

TRANSPORTATION PHILOSOPHY

Pupil transportation is a major support function of the educational process. It requires special attention so that the greatest benefit will accrue to the school district from the dollars expended. It is important to set forth the major objectives which serve as a guide in the management of the pupil transportation program. These objectives include the following:

1. To furnish transportation to those pupils whose health or distance from school makes the service essential.
2. To provide the safest possible transportation.
3. To operate the transportation program efficiently and economically.
4. To adapt transportation to the requirements of the instructional program.
5. To maintain conditions on the buses which are conducive to the best interest of the pupils, including mental, moral, social, emotional, and physical considerