

**Administrative Procedures for Policy # 4201 (Support Services)
Regarding Student Transportation School Vehicle/Bus Stops and Seating Assignments**

I. Definitions

- A. Alternate School Vehicle – a vehicle that is used to transport pupils from home to school or school to home as well as to and from school related activities that is neither a Type I nor a Type II school vehicle as stated in Transportation Article 11-154, Annotated Code of Maryland
- B. Authorized Passengers - those individuals who are approved to use transportation services provided by the Board. It shall be deemed to include, but be limited to, students and teachers of Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS)
- C. Board –Board of Education of Education of Calvert County
- D. Bus Route - the route, as determined by the Director of Transportation, that a particular School Vehicle/bus will travel to and from school to pick up and discharge students, and includes all scheduled bus stops along the route
- E. Contractor - an individual or entity contracted by the Board to provide student transportation services
- F. Driver – a driver who is seeking or has been exclusively certified at the local level to operate a school vehicle/bus, taxi, or alternative school vehicle
- G. Director of Transportation- the individual responsible for student transportation for Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS)
- H. Parent – a student’s biological or adoptive parent, legal guardian, or an individual who is legally responsible for a child’s welfare
- I. School - any educational facility
- J. School Vehicle/Bus – a motorized mode of transportation that meets all federal and state laws/regulations, as well as local Board rules, policies, procedures, requirements related to transporting CCPS students to/from school
- K. School year - the period of time students must be transported to/from school
- L. Seating Assignment – location on a school vehicle/bus where a student is assigned to sit
- M. Student - an individual legally enrolled in CCPS or who is placed in another school by the Superintendent or designee or an IEP team
- N. Superintendent - the Superintendent of Calvert County Public Schools

II. School Vehicle/Bus Stops and Seating Assignments

- A. Student Welfare Prior to Pick-Up and After Discharge

1. The school system assumes no responsibility for the safety and well-being of children prior to being picked up or after they have been discharged from the school vehicle/bus, unless the driver and/or riders witness an incident at the school vehicle/bus stop location. Should the driver and/or riders witness an incident among students at the bus stop location, the driver is to document the incident on a Bus Behavior Referral Form and submit the completed form to the school. If the incident involves persons other than students, then the school vehicle/bus driver will notify the appropriate authorities, which may include the Contractor, the school, Transportation office, law enforcement, etc.
2. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure proper care and supervision are provided prior to pick-up and after discharge of the student. Students and their families assume responsibility for any harm/damage done to persons or properties as students are walking to or from their assigned school vehicle/bus stop
3. When students are in pre-k through 2nd grade, schools, parents, and school vehicle/bus drivers must work together to ensure that an appropriate adult or other individual as specified by the parent is present before discharging these younger students.
 - a. If no one from the family/daycare is at the younger student's stop to receive the student, the school vehicle/bus driver will contact the transportation office and return the younger student to his/her school
 - b. Notes from the parent will be required if they seek unsupervised drop-off of these younger students is requested. One note must be provided to the driver and the other note must be provided to the school principal

B. Routes

1. Routes are established and designed by the Director of Transportation or designee so that each route is maximized for safety, efficiency, and economy
2. Vehicles will be assigned to operate on paved roads only. Paved roads shall be considered those roads that are a minimum of twenty feet wide. However, because of established walking distances, not all paved roads will be served by transportation services
3. Routes shall be planned to minimize or eliminate the need for backing the school vehicle/bus. If the school vehicle/bus must back up, a safe and adequate turning place must be available. Buses should not back in a heavily populated area
4. A school vehicle/bus may be routed into a cul-de-sac if the cul-de-sac is a minimum of 94 feet in diameter and it is clear of obstacles

C. Assignment of School Vehicle/Bus Stop

1. Students shall be assigned the school vehicle/bus stop nearest their homes as determined by the Director of Transportation or designee. At no time will the maximum one-way walking distance to the school vehicle/bus stop from the

end of the driveway of the student's residence be greater than one-half mile for elementary students and greater than one mile for secondary students. Daycare providers are responsible for transporting students to and from school vehicle/bus stops. Students will also not be required to walk along roads with a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour or greater in order to access a bus stop

2. Students shall be picked up and discharged at their designated stops. These stops will be determined by the Director of Transportation or designee and will be based on regulations as stated in COMAR 13A.06.07.14, Routing and Operating Procedures
3. Under most conditions, transportation on a regional program route provides curb-to-curb service. This means that the school vehicle/bus picks-up and drops-off the student at the curb in front of the student's home or daycare location
 - a. There are some exceptions to this procedure
 - 1) Road conditions such as private, dead-end, dirt, gravel roadways, or narrow roadways may make it necessary for the Transportation Office to establish the pick-up/drop-off site at a safe location away from the home or daycare
 - 2) An effort will be made to locate the stop as close as possible to the home or daycare; however, parents/daycare providers are responsible for getting students to and from school vehicle/bus stop locations. When an escort is appropriate, it will be the responsibility of the parent/daycare providers to escort the student to and from the pick-up and drop-off location. The school vehicle/bus driver or attendant will not escort the student to or from the home/daycare
4. In some instances, the pick-up or drop-off location may require the student to cross the roadway. The guardian/daycare provider and bus attendant will escort the student across the roadway to and from the pick-up and drop-off location in such cases

