

SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION PARENT HANDBOOK



Introduction

The following procedures were established by the Transportation and Special Services Departments to facilitate safe and efficient transportation for students with special needs. On occasion, the Transportation and Special Services Departments receive requests from parents that deviate from these procedures. Transportation and Special Services reserve the right to authorize or deny deviations from these procedures based on the need to provide an acceptable level of safety for all students on the bus and an acceptable level of service for those entitled to special education transportation.

The Transportation Department is committed to providing safe and efficient transportation services for special needs students. It is our sincere hope that this handbook will contribute to a clearer understanding of specialized transportation services.

The safe and efficient transportation of your child relies on the cooperation and efforts of the school staff, the Transportation Department, the Special Services Division, the bus driver and bus aide, and you, the parent. The following section outlines some of the various responsibilities of those involved.

Our mission in the P-BVUSD Transportation Department is to ensure your child arrives at school and returns home safely with care and thought given to his/her individual needs. All drivers and bus aides participate in frequent in-service training to expand and improve their driving skills and upgrade their knowledge of helping children with special needs.

The Special Services and Transportation Departments hope that each student has a safe and successful school year.

Questions?

Transportation

Email: transportation@pbvusd.k12.ca.us

Phone: (661) 831-8331 ext. 6179 or ext. 6160

Special Services

Emails: pbvssc@pbvusd.k12.ca.us

Phone: (661) 831-1906

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Responsibilities

Special Services Department Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the Special Education Department to:

1. Provide the Transportation Department with timely and accurate information regarding the initiation of, or changes to, each student's specialized transportation requirements.
2. Provide assistance as needed via the Orthopedic Impairment Program Specialist and/or Physical Therapist to determine the structural safety of a wheelchair for transport on a school bus.
3. Coordinate professional development with Transportation and Health, Safety and Wellness for bus drivers and bus aides.

Transportation Department Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the Transportation Department to:

1. Assign each eligible student to a bus within 15 business days of a valid request.
2. Determine bus stop locations according to the disabling condition of the student and the accessibility of the residence.
3. Route, schedule, and tier special education buses. The routing and scheduling plan will ensure the safest and most effective use of each vehicle. Beyond the onset of the school year, a minimum of 15 working days may be needed to establish a new route and schedule any pick-up/drop-off changes.
4. Address concerns from parents, school administrators, drivers, and bus aides, and the motoring public regarding special education transportation.
5. Provide the appropriate training and screening for bus drivers and bus aides.
6. Establish and enforce transportation procedures, rules, and regulations.
7. Inspect all buses in accordance with all state and local statutes and regulations.
8. Provide assistive devices as needed, including, but not limited to vests, harnesses, car seats, and booster seats.
9. Notify parents of schedule changes that may affect pupil transportation (i.e., early dismissals, inclement weather, etc.)

Parent Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the parent to:

1. Assist Transportation by submitting address changes to their child's school of attendance and the Special Services Department so that any updates or changes to specialized transportation can be quickly addressed.

2. Inform the school of attendance, the bus driver, the special education case manager/teacher, and the District Nurse of any medical or psychological conditions, which might affect the student's safety or health on the bus.
3. Provide up-to-date emergency information, such as emergency contact phone numbers and addresses and physician information, to the school and the Transportation Department.
4. Supervise their child in the morning prior to loading onto the bus and assure that the student meets the bus at the scheduled time. Have your child ready to board the bus at least five (5) minutes before the scheduled pick-up time each morning. Buses are scheduled to arrive within a few minutes of the designated time each day. The bus driver is required to wait for one (1) minute and cannot wait for a tardy student as this creates late pick-up times for other students.
5. Assure that an authorized person will be at the bus stop, on time, when the child is dropped off.
6. Attend your child's IEP Team meetings.
7. Teach your child to follow the bus rules (A copy will be provided to you).
8. Notify Transportation at (661) 831-8331 ext. 6165 as early as possible when your child will not be attending school.
9. If your child will not be riding in the morning, please place the A sign in your front window or on your door that has been provided by Transportation
10. Ensure that a child in a wheelchair must have properly operating lock brakes, footrests, armrests, and a safety belt.

Student Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the student to:

1. Obey the rules for bus riders.
2. Respect the rights of the other student passengers.
3. Be ready at the designated pick-up time.

