

## ECISD Transportation Guidelines

The Education Code states that a Board may provide student transportation service; therefore, such service is not the right of every student, but rather a privilege to be accorded to those students who qualify within the terms established by the Board. ECISD Transportation ridership guidelines for the most part reflect TEA funding guidelines for school transportation found in the TEA Transportation Allotment Handbook. Prime consideration in the design and operation of the transportation system shall be safety, efficiency and providing a courteous service.

### Eligibility Distances for Regular Transportation

#### Home to School

Students may be provided transportation if their primary residence meets the eligibility distance of 2 or more miles by direct route on a publicly maintained road to their home school.

The parent(s) or guardian(s) is/are responsible for the safe conveyance of their children to and from school if they do not meet bus eligibility requirements.

#### Home to Bus Stop

Students eligible for transportation according to the eligibility distances noted above will be assigned to a bus stop location according to the following distance guidelines:

Elementary students 2 tenths of a mile

Secondary students 3 tenths of a mile

**Exceptions:** Students who attend a school outside their attendance zone may be required to go to their home campus to catch a bus.

The parent(s) or guardian(s) is/are responsible for their children prior to pick-up and following drop-off.

### Eligibility for Special Education Transportation

Special Education bus eligibility is determined by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee (ARD) on the student's assigned campus. If the ARD committee determines that transportation is a necessary related service that student will be placed on a Sp. Ed. Bus and will be picked up and dropped off at their primary residence.

### Hardship Cases

Students not eligible for bus transportation may apply for hardship transportation based on the following criteria:

1. A hardship application must be filled out and present to the building principal who will determine if a hardship exists in the parent providing transportation to and from school. If the principal determines a hardship exist the form will be presented to the transportation office to determine if service is available.
2. Consideration will be given only if space is available on the bus that serves the student's school and residence area. Availability is based on 100% of capacity: 71 students on elementary buses and 55 students on secondary buses.
3. Hardship cases will be granted on first come, first serve non-discriminatory basis.
4. Hardship ridership may be revoked at any time the bus reaches maximum capacity. Students who were most recently placed on the bus will be the first removed on a non-discriminatory basis. Students who are removed during the semester shall be entitled to a pro-rated refund of fee for any remaining months of the semester.
5. A student will be required to meet the bus at the stop that is closest to his/her address or the bus may make a stop on the way to school provided the stop is along the legal route and is not within one mile of the school.
6. A fee of \$45.00 per family, per semester, will be charged for the bus service to ineligible riders. The fee may be waived for students qualifying for free lunch, or reduced for students qualifying for reduced lunch prices under the Federal Lunch Program. The reduced fee will be \$20.00 per semester. This fee is due at the beginning of each semester. A five-day grace period will be observed. Service will be discontinued at the end of the grace period if payment for the semester has not been received.

7. Billings and payments will be handled at the Transportation Office located at 2211 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street.

### **Transportation to and from Child Care Facilities or Grandparents Residence**

As stated in the TEA Transportation Allotment Handbook a parent may designate a grandparent's home or a state recognized Child Care Facility for transportation purposes. The following criteria must be met:

1. The grandparent's residence or child care facility must be two or more miles from the students assigned campus of regular attendance or in a district designated hazardous traffic area less than two miles from the student's assigned campus of regular attendance.
2. The grandparent's residence or child care facility must be in an area serviced by a school bus route from the student's assigned campus of regular attendance on a TEA approved bus route.
3. A stop at the child care facility will only be added if a minimum of three students are eligible on the bus that drops off at that location. If there are less than three eligible students they will be dropped off at the closest stop to the child care facility. Stops will be evaluated at the beginning of each semester.

The only exceptions to the minimum of three eligible riders are Special Education Students that ride a Sp. Ed. Bus and Pre-K students that ride a Pre-k Bus.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) must annually apply, on the approved form, for this type of alternate address pick-up and drop-off.

### **WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT DURING TRANSPORTATION?**

All students using the School Transportation System are responsible for their Conduct on the bus.

1. Abide by the Bus Operator's Instructions.
2. Behave in an Orderly Manner.
3. Refrain from use of Profane Language.
4. Refrain from Smoking.
5. Refrain from Eating or Drinking.
6. Respect the Safety of the other Students.
7. RIDING ON A SCHOOL BUS IS A PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT.

The consequences for misconduct on the bus will be as follows:

1. First time a student breaks a rule the driver will have a conference with the student and change seating arrangements if necessary.
2. Second time the student breaks a rule the driver will contact parents seeking their assistance. Further incidents will result in written referrals.
3. 1<sup>st</sup> written referral—the Principal will have a conference with the student and parents will be contacted.
4. 2<sup>nd</sup> written referral—the student will receive a 5 day suspension from the bus.
5. 3<sup>rd</sup> written referral—the student will be suspended from the bus for the remainder of the semester.
6. After returning to the bus in the second semester, if the student receives another bus referral, the student shall be removed from the bus for the remainder of the school year.

\*In the event of initiation and/or participation in a major offense, a student may lose bus privileges for an undetermined length of time. The student may also receive other disciplinary action. Flagrant misbehavior could result in immediate removal from the bus. Restitution for any damages incurred must be made before returning to the bus. Students must be dressed according to the dress code when riding the regular bus to and from school.

# Transportation Frequently Asked Questions

## **1. How do I find out about bussing arrangements for my children?**

- a) On the Transportation Webpage, there is a link for bus registration.
- b) Prior to the start of each school year emails/post cards with bussing information are sent out. This information includes bus number, stop location, and pick up/drop off times.

## **2. How are bus stops determined?**

Based on the Operational Guidelines, Student Transportation staff allocates bus stops in safe, centralized pick up areas. Based on the large numbers of students transported centralized pick up points are used when possible.

## **3. I am unhappy with my stop location and want it changed. How do I change the stop location?**

Transportation Operational Guidelines provide transportation eligibility distances and bus stops are set up within those guidelines. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to get the student to and from the stop, both in the morning and the afternoon. Concerns can be registered with Transportation staff and your request will be reviewed, but it is indeed a parental responsibility to get children safely to and from the bus stops.

## **4. If I have infants at home, can I change my bus stop to my door, so I do not have to bundle up my infants to take my student to the bus stop?**

Your children's transportation is governed by the same policies as other families who do not have infants at home. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to get students to and from the stop, both in the morning and the afternoon.

## **5. My student has been suspended from the bus and I don't have a way to get them to and from school. How can I get them back on the bus?**

The student will not be eligible to ride again until the allotted time has passed. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make arrangements to get their student to and from school when the student is suspended from the bus.