

Section II

Transportation of Students with Disabilities

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WHAT IS SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION

Specifically, special education transportation is defined as "travel to and from school and between schools; travel in and around schools; and specialized equipment, such as special or adapted buses, lifts and ramps, if needed for an identified student with a disability."

There are two types of special education transportation defined in California Education Code.

1. Education Code 41850(d) defines **"special education transportation"** as:

"The transportation of severely disabled special day class students, and orthopedically-impaired pupils who require a vehicle with a wheelchair lift, who received transportation in the prior fiscal year, as specified in their individualized education program." It also includes, "a vehicle that is used to transport special education students."

2. EC 41850(b)(5) defines **"home-to-school transportation services"** for students with exceptional needs as:

"The transportation of individuals with exceptional needs as specified in their individualized education programs, who do not receive special education transportation as defined in subdivision (d)."

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION

Special education transportation is a "related service" and as such only students with identified needs resulting from, or associated with, an identified disabling condition are eligible to receive special transportation.

Under E.C. 41850(d), eligible students would be:

1. students with severe disabilities who are enrolled in severely disabled special day classes, and
2. students with orthopedic impairments.

In both cases, eligibility would be based on a student's needs related to his/her physical and/or mental capacity.

Under EC 41850(b), eligible students would be:

1. Students with severe disabilities who are not enrolled in special day classes or otherwise enrolled in programs serving students with profound disabilities; students with orthopedic disabilities who do not use wheelchairs or require lifts; students with other health impairments, learning disabilities or other cognitive disabilities whose disabilities make it problematic to get to school in the same manner as non-disabled students; or
2. Students who live beyond a reasonable distance to their school and would not, without transportation, have access to appropriate special education instruction and related services at no cost.

In each of the cases above, eligibility is based on the specific needs of the student.

WHO DETERMINES IF A STUDENT NEEDS SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION

The IEP team determines whether a student needs special education transportation.

HOW IS ELIGIBILITY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION DETERMINED

In reviewing the needs of each student with a disability, the IEP team should ask: *"Does the student's disability make **it** problematic to get to school in the same manner as non-disabled students?"*

The specific needs of the student must be the primary consideration when an IEP team is determining any transportation needs. If the answer to the above question is "yes," the IEP team should consider what type transportation is needed. If, on the other hand, the student can get to school in the same manner as non-disabled students, then special education transportation may not be needed.

The following eligibility descriptions align themselves to E.C. 41850(d) and EC 41850(b) eligibility criteria. IEP teams can evaluate the need for special education transportation using the four categories of physical accessibility, mental capacity, medical and health needs, and other transportation needs.

1. **Physical accessibility:** For a student using a wheelchair, physical accessibility to school is severely limited by physical barriers, such as curbs, narrow sidewalks, and busy streets.

2. **Mental capacity:** The mental capacity of the student severely limits his/her ability to arrive at school on time, to avoid getting lost, to avoid dangerous traffic situations, or avoid any other potentially dangerous situation on the way to and from school.
3. **Medical and health needs:** The use of regular transportation or other means of attending school creates a potential risk to the student in terms of his/her health, e.g., regular bus route is too long, and student is prone to tire easily; the distance needed to walk or wheel oneself to school is too long for the student; the student does not have the strength to walk or wheel himself/herself to school; and/or life support equipment is needed for the student.
4. **Other transportation needs:** The student's special education services are not located at the neighborhood school and/or the student needs mid-day transportation for other service needs, such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, mental health services, or community-based classes.

HOW IS THE NEED FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION DOCUMENTED IN THE IEP

The need for special education transportation must be recorded in the **IEP**. Specific transportation requirements should be identified, i.e., specific modifications and adaptive equipment needed; type (*school to school, door to door, etc.*); frequency and duration of special transportation services; and any other special considerations, such as a bus monitor, non-school site transportation, etc. *(Note that the type of vehicle, the selection of the equipment, the bus routes and locations for bus stops are related to the function and operation of the school district Transportation Department and fall under the decision-making authority of the district.)*

The student's IEP must be approved by the parent or guardian prior to initiating special education transportation services. Any change in special education transportation services, including discontinuation of the service, requires an IEP meeting. If an IEP or amendment is not specific about the student's transportation needs, an amendment will be requested. Changes to a student's transportation arrangements (change of address, type of pickup, accommodations needed) typically take between 3-10 days to begin.

