

2023

**PARENT HANDBOOK – SPECIAL EDUCATION
TRANSPORTATION**



DISPATCH OFFICE (925) 825-7440 extension 3710

**Mt. Diablo Unified School District
Transportation Department
9/20/2023**

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

Provide equitable transportation with outstanding customer service to our students, parents, and schools. Provide the safest, most efficient, and most cost-effective transportation service. Improve self through personal and professional growth opportunities, and continually develop a work environment where each group member is respected, valued, and cherished while being their authentic selves and conducive to achieving our mission.

Transportation Team

TRANSPORTATION ELIGIBILITY

IEP teams determine eligibility for transportation as a related service on a per student basis. Generally speaking, students placed at a school other than their home school in order to access a particular program are eligible for transportation services. In addition, students who are unable to access transportation options similar to same age peers due to their disability may also be eligible for transportation.

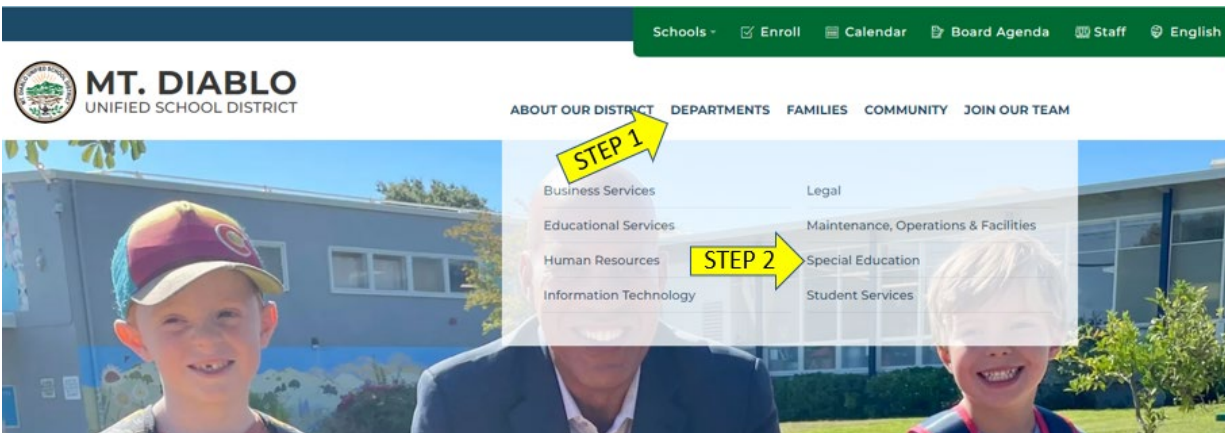
All parents have the right to request inter-district transfers per district policy. However, students whose parents elect to transfer their students to programs other than those assigned by the district as part of the IEP process (i.e. Intra-district transfers, etc.), transportation will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

EMERGENCY FORM

In order to keep emergency information on each child as current as possible, parents/guardians will be required to provide transportation information two times per school year, once at beginning of the school year and once for extended school year. This may be completed electronically.

The Special Education Office will provide a link to an electronic form for parents to complete. The link to the Transportation Request Form may be found on the MDUSD website under the Special Education Department Tab.

Start by going to www.mdusd.org, then clicking on the departments tab as shown, and then selecting Special Education, click the Yellow Bus.



If internet is not available, parents/guardians may contact the District Office, Special Education Department, Wing D, or the student's school office for assistance to access and complete the form.

Parents will be provided with a deadline by which all information must be provided, typically six to eight weeks before the start of the school term. Delays in sending the information may result in a delay in transportation starting.

BUS STOPS

Under most conditions, when a student is eligible for transportation services per their IEP, special education students are transported from their home to school and back. Services allow for pick up and drop off at a day care facility within the boundaries of the Mt. Diablo Unified School District. Please be advised that no student may have more than one pick-up location and one drop off location.

Unless physically unsafe for the bus, the stop will be in front of and on the same side of the street as the student's address. Pick up or release of a rider will not be made in any area determined to be unsafe. Safety always takes precedence.

Each child is assigned to a defined bus route and may be assigned to a particular seat. State law requires that no child be permitted to leave the bus at a point other than his/her assigned stop.

