and special equipment will be required. The person conducting the inspection shall promptly report any defects to be immediately corrected.
- 12.3 Any vehicle designed to carry more than 10 passengers must meet all legal requirements for a school bus.
- 12.4 Type III Vehicles – A Type III vehicle is defined as a car or van designed to carry 10 passengers or less.
 - 12.4.1 Any Type III vehicle used to transport students must carry all emergency equipment, including a fire extinguisher, first aid kit, bodily fluids clean-up kit, flashlight and reflective emergency warning triangle.
 - 12.4.2 If owned by the district, the name of the district will be clearly marked on the side of the vehicle.
 - 12.4.3 All district-owned Type III vehicles will be properly licensed, insured and inspected.

13. **School Bus Drivers and Chaperones**

- 13.1 Responsibilities – All bus drivers and chaperones will be adequately prepared, physically and mentally, each day to perform their required duties which are described in the District 196 Transportation Department Employee Manual. Those duties include, but are not limited to, the following items:
 - 13.1.1 Operating the vehicle safely and efficiently;
 - 13.1.2 Conducting thorough pre-trip and post-trip inspections of the vehicle and special equipment;
 - 13.1.3 Ensuring the safety, welfare and orderly conduct of passengers on the vehicle;
 - 13.1.4 Meeting emergency situations in accordance with operating procedures;
 - 13.1.5 Communicating effectively with school staff, students, parents, law enforcement officials and motorists;
 - 13.1.6 Completing required reports;
 - 13.1.7 Completing required training programs successfully, and
 - 13.1.8 Providing maximum safety for passengers during loading and unloading.

13.2 Training

13.2.1 All new school bus drivers will be provided with pre-service training, including in-vehicle (driving) instruction, before transporting students and shall meet the competencies specified by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. This will include training, as necessary, in the following areas: pre-trip inspection, fundamentals and techniques of school bus driving, special education transportation, emergency procedures, first aid, private or confidential student information, student discipline, human relations and chemical abuse.

13.2.2 All school bus drivers and chaperones shall receive ongoing training in compliance with state and federal laws, school district policy and department needs.

13.3 Evaluation – Drivers must meet minimum standards as prescribed by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. All drivers will be evaluated at least once annually.

14. **Fee-For-Service Transportation Option**

14.1 State law allows school districts to charge a fee for transportation of students residing less than two miles from their attendance area school, except transportation for individuals with special needs.

14.2 The fee-for-transportation option will be available for students ineligible for transportation as provided in Section 1 above through completion of the fee-for-service registration process (District Procedure 707.4P, Student Transportation Fee-For-Service Registration).

15. **Policy Review** – This policy will be reviewed annually and amended as appropriate.

References: - Minnesota Rules, 3520.1500, Free and Equal Transport to District Boundary
- Minnesota Statute 121A.59, Bus Transportation a Privilege Not a Right
- Minnesota Statute 123B.86, Equal Treatment
- Minnesota Statute 123B.88, Independent School Districts, Transportation
- Minnesota Statute 123B.90, Student Training
- Minnesota Statute 123B.91, School District Bus Safety Responsibilities
- Minnesota Statute 124E.15, Transportation