Driver & Bus Aide Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the bus driver, and bus aide to:

1. Notify the parent/guardian of the bus number and approximate time of pick-up and drop-off.
2. Notify the parent/guardian of any pick-up and drop-off changes.
3. Be on time for the pick-up and drop-off. The driver is not required to wait for a student for more than 1 minute. This procedure must be adhered to because of the number of students to be transported in a fixed period of time. If the driver arrives earlier than the designated time of pick-up, he/she must wait.
4. Ensure the overall safe operation of the bus.

5. Be prepared to provide appropriate first aid.
6. Display appropriate care and patience.
7. Be located in a position inside the bus that best meets the needs of all students (bus aide).
8. Maintain an emergency evacuation plan, listing each passenger, for use by medical personnel in the event of a vehicle accident.
9. Be prepared to effectively and efficiently evacuate the bus in the event of an emergency.
10. Understand and support the privacy and confidentiality of the families whose children they transport.
11. Complete and submit a notice of unsatisfactory conduct to the designated school administrator if a behavior problem occurs on the bus.
12. Report to the school administration any significant changes in a child's behavior.
13. Assist students on and off of the bus as required by their disabling condition.

Case Manager Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the Case Manager to:

1. Work with the parent and the rest of the IEP team in the formulation of the implementation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that takes into account the student's individual needs as they relate to the necessity of specialized transportation.
2. Upon completion of the IEP, notify the Special Services secretary of any needed updates to each student's specialized transportation.
3. Assure that the students are ready for dismissal and pick-up at the time established by the District and the Transportation Department.
4. Provide appropriate arrangements for those students needing assistance in boarding and discharging from the bus at the school.
5. Refer requests by the parent or guardian involving alternate transportation arrangements to the Special Services Department.

School Site Administrator Responsibilities

1. Accept and act on discipline forms submitted by the bus driver or bus aide. If necessary, convene the IEP team.

Transportation Boundaries

With the few exceptions noted below, the District does not provide specialized transportation to residences or care facilities outside of the District's boundaries. Parents are encouraged to find before and after-school care within the District boundaries if they will need to utilize specialized transportation.

The District will provide transportation to specialized daycares and after-school programs that are within close proximity to the District's boundaries. Currently, the District provides specialized transportation to the following out-of-boundary locations: Valley Achievement Center on New Stine and Caring Corner on Wible Rd.

Pick-Up/Drop-Off

Under most conditions, special education transportation provides pick-up and drop-off of students as close to their residence or care facility as possible. This means that the bus will pick up and drop-off at the curb in front of the student's home, daycare, or after-school program.

Due to road conditions (dead-end roadways, dirt or gravel roadways, narrow roadways, or construction), it may be necessary to place the pick-up/drop-off site at a safe location away from the home or daycare. Every effort will be made to locate the stop as close as possible to the home or daycare. When an escort is required it will be the responsibility of the parent or their designee to escort the student to and from the pick-up/drop-off location. The bus driver nor the bus aide is responsible to provide an escort for the student to or from the pick-up/drop-off location.

In rare instances, the pick-up/drop-off location may require the student to cross the roadway. When applicable, the bus driver or bus aide will escort the student across the roadway to and from the pick-up/drop-off location.

All students must be ready for pick-up 5 minutes before the scheduled time. These times may vary by as much as fifteen (15) minutes. If, after fifteen minutes past your child's scheduled pick-up time, please contact Transportation at (661) 831-8331 ext. 6160.

Drivers do not honk the horn due to local noise ordinances. Students and their parents should be outside waiting for the bus. Drivers will wait for one minute after arriving for their pick-up and then continue on their route.

Beginning Services and Routes Changes

When service begins, or when changes occur, routes must be revised and time changes communicated to all parents on that route. Please plan to transport your child to and from school for up to 15 business days if there is a change in your child's drop-off or pick-up location after school begins in August.

Exclusions

It is within the rights of businesses, condominium complexes, apartment complexes, mobile home parks, and gated communities to deny school buses access to their community and parking lots. In these cases, the pick-up/drop-off will be placed at a safe location close to the entrance to the student's residence or care facility.

Parents who reside in gated communities are required to provide the District with a gate opener ("clicker") or gate codes as they are updated.

Bus stops will only be located on PUBLIC MAINTAINED ROADWAYS. The Transportation Department will assign the nearest possible pick-up and drop-off bus stop location using these criteria. It is the parent's responsibility to escort or transport their child to and from this bus stop location.

Drivers will not pull in or out of private driveways or other private property, including apartment complexes or mobile home communities which may pose a traffic hazard for the school bus.

Inclement Weather

The safe transportation of students can be affected by inclement weather, such as fog, rain, and very occasionally, snow. Such weather activity generally occurs during the colder, winter months. If such conditions should develop or worsen during the transport of students, the bus driver has the discretion to discontinue the route if he/she feels it is unsafe to proceed.

Transportation for the entire district may be preemptively delayed if the weather conditions are expected to make it unsafe for buses to be on the road. During the winter months, bus delays are generally due to foggy conditions. As fog can occur in some areas and not others, it may be foggy in areas other than your immediate location so we advise you to listen to your radio and local TV stations every day during the winter months. Reports regarding transportation and school delays are broadcast every 15 or 20 minutes on most local stations. You can also refer to the KCSOS website <https://alertline.kern.org>.

After-School Programs

It is the goal of the Transportation and Special Services Departments to work with the after-school programs that our students attend. After-school programs may not accept students early from the bus in the event the District has an early release day, such as those that occur every Wednesday and before Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer Vacations. Also, after-school programs are sometimes closed because of professional development for their staff. In the event of one of these scenarios, or unexpected closure of an after-school program, or other unforeseen circumstances where a student cannot be released to the after-school program, parents will be notified and are responsible for arranging to have their child picked up from the school at the end of the instructional day.

Drop-Off Procedures

Drivers are permitted to discharge students only at the school or designated drop-off. When there is no authorized person to accept the student at the drop-off, the following steps will be taken:

1. The driver will notify the Transportation Department of the student's continued presence on the bus.
2. If the student can not be dropped off, the Transportation office staff will work with the school of attendance to locate the parent/guardian.
3. The driver will notify dispatch and deliver other students on the bus and then return to the home/after-school care location to drop off the student.
4. If no one is home during the 2nd attempt, the driver will return the student to the school with a responsible staff member.

5. After the third incident of the bus not being able to drop off a student, the parent will have to provide proof of residence or continued enrollment in the after-school program or care facility, and transportation services may be suspended pending a conference with the parent or guardian.

Loading/Unloading

It is the responsibility of the driver and bus aide to load and unload students at the pick-up/drop-off location. Parents and childcare providers are strongly encouraged to communicate to the bus driver and bus aide any information about the student that would help facilitate safe loading and unloading. Parents and childcare providers should be careful not to interfere with the driver or bus aide while they are performing their duties.

Parents and childcare providers are not allowed to board the school bus during loading and unloading.

Parents/guardians should not send students to the bus with food or drink to be consumed on the bus unless otherwise agreed upon in the student's IEP.

At the School

When it facilitates a smoother transition to and from the bus, school personnel are encouraged to help load and unload ambulatory students from seats equipped with any of the following restraint devices: seat belts, car or booster seats, harnesses, or vests. The bus driver and bus aide have the ultimate responsibility to check these restraints before beginning their route. Only the driver and bus aide should load, unload, and secure students in wheelchairs.

Suspension of Transportation

Drivers will not pick up or drop off students in the following circumstances:

1. If the student does not ride the bus for 5 days in a row the student will be dropped from that route until the parent contacts Special Services to resume the route. Parents may be asked to provide proof of residence before being rerouted.
2. A student is witnessed exiting a passenger vehicle near the designated pick-up site for 3 days concurrently.
3. A student is witnessed getting into a passenger vehicle near the designated drop-off site for 3 days concurrently.
4. The care facility the student was attending has closed or moved outside of the District's boundaries.
5. The school of attendance has asked the parent for proof of residence within 5 to 10 days and the parent has not provided such proof to the school of attendance.
6. The parent is attempting to release or receive the student at a location outside of District boundaries.

Drop-and-Go Procedures

For students who receive "curb-to-curb" transportation, an Adult **MUST** be at home to receive the child when delivered by the bus driver. This person should be seen by the driver so that the child can be discharged from

the bus. If you desire your child to be left at home without the parent/guardian present, parents must complete a [Special Education Transportation Waiver and Student Release Form](#).