D. Changes in Assigned School Vehicle/Bus Stops

1. Permanent Changes to School Vehicle/Bus Stop
 - a. A written request with rationale for a permanent change of school vehicle/bus stops within the school attendance area in which the student resides may be made by the parent to the school staff which enters transportation information into the student database.
 - b. The Director of Transportation or designee will determine on a case-by-case basis if the request is to be approved or denied. Items which may be considered in evaluating such requests include, but are not limited to:
 - 1) Whether the change will provide a substantive benefit to the student

- 2) Whether the change does not circumvent safety or efficiency
 - 3) Whether adequate seats are available on the school vehicle/bus serving the requested school vehicle/bus stop
 - 4) Whether the requested stop meets the distance guidelines regarding elementary and secondary students
 - c. Upon approval, requests for permanent changes will be effective for the remainder of the school year only
 - d. Requests may be granted on a provisional basis and must be made and approved on an annual basis. Approval of provisional requests in preceding years will not guarantee approval in subsequent years
2. Temporary Changes to a School Vehicle/Bus Stop Assignment
- a. Requests for a temporary change in school vehicle/bus stop pick up or discharge locations may be made using the Guest Rider Request Form. Temporary changes will be made for family emergencies, only.
 - b. The principal or designee, in their sole discretion, will determine on a case-by-case basis if the temporary change is to be approved or denied. Items which may be considered by the principal in evaluating such requests include, but are not limited to:
 - 1) Whether the change will assist in meeting an immediate, temporary need of the student or parent
 - 2) Whether adequate seats are available on the school vehicle/bus serving the requested school vehicle/bus stop
 - c. Upon approval, requests for temporary changes will only be effective for the day or days approved
 - d. A written notice must be given to the school vehicle/bus driver by the principal or designee
 - e. Requests must be made on each occasion and approval provided for each request. Approval of prior requests will not guarantee approval of subsequent requests
3. Route Extension Requests to extend a route and/or a bus stop
- a. Requests to extend an existing route and/or add a stop shall be made to the Director of Transportation using the Route Extension Request Form
 - b. Upon receipt of the completed Route Extension Request Form, the Director of Transportation or designee will make a final determination on whether to approve or deny the request. The Director of Transportation or designee may take anything considered relevant to the request into account in making the final decision. Considerations may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1) How far the extension request is for, and whether it is within the minimum walking distance to a school vehicle/bus stop as

set forth herein (a one-way distance of one-half mile for elementary students and one mile for secondary students)

- 2) Whether there is a safe and adequate turnaround where necessary
 - 3) The traffic patterns, traffic volume, traffic control devices, speed limit, alignment of road, road width and composition, road shoulders, walkways, sight distance, and grade level of students
 - 4) Any medically documented physical incapacity of the student. The Director of Transportation or designee may request a review of any medical documentation by the Supervisor of Student Services/designee
- c. Where the extension request would require a vehicle to travel on any road not maintained by the state or county, the following requirements must be met prior to the Director of Transportation or designee considering the request:
- 1) The owner or controlling entity of any such road must provide written confirmation to the Board of the following:
 - i. The Board has permission to authorize the operation of school buses/vehicles, or other Board-approved vehicles on the roads in question
 - ii. All emergency and/or law enforcement vehicles that may need access to the roads because of a school vehicle/bus being on the road have express permission to use the road
 - iii. All State and local laws, regulations, rules, policies, procedures, and standards regarding roads and vehicular/pedestrian traffic, including, but not limited to road conditions, parking and traffic controls on public roads are in effect on the road(s) in question
 - iv. The owner or controlling entity shall provide a copy of a binding written contract, deemed acceptable by the Director of Transportation for the maintenance of said roads, including but not limited to, snow removal
 - d. A written response will be sent within ten (10) school days or as soon as practicable of the receipt of the request
 - e. Upon receipt of the Director of Transportation or designee's decision, a parent may appeal in writing within thirty (30) days to the Director's immediate supervisor

E. Seating Assignments

1. All students are required to sit in assigned seats as determined and directed by the school vehicle/bus driver

2. The school vehicle/bus driver may change student seating assignments at any time, for any reason
3. All requests for seating assignment changes from a parent or student shall be made to the driver who, in his/her sole discretion, will determine if the seating assignment is changed
4. Administrators may request that a school vehicle/bus driver make seat assignment changes which are in the best interest of students, or the school administrator may make the change unilaterally.