WHAT ARE SOME SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Special education transportation options may include, but are not limited to, any of the following:

No transportation, Student arrives/leaves school in the same manner as non-disabled students when there is no district-provided transportation.

Regular school bus transportation. Student use the same regular school bus as non-disabled students when there is district-provided transportation.

Regular school bus transportation with modification. Students use the same regular school bus as non-disabled students, with an arranged corner stop near student's home or at the end of road leading to the student's home.

Public transportation. Student uses public transportation, with reimbursement of the cost given to the parents.

School-to-non-school district service provider. Student may be transported, to and from school to a service provider not located at a school site. Special Education transportation may be provided by a regular school bus, special education transportation bus, or other district-approved transportation provider.

Point-To-Point. Student is provided special education transportation between the student's home, or at the end of road leading to the student's home, and the location of his/her special education services. Special Education transportation may be provided by a regular school bus, special education transportation bus, or other district-approved transportation provider.

A transportation option might also be a parent voluntarily transporting his/her child. If a parent chooses not to utilize bus transportation offered by the district, the parent will not be entitled for reimbursement. If the parent is transporting and being reimbursed, the parent will be paid the rate of reimbursement that is paid to district employees for travel. The IEP should specify the details of this arrangement, including mileage reimbursement rate, the standard daily mileage for which reimbursement will be made, the frequency of reimbursement, and any documentation required of the parents.

WHEN SHOULD TRANSPORTATION PERSONNEL BE INVITED TO IEP MEETINGS

Transportation personnel should be invited to all IEP meetings when there is a disagreement about special education transportation issues.

HOW IS DISCIPLINE OF DISABLED STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION HANDLED

There may be times when a student may need to be suspended from special education transportation services. (See EC 48900-48900.7 for Grounds for Suspension.) A proposed suspension from special education transportation services, however, is LASER Procedures - Transportation of Students with Disabilities

subject *to* the same rules as a proposed out-of-school suspension. It can constitute a significant change in placement, which would initiate a manifestation determination IEP meeting, if: 1) the student is suspended from special education transportation services as a disciplinary measure; and 2) the district does not provide another mode *of* transportation.

A significant change in placement requires an IEP meeting to determine whether the student's behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability. If the behavior is determined by the IEP team *to* be a manifestation of the disability, special education transportation services cannot be terminated. Although a student with disabilities can be suspended from special education transportation services, the student cannot be denied transportation on a permanent basis. The district is required to arrange for alternative means of transportation while a student has been suspended from riding the school bus.

WHAT ARE THE PROCEDURES FOR BUS DISCIPLINE

The following suggested procedures are recommended for bus discipline *of* a student receiving special education services:

1. Upon occurrence of a discipline problem, the driver should submit a discipline referral to the program teacher or site/district administration. The program teacher and/or site/district administration then would decide as *to* the appropriate behavior management strategies to use.
2. Upon the second discipline referral, an IEP meeting should be held with the parents, transportation personnel, site administrator, and teachers *to* develop a behavior intervention plan.
3. Upon the third discipline referral, an IEP meeting should be held with parent, transportation personnel, site administrator, teachers, and a representative from the district. During this meeting, the behavior intervention plan should be reviewed. Some suspension from the bus may be considered at this time.

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES

Parents and School Staff:

The following information describes the general procedures for transporting special education students. *If* you have any questions regarding these procedures, please contact the district transportation department at: 331-7170 at the prompt press 2 for Dispatch.

1. For safety reasons, students cannot be transported without a current emergency card. It is the parent's responsibility to keep all information current.
2. Only parents or designated people (those who are listed on the emergency card) can put students on/off the bus. If parents wish their high school-aged student to be released without a responsible person present, this will be discussed at the IEP meeting. If the team agrees, then a note authorizing the driver to leave the student unattended will be on file at the district's transportation department.
3. For safety reasons, parents are not allowed to enter the bus to assist their child.
4. Drivers will not leave a bus stop before the scheduled time. If a student is not at the bus stop by the scheduled time, the driver will call into Dispatch to document the absent student. Drivers will not wait past the scheduled pick-up time.
5. Parents are asked to call the district's transportation department by 6:30 AM when the student is not going to ride the bus or when the student will be returning to school after being out ill. After three days of no-show, drivers will stop going by that student's house until a parent/guardian calls transportation and requests service be resumed.
6. To prevent confusion and disruption in bus schedules, students should be picked up and dropped off to the same address daily. The morning and afternoon addresses, however, may be different.
7. If a student does not use the district's special education transportation in the morning, the parent is responsible for notifying the district's transportation department if an afternoon pick-up is requested. If the district's transportation department is not notified, then it will be assumed that the parent will be returning to pick up the student.
8. For safety reasons, the bus driver cannot transport a student who appears to be ill. An ill student may become *severely* ill during the bus trip, thus potentially causing an emergency.
9. If a student requires a medical attendant, it is the parent's responsibility to call an IEP meeting to arrange for assistance. The driver cannot be an attendant as his/her responsibility is to operate the bus and provide safe transportation.
10. If the family moves or the parents need to change the address for pickup/drop off, the district's transportation department must be notified as soon as the change is known in order to rearrange the pick-up and drop-off schedules in a timely manner.

11. If the student becomes ill at school, the parent is responsible to transport the student home. School staff will notify the district's transportation department whenever this occurs so that the driver is not making an unnecessary trip.

12. After entering the bus, students will be seated with their safety belts fastened. Drivers will ensure that each student is securely in his/her seat.

13. For safety reasons, students may not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus.

14. Parents or a listed responsible person must be seen at the drop off location. For safety reasons, students will not be released from the bus without a responsible person present, unless special arrangements have been pre-approved. This is referring to Hand to Hand and Supervised students.

The procedure followed if an authorized adult is not home and an authorization to leave the student unattended is not approved is as follows: a) The driver will notify the district's transportation department. b) Transportation staff will call the student's home. c) The driver will continue the route with the student still on board.

d) After completion of the route, the driver will try once again to locate the parent via phone. e) If there is no success in locating the parent or authorized adult, the driver will release the student to the Police. If there are continued problems with delivery of a student, an IEP meeting will be held to discuss the problem. After the first attempt the driver will drop students in the area while Dispatch continues to contact a parent or emergency contact. The driver will make one last attempt to deliver student before leaving the area. At this point Dispatch will call the student's school and return the student back to school only if it is verified that there is a certificated employee at the school site. If it is after closing time at the school, is when local police and CPS is contacted. Very seldom do we have to call the police or call CPS. At least three attempts are made to drop the student.

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS SCHOOL BUS GUIDELINES

GOAL: The Transportation Department's goal is to provide efficient, reliable service on the safest form of transportation available.

MEETING YOUR STUDENT: It is expected that a parent or designee shall meet students that receive door to door and supervised service. The driver will attempt to

return to the stop after others have been dropped off. **NOTE: For safety reasons, students that are not met by a parent or designated guardian will be returned to their school or the local Police Department.**

SAFETY CONCERNS: Please do not send your child with food to eat on the bus. This could be a choking hazard. All school supplies should be in backpack and not in use while riding the bus.

STOP TIMES: In order to keep to the route schedule, parents are asked to have students ready 5 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. It is highly recommended waiting outside the house for the bus. Drivers will not sound the horn. There are extenuating circumstances that could cause a bus to be delayed. After waiting 15 minutes, parents should contact transportation.

STUDENTS NOT RIDING: Contact transportation if your student will not be riding for an extended period. If a student does not ride for 3 consecutive days, the driver will stop going to the stop. To resume transportation please contact transportation dispatch the day before service is to resume. Dispatch 331-7170 Opt. 2

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: Students that require special equipment as required on their IEP paperwork will wear such equipment until changes are submitted through the Special Education Department. Students not wearing the specified equipment will not be transported until they are wearing the proper equipment or, if it is damaged or missing, equipment has been replaced. Please call transportation as soon as possible for replacement.