It is the policy of the district that *all Pre-K, Moderate/Severe, and designated Mild/Moderate students* [per the individual student's IEP] *will only be dropped if there is a parent or guardian at home to receive the child.*

Parents wishing to have their special needs student(s) exempted from this policy must complete the [Special Education Transportation Waiver and Student Release Form](#) annually, and again for any changes or updates during the school year. Each student must have their form on file with the Transportation Department. You will be notified of the status of your request within 5 workdays of receipt of a completed form.

If the Transportation Department and/or the Special Services Department do not approve your request, you may contact the appropriate Assistant Director or Director of Special Education at (661) 831-1906 to request an IEP to discuss your student's transportation accommodations.

This request is only applicable to students who are dropped at a residence. Students who are dropped at a daycare or after-school facility can only be released into the custody of an employee of the facility.

Prior to completing this request form, please understand that there may be dangers in releasing your student from the bus without a parent/guardian present. If your student has any behaviors, such as wandering away from home, running away from you in public places, or getting lost easily, it may not be safe for your student to be released from the bus or to walk home independently. Please take careful consideration of your student's needs when completing this form. *The District may deny your request if your child cannot safely navigate from the bus to home independently; an IEP will then be scheduled to discuss the request.*

Student Safety

It is the school system's responsibility to provide safe transportation for students who ride school buses to and from school and on school-related trips. In the absence of a teacher or school administrator, the school bus driver is responsible for ensuring that students behave in a safe and responsible manner. Any behavior which interferes with the safe transportation of students must be reported. This policy applies to all students for whom bus transportation is provided by P-BVUSD. Exceptions are made for special education students whose behavior is a result of their disabling condition. Notwithstanding legal exceptions, the procedures outlined in the policy are applicable to special education students. Specifically, drivers and bus aides are to use the Notice of Unsatisfactory Conduct report to refer inappropriate behavior to school administrators. When applicable, administrators are to follow a progressive discipline procedure.

Dangerous Behavior on the Bus

The following are the Transportation Department guidelines for bus drivers responding to unsafe behavior on the bus:

- Any unsafe behavior should be reported to the school administrator as soon as possible. A Notice of Unsatisfactory Conduct report should be submitted as a follow-up.
- When the behavior of a student on a special education bus poses a potential or imminent danger to others on the bus, the driver should immediately call the Transportation Department.

- Students who have specialized transportation as part of their IEP are not suspended from the bus unless they are suspended from school.

Car Seats and Booster Seats

By law, the State of California requires the use of car seats and booster seats in cars, trucks, and multipurpose vehicles. Car Seats are not required on school buses. Any and all car seats, safety vests, and other restraints, excluding seatbelts, must be included in each individual student's IEP before being implemented in P-BVUSD vehicles.

The following guidelines are followed regarding car seat use on P-BVUSD school buses:

- Infants who weigh under 20 pounds and are less than 1 year old will be secured in a rear-facing infant car seat.
- In general, Early Childhood and Preschool students do not require a car seat when riding a school bus.
- Students needing support to help them remain seated may need a car seat or harness due to a disability.
- Students riding in a small school bus (school bus weighing less than 10,000 lbs.) will wear a seatbelt.
- Students riding in a passenger vehicle (e.g., van or passenger car) will be placed in the appropriate seating divide (car seat, booster seat) for their height and weight.

Safety Vests/Restraints

A safety vest or harness may only be used at the direction of the IEP. A safety vest or harness is designed for students with behaviors that require restraint while on the bus to keep that student, and other students on the bus, safe. The safety vest is equipped with a zipper in the back that, when properly attached, is not accessible to the student. It may have straps that attach to the front of the vest and go under the crotch to fasten in the back of the vest. The safety vest is attached with a strap mounted to the bus seat. The safety vest allows for some freedom of movement but the student cannot get out of their seat.

Passenger Restraint Systems (5 CCR 14105)

When a school bus or school pupil activity bus is equipped with passenger restraint systems, all passengers shall be required to be properly restrained by that system while the bus is in motion. Bus drivers shall be informed of procedures to be followed to reasonably ensure that all passengers are so restrained. The driver or school district shall not be charged for a violation if a passenger on the school bus or school pupil activity bus fails to use or improperly uses the passenger restraint system.