CHANGES

Parents or guardians may not make private arrangements with the bus driver.

Routes are established using software that provides for the shortest, safest route possible. Drivers must follow these established routes. They may not make changes in these routes to accommodate parent requests unless authorized by the Transportation office. GPS is used to monitor departure and arrival times and to ensure the most efficient route possible.

If you move or make changes that affect transportation during the school year, please notify your student's school office at least ten (10) school days in advance. You will need to submit proof of residence to your child's school. In addition, you will need to complete a new Request for Transportation, indicating all changes. For expediency, this form is available on the website at under the Special Education Department Tab.

BUS SCHEDULES

Prior to the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians are notified of the pick-up and drop-off schedule. Buses, routes and times may change throughout the school year. Parent/guardian will be notified of time changes. Please note that buses may run late during days of unfavorable weather conditions, traffic accidents or road construction.

PICK- UP PROCEDURE

Students are scheduled onto routes that are the most expedient way to ensure all students arrive at school for instruction with the shortest ride time possible.

Requests for earlier or later pick up times to address parent work schedules, or day care schedules cannot be accommodated.

Students must be supervised by an adult, be ready five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled time and watching for the bus. Drivers are prohibited from honking the bus horn, texting parents from the bus or use any other method to announce their arrival (i.e. using back up beepers).

The parent /guardian is responsible for getting the student to the bus. The bus driver may not leave the bus except to operate the lift gate for students in wheelchairs. It is the bus driver's responsibility to load and unload the students and to ensure that the wheelchairs are secured and all seatbelts are fastened.

Buses must operate on a definite schedule in order for classes to start on time. Buses will not depart from a stop prior to the designated time and will wait only one (1) minute before continuing on the route. This wait time is only for occasional delays, not scheduled in the route as part of the daily route time.

Repeated delays are reported to the Special Education Department and your child's transportation service may be affected.

PROCEDURE FOR ARRIVAL AT HOME OR AT A DESIGNATED DROP-OFF

The parent/guardian or designated adult must be at the assigned stop to receive the student from the bus unless the student transportation form indicates that the student may be left unattended. No student is permitted to leave the bus at any point other than the assigned stop. If there is an unforeseen event, and the designated adult is unable to meet the bus, arrangements must be made for another adult to be there when the bus arrives. If the parent/guardian feels the student does not need to be met by an adult, please complete and submit the Drop-Off Permission Slip form available from your Driver or online at the district website under Departments/Transportation. Completed forms may be given to the driver.

In the event that no adult is available to meet the student and there is no unattended authorization on file, the bus driver will notify the dispatcher by radio immediately. If other students are on board, the bus driver will continue on route.

The Transportation Office will make every attempt to locate a parent/guardian or alternate drop off point using the information provided on the Transportation Form. At the completion of the route, if no responsible adult is located, the student may be returned to the school or the district office or the local law enforcement may be contacted.

Repeated instances of not being met by an adult at drop off may affect your child's service.

In the event that your child misses the bus in the morning or after school, it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to transport the student to/from school. The buses wait up to 10 minutes after dismissal bell for the students to board the bus.

ILLNESS OR ABSENCE PROCEDURES -DO NOT SEND A SICK CHILD TO SCHOOL

In fairness to your child and the other children, keep a sick child at home. Most doctors recommend that children be free of fever for at least 24 hours before sending them back to school. If a child becomes ill at school, the parent/guardian is required to transport the child home.

RIDE CANCELLATIONS

Please notify the Transportation Office at 925-825-7440 extension 3710.

- If your child will be absent from school for one day. (at least one hour prior to the scheduled pick-up)
- If your child will be absent from school for an extended period of time.
- If you choose to drive your child to/from school.

If your student is a no show/no call for 3 days, they will be placed on Will Call and you must call the Transportation Dispatch office at least 24 hours in advance to resume the bus.

Please note - you must also notify your school office of absences. If your NPS student is transported on a district bus, absences should also be reported to the Transportation Department at 925-825-7440 x 3710.

LOST ARTICLES

Please label all personal items sent to school. The Transportation Department assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen articles including cell phones or other electronic devices. Any articles found on the bus will be held until claimed or ten (10) days past the end of the school year. The school district will not be responsible for personal items lost or damaged on the bus.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior to and from school while riding the school bus. Parents may be held responsible for intentional damages caused by a student.