WHEELCHAIRS: Wheelchairs must meet national safety standards in order to be transported. All wheel chairs shall be checked by the transportation department to ensure equipment is working properly before transporting. The owner of the wheelchair is responsible for maintaining the condition and cleanliness of the wheelchair.

TRAVEL TIME: The Transportation Department tries to keep travel time to a minimum and consistent, but parents should be prepared for changes in buses, routes and time of pick up throughout the school year as a result of the addition or withdrawal of students in the program. Overall travel time will vary from route to route depending on the class times and student home locations.

ADDRESS CHANGES: All changes must go through the Special Ed department. The Special Ed department will make the changes and inform transportation. Transportation has 5 to 10 days to make the changes and contact parents. Please call the Special Ed office at 331-7087 with any changes.

INCLEMENT WEATHER:

FOG: School buses need 500 feet and able to pull safely off the road to pick up students. Fog can present a serious delay or, in extreme cases, the cancellation of buses. Check website for fog delays.

WIND: Wind advisories could cause delays for wheelchair students. High wind warnings could be a safety issue for driver and student while loading or unloading on the wheelchair lift. May be necessary to postpone or cancel transportation of wheelchair students until winds diminish.

RAIN: Reduced driving speed due to wet roads.

HEAT: Mechanical difficulties may cause a delay in travel time.

These guidelines will acquaint you with many of the policies governing bus service at Lodi Unified School District. Please review the procedures and contact the Special Ed Transportation at (209) 331-7596 between the hours of 8 AM to 4:30PM with any questions or special concerns with your child's transportation.

Transportation Definitions for Use in IEPs

Transportation may be a Related Service if a student requires specialized transportation to receive special education services and to access education. Transportation is defined by the IEP Team and is documented on the IEP. The Special Education Office will make the request for Transportation to the Transportation Department. Case managers should not contact the Transportation Department directly.

If the nature of the Transportation Related Service is unique or unusual, the case manager is responsible for ensuring that a representative of the Transportation Department is invited to staff the proposal prior to the IEP meeting and/or participate in the IEP meeting that will consider the proposal.

Term	Definition
1. Point to Point, Unsupervised	Home to School and School to Home. "Home" is identified by Transportation Supervisory Staff. Can be childcare location, if in district. Must be consistent location. Point of pickup is safest location in proximity to "home." No supervision is required at point of pickup or point of delivery. Student can wait for pickup, unattended. Student can travel from bus to classroom or school-based location unattended. Bus stop location is created by transportation supervisor staff.
2. Point to Point, Supervised	Home to School and School to Home. "Home" is identified by Transportation Supervisory Staff. Can be childcare location, if in district. Must be consistent location. Point of pickup is safest location in proximity to "home." Child is under parent supervision at time of pickup. Child can walk to bus while parent is watching from home. At school delivery, school staff maintain observation of child but do not need to provide physical attendance of child.
3. Hand-to-Hand	See #1. Parent responsible for supervision at pickup. Delivers child to bus door. School staff responsible for meeting child at bus. Driver releases child to school staff who then accompany child to class or other school-based location.
4. Bus Attendant (Rider)	Per IEP Team decision. For student safety and/or health, a school employee (Rider) accompanies the student on the bus to monitor and/or implement a health protocol or behavior plan.
5. Safety support (specify)	Use of lap belt, harness, safety vest or other specialized equipment to ensure student stays in seat and travels safely. Driver can secure child in the needed support equipment. Driver will secure child and confirm that equipment is fastened

	for safe transportation.
6. General Transportation	Not specialized transportation. This transportation is that form provided to any child living in LUSD boundaries in accordance with Transportation Department standards.
7. School to School Transportation	Due to special education placement at a school other than school of residence, student is transported from school of residence to school of service. (Student is able to safely travel from home to school of residence or other designated pickup location identified by Transportation.)