Wheelchairs and Travel Chairs

The safest possible lifts and tie-down equipment have been purchased for the transportation of your child. Your help is also needed to maintain the safe transportation of wheelchairs and travel chairs. Per Section 1293 (g) C.C.R. "wheelchairs shall be equipped with brakes and a restraining belt properly maintained by the owner of the chair." Transportation may be discontinued if these devices are not properly maintained by the owner.

Wheelchair Lift Operation

Drivers are specially trained in wheelchair lift operations. Although your assistance in loading and unloading is appreciated, we ask that **ONLY THE DRIVER OPERATE THE LIFT CONTROLS**. If a student requires the use of a wheelchair the student can only be transported on the bus when they are seated in the wheelchair. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) does not allow school buses to transport or store loose wheelchairs on public school buses.

Bus Evacuation Plan

Special education students who are able to get on and off of the bus unassisted or with little assistance are expected to participate in the annual bus evacuation drills. Drivers who transport non-ambulatory or orthopedically handicapped students are expected to maintain an up-to-date bus evacuation plan. The annual bus evacuation drill and the bus evacuation plan contain the following:

1. The exact roles of the driver and bus aide during an evacuation.
2. Identification of children who have special medical conditions and what special processes need to be implemented in case of an evacuation.
3. Determination of whether or not students should be removed from their wheelchairs during an evacuation.
4. Seating location of all passengers on the route.
5. A brief description of the physical disability of each passenger.
6. The exact location of every emergency exit on the regular bus used on the bus route.
7. The exact location of emergency equipment on the bus - extinguisher, first aid kit, radio, etc.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What happens if I'm not home to receive my child after school?

If no one is home to receive your child when the bus arrives, the driver will continue with the route, keeping your child on the bus until the other children have been transported. Then the driver will make a second attempt to drop your child at your home. If no one is home after the second attempt, the driver will return the child to his/her campus. If this occurs more than 3 times in a school year, transportation services may be suspended until you provide your child's school of attendance with proof of residence.

2. Why does it take up to fifteen (15) business days to begin transportation services for my child?

When a new student is added to or dropped from a bus route, the time of pick-up and drop-off changes for all students. Transportation needs up to 15 business days to develop the new routes to accommodate adding your child, and to make contact with all parents of the other students to provide them with their child's new pick-up and drop-off times.

3. Why must my child be on the bus for so long?

Curb-to-curb service requires the drivers to go to multiple locations spread out over a large geographic area, and transport students to locations that are often far away from the child's school of attendance. It is our goal to

keep transportation times to a minimum, and we make every effort to schedule efficient routes that get students to their destinations in a timely manner.

4. How long do buses wait for special needs students to board the bus?

Bus drivers who provide specialized transportation are instructed to wait for a minimum of 1 minute at the stop for the student(s) to load. In the afternoon, all the buses will wait 5 minutes at the school for students to board.

5. Whom do I call when I have questions or concerns?

If you have questions or concerns about transportation services for your child, please call the Transportation Department's (661) 831-8331 ext. 6160. If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's IEP or special education services, please call the Special Services Department at (661) 831-1906.

6. What if my home address or care facility location changes?

All address changes must be reported to the secretary at the student's school of attendance for an update in Synergy, the District's student information system where all student demographic information is housed. After notifying the school of attendance, notify the appropriate administrative secretary (see the chart below) for the Special Services Department at (661)831-1906.

Once your child's address has been updated in Synergy and with Special Services, the Special Services administrative secretary will notify Transportation of the necessary change to the pick-up and/or drop-off location. **Reminder:** In general, P-BVUSD does not transport students to or from residences outside of the district's boundaries.

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INFANT PROGRAM	ACTIS	LOUDON
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM	BERKSHIRE	LUM
LAURELGLEN	BUENA VISTA	MCAULIFFE
MILLER	CASTLE	PANAMA
SEIBERT	HART	REAGAN
	OLD RIVER	TEVIS
	SANDRINI	VAN HORN
	STINE	WARREN
	STOCKDALE	WHITLEY
	STONECREEK	WILLIAMS
	THOMPSON	HIGHGATE