Please discuss the following with your child:

1. Students may be assigned to a particular seat.
2. Seat belts are to be worn and students must remain seated at all times when the bus is in motion.

3. For safety purposes, students should use quiet voices on the bus.
4. All cell phones or music devices must be worn with headphones or ear buds.
5. Hands, arms, legs and feet must be inside the school bus at all times. No items may be thrown out of the bus at any time.
6. Appropriate language is to be used and foul or abusive language is prohibited.
7. Eating or drinking is not permitted on the school bus, unless medically necessary.
8. Do not bring animals, birds, or reptiles on the bus.
9. No alcoholic beverages, cigarettes or other smoking devices, drugs, or weapons of any kind are allowed on the bus.
10. No items may be brought aboard the bus that could be hazardous to the driver or other passengers.
11. Vandalism to the interior or exterior of the bus is prohibited and violators may be held liable.
12. No large items or glass containers are allowed on the bus.
13. Be courteous, respectful and cooperative with the driver at all times.

CAR SEATS, WHEELCHAIRS AND SEAT BELTS

If the driver determines that due to safety reasons a student requires seat belt securing device, one may be used to ensure your child remains fastened into his/her seatbelt.

Students who cannot sit safely secured by a seat belt must be transported in an approved car seat/star seat (if appropriate to their size), safety vest, or wheelchair. Special equipment must be listed in the student's IEP.

Wheelchairs must be equipped with brakes and seat belts and are to be properly maintained by the owner of the chair. (Velcro fasteners do not meet minimum state requirements and cannot be the sole source of seat restraint). All wheelchair brakes must be maintained to prevent the wheels from moving when the brakes are applied.

Power wheelchairs transported on school buses shall be capable of being locked in gear when placed in a school bus, or they must have an independent braking system capable of holding the wheelchair in place. Wheelchair power must be turned off prior to being transported in a school bus. Batteries used to propel power

wheelchairs shall be both leak-resistant and spill-resistant or must be placed in a leak-resistant container. Batteries must be secured to the wheelchair frame in such a manner as to prevent separation in the event of an accident.

Any wheelchair, which does not meet minimum state requirements, will not be transported. It is the parent's responsibility to provide equipment that meets the minimum safety requirements and maintain such equipment in proper, working order.

Wheelchairs must be occupied by the student. At no time, will an empty wheelchair will be transported.

All students are required to wear seat belts while riding the school bus. Seat belts are not to be unfastened until the bus has stopped at the proper destination.

SCHOOL BUS EQUIPMENT

All school buses are inspected daily by the driver, routinely by District mechanics, and annually by the Department of California Highway Patrol. Each vehicle must be certified so that it meets all applicable regulations and laws relating to pupil transportation in the State of California. All district operated buses are equipped with GPS which may be used to track arrival and departure times of buses. In addition, some buses may be equipped with video cameras which may be reviewed at a later time if needed by district staff and outside agencies.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

The Mt. Diablo Unified School District and State law require that all school bus drivers attend regularly scheduled safety meetings and in-service training sessions to maintain skill levels. State law requires each driver to have a valid School Bus Driver Certificate, first aid training, a physical exam, and traffic and criminal clearance.

SCHOOL BUS ACCIDENTS

A school bus accident is any accident, no matter how minor, involving a school bus with students on board. When an accident occurs, it is the Transportation Department's responsibility to determine the extent of the damages and if there are any injuries and, in every case to notify the proper authorities which includes California Highway Patrol, the driver's supervisor and an ambulance if necessary. The Transportation Office will notify school and district personnel as soon as it is safe to do so.

If students are involved in an accident, the parents must be notified by their school of attendance and if after hours, by the Transportation Department. The school sites have the emergency cards with the current emergency information. The Dispatcher will call the school and let them know which students are involved in the event.

If you are notified that your child is on a bus and there has been an incident with your child's school bus, DO NOT go to the accident site as this may slow down the investigation. California Highway Patrol will not release students until the investigation is over and going to the site may cause delays, even in minor incidents. Parents will be notified of drop off location and time or dropped at assigned drop location with new estimated arrival time.