

Title: Student Transportation - Regulation

This procedure is designed to establish guidelines for student transportation throughout the District in accordance with state laws and District policies.

Complaints about the student transportation program shall be referred to the Transportation Coordinator or bus contractor. If a satisfactory resolution of the problem cannot be achieved, the matter may be referred to the Chief Financial Officer. If the matter cannot be resolved at this level, the complainant may request consideration by the Superintendent.

I. RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

A. Board of Directors

1. Adopts specific written policies regarding the student transportation program.
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves contract(s) with operators of school buses to supply student transportation services.

B. Superintendent

1. Assigns administrative and operational duties and keeps the Board informed as to the operation and needs of the student transportation program.
2. Recommends transportation policies, contractor, insurance requirements, bus routes and budgeting to the Board for approval.

C. Building Administrators

1. Provide for the embarking and disembarking of students from school buses at their school.
2. Maintain discipline of students for infractions of bus rules as referred by drivers.
3. Notify the Transportation Coordinator or bus contractor of student transportation problems and refers unresolved complaints.

D. Chief Financial Officer

1. Administers the District's student transportation system and ensures compliance with all laws, Board policies and administrative regulations.
2. Prepares and submits reports required by the State Department of Education for approval

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of transportation and reimbursement of non-public transportation costs.

E. Transportation Coordinator

1. Investigates complaints concerning student transportation.
2. Works with bus contractor to develop all bus routes and approves all changes.
3. Assists building administrators on specific transportation matters relative to their respective schools.

F. Bus Contractor

1. Provides transportation to all students of the District for whom service is contracted.
2. Employs a sufficient number of qualified bus drivers to perform the services as specified in the contract and supervises and controls the performance of each driver.
3. Instructs and keeps drivers informed of all applicable Board rules affecting student transportation.
4. Works with Transportation Coordinator to develop appropriate bus routes.
5. Submits transportation schedules and routes to the District as requested.
6. Reports and has on file evidence that all buses have been properly inspected and have necessary permits and certifies that adequate liability and property damage insurance is maintained as required by state law and the contract.
7. Files a complete report with the Chief Financial Officer and the State Department Student Transportation Bureau of all accidents involving student injury and/or property damage when the contractor is performing service for the District.
8. Provides extra transportation for field trips, athletic events and other school-related activities as requested by the supervisor of transportation.
9. Trains all bus drivers in routine operations, safety and appropriate student management procedures, etc.
10. Provides accurate data for reports required by the State Department and the Board. Included in this data are student counts, fuel consumption and mileage records for each bus as well as accident reports, misconduct reports, copies of new health certificates and renewed bus operator licenses for all drivers.

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11. Ensures that the drivers:
 - a. Have a valid CDL license, have completed the necessary training inclusive of required continuing education courses and have satisfied all required health screenings including those covered by the Iowa Drug and Alcohol Testing Program.
 - b. Have passed a thorough background check including reference checks, criminal background checks, Iowa and Nebraska dependent adult abuse, child abuse and sex abuse registries or other applicable state registries. This same thorough background check is also required for bus attendants.
 - c. Have a knowledge of traffic laws, school bus regulations and District policies relating to student transportation.
 - d. Operate the school bus in a careful and prudent manner and comply with all laws, ordinances, rules and regulations.
 - e. Are mature, responsible and concerned for the safety of students, and shall have the ability to supervise students and maintain a disciplined environment on the school bus.
 - f. Run routes according to the time schedule on the route sheet and report to his/her supervisor any problems in adhering to the schedule, overloading and/or unsafe loading/unloading zones.
 - g. Submit notices of student misconduct to building principals and furnish any information needed by the principal for disciplinary action.

II. LEGAL BASIS FOR RIDER ELIGIBILITY

Ref: Chapter 285, Code of Iowa

A. Eligible Rider Defined

Elementary and middle school students living two (2) miles or more from the designated attendance area school are defined as “eligible students” . . .

High school students living three (3) miles or more from the designated attendance area

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school are defined as “eligible students” . . .

B. Mile Line Defined

"The 2 or 3 mile limit is defined as being from a point at the edge of the roadway nearest the front door of the home to a point at the edge of the driveway nearest the front door of the school by the nearest and most safe traveled roadway.”

C. Safety Considerations and Permanent School Closures Impacting Students

In some situations, students residing closer than the statutory mileage requirement may be provided free transportation services to their regular schools of attendance. The Board may opt to provide such transportation in conjunction with the permanent closure of school. Also, in some instances, serious safety hazards exist for students walking to and from school. Students may be afforded free transportation should the presence and degree of hazard warrant.

D. Transportation of Students Attending Non-Public Schools

Students who reside in the District and who attend a non-public school within the District are entitled to free bus transportation (whether directly or through reimbursement) in accordance with the eligibility rules defined in Paragraph A above.

E. Transportation of Open Enrollment Students

1. School District Responsibility

For those students meeting the requirements for free or reduced meals, the sending school district shall be responsible for providing transportation to and from a point on a regular school bus route of the contiguous receiving district, or may choose to have parents or guardians transport those students to and from a point on a regular bus route of the receiving district. In the latter case, the sending district is responsible for paying the pro rata cost of transportation to a parent or guardian as provided by law. The cost paid to parents or guardians cannot exceed the average transportation cost per pupil for the previous year. Transportation expenses incurred by the sending district may be deducted from the cost per student amount required to be sent to the receiving district.

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2. Parent's Responsibility

For those students not meeting the requirements for free or reduced meals, the parent or guardian is responsible for transporting the student, without reimbursement, to a point on the regular bus route of the receiving district. If this point-designated stop is within the distances established by Iowa Code Section 285.1 from the school designated for attendance by the receiving district, that district may, but is not required to, provide transportation for an open enrollment student. A receiving district may not send its buses into the sending district for the purpose of transporting an open enrollment student.

F. Transportation of Other Riders

The Board may provide transportation for students who are required to attend class at a school site other than their home school within the school day. The transportation shall be from school to school.

III. OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

A. Route Development

1. Bus routes will follow the most direct roads practicable for bus travel to serve those students entitled to transportation service. Where an alternate route may be selected without sacrifice of efficiency or economy, preference will be given to that route that more directly serves the largest number of students.
2. Routes will be assigned to eliminate as many turnarounds as possible and to employ as nearly as practicable the full carrying capacity for each bus trip. Every effort shall be made to insure that students transported are on the bus no more than one hour.
3. Any changes in bus routes during the school year shall be approved in advance by the Transportation Coordinator. Any rerouting must allow adequate time (except in emergency situations) to notify all riders assigned to the bus of the changes.

B. Bus Assignments

Students will be assigned to a bus and bus stop according to their home addresses.

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Elementary students may also be afforded transportation services from their daycare providers' addresses if the daycare locations are situated within busing zones to their regular schools of attendance. Students shall ride their assigned bus and embark/disembark at their regularly assigned stop unless permission to change the stop has been obtained through the office of the principal and/or the supervisor of transportation. Any request for a student to ride a different bus for a special occasion must come from the parent or guardian. Permission will be granted for good reason or an emergency situation when parents will be out of town, in the hospital, etc.

C. Bus Stop Selection

1. Authorized bus stops will be located at safe, efficient intervals where students may board and disembark, cross roadways and await arrival of buses with maximum safety permitted considering the road conditions. District students are required to walk to bus stops for distances not to exceed 3/4 mile.
2. If it is necessary to back the bus at a pick-up point for a turnaround, all riders shall be boarded before backing. On the evening run, all riders shall remain on board until the turnaround is completed.
3. When patrons request that a bus stop be added to a route, each request will be given individual attention and checked by the Transportation Coordinator. If it is determined that an additional stop is warranted in accordance with the criteria listed above, the contractor will be notified and given adequate time to make the changes in the route.

D. School Site Loading/Unloading

1. Buses will load and unload in designated areas at each school site. Principals or designated staff members will supervise loading and unloading of buses.
2. Buses will park bumper to bumper at the school site so that students may not walk between buses.

E. Passenger Seating

The number of students assigned to a bus will be based on rated bus capacity and size of

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students. Allowances may be made on buses transporting high school students when the number of students transported does not allow a comfortable ride for passengers.

F. Reporting of School Bus Accidents

The bus contractor shall immediately report to the Transportation Coordinator any school bus accident which results in personal injury or property damage.

G. Transportation of Secondary Students Living Fewer Than 2 or 3 Miles From School

1. Sign up sheets for "space-available" transportation of ineligible secondary riders will be available at school offices for students who live fewer than 2 miles for middle school students or 3 miles for high school students from their assigned schools. Applications will be processed as expediently as possible after adequate time has been allowed to correct overloads, under loads, etc. in the transportation of eligible students.

2. "Space-Available" transportation uses only existing bus routes and stops. Empty seats, if available on a bus, will be made available to requesting students with priority given to those living the furthest from school. A fee will be charged each quarter for "space-available" busing. Students who qualify for free and reduced lunches will receive a fee waiver upon request. Students receiving free lunches shall receive their "space available" bus passes free of charge, while students receiving reduced lunches will pay a reduced "space available" fee as designated by the District's fee schedule.

3. Hardship situations may exist where students need to be transported from/to an alternate address within the school's attendance area. Examples of this may be when parents' working hours are such that the student routinely must sleep at a relative's or care provider's residence or when the student is on an IEP(Individualized Education Program) and is in need of adult supervision immediately before/after school. A letter of request must be made to the appropriate principal(s) for a "hardship exception," and must be approved by the principal and the Chief Financial Officer before transportation will be provided.

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4. A parent may request transportation of his/her student(s) from an address other than the home address. Students may be granted transportation privileges only after all eligible riders, space available students and hardship students have been provided services. In such cases the customary space available fee will be assessed.

H. Student Conduct on School Buses

1. Students using District transportation are under the jurisdiction of the school from the time they board the bus until they are released at school or at the students' designated stop. Required conduct while on the bus is set forth in the District Code of Conduct.
2. Students are under the authority and supervision of the bus driver while on the bus and shall adhere to the directions, rules and regulations while under the driver's authority. Persistent infraction of the rules and regulations, or a serious challenge to the authority of the bus driver, may result in the loss of bus riding privileges.

I. Procedures for Student Discipline on School Buses

The driver is required to report in writing any infractions of the Code of Conduct within 24 hours to the principal. Those infractions will be dealt with according to the provisions of the code.

J. Athletic/Field Trips

1. A Request for Transportation Form must be completed by the principal and forwarded to the Transportation Coordinator for approval. Once approved, copies of the form will be sent back to the principal and to the bus contractor. Forms must be submitted at least 7 days prior to the date of the trip. There will be at least one adult on the bus to monitor discipline on each athletic/field bus trip.
2. Principals or supervisors requesting buses for trips are responsible for notifying the Transportation Coordinator of any cancellations prior to the date of the scheduled trip. A charge is assessed by the contractor for any trip not canceled.
3. In any instance in which the District does not provide transportation for a particular athletic/field trip or other activity, then the responsibility and corresponding liability

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for any transportation to and from the activity shall rest solely with the student/parent.

K. Special Education Transportation Services

1. Special transportation services are provided to special education students who have the service required as part of the student's IEP. The IEP will state the level and conditions of service for the student.
2. A maximum of three days should be allowed for transportation arrangements to be completed. The Transportation Coordinator will notify the parents/guardians and the school to which the student is assigned of the transportation arrangements.
3. Parents/guardians of those students being provided door-to-door service are expected to assist the District in the transportation of their child by assuring that the student will be present for pick up, that the student will be ready to leave when the vehicle arrives at their home and that a responsible adult will be present when the student is returned home. If no adult is present, the student may be returned to the school site. Parents are responsible for pick-up at the school site within a reasonable time. If supervision is unavailable, the police or Department of Human Services may be contacted.

L. Video Monitoring System

1. The school bus video monitoring system is established to promote the safety of our students and monitor student behavior while the students are being transported to and from school or on field or activity trips sponsored by the school. The video monitoring system contains a video camera, fix-mounted into a recessed enclosure above the driver's compartment.
2. Video tapes will be initially reviewed by the contractor's safety personnel. Whenever initial viewings indicate problems, tapes will be forwarded immediately to the Transportation Coordinator. Otherwise, tapes will remain with the contractor for a period of six days, and then be forwarded to the Transportation Coordinator who will randomly review the tapes, erase them and return to contractor for re-use.

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Other administrators authorized to view videotapes include the Superintendent, Chief of Student & Family Services, Director of Special Education, school resource officers and other appropriate parties and all building administrators. These videotapes may be used for the purpose of disciplining students and others. The aforementioned District personnel will control and secure the videotapes in accordance with applicable confidentiality laws. Parents and students will only be permitted to view videotapes after submitting a letter of request and as allowed by law. A fee may be charged to offset the costs associated with having a service provider modify the tape to protect the identities of all other students on the bus, such that only the student on whose behalf the request was made will remain identifiable.

4. All tapes will be viewed with the aspect of student safety in mind. The driver's performance may be viewed to ascertain compliance with State law and contract provisions. Secondly, the cameras may be used to monitor student behavior with the intent to reduce student violations. Students whose actions reflect a flagrant disregard for those rules set forth in the Code of Conduct will be issued referral slips for the infraction or receive further disciplinary action. Appeals and due process procedures will be followed as set forth in the Code of Conduct.

M. Handling of Prescription Medications

The bus drivers and associates will not be responsible for the control and safeguarding of students' prescription medications. The responsibility for getting these medications to school shall remain with the parents or guardians. Special exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis by the building administrator in response to a parent request.

Approved: Jun. 1, 1994

Reviewed: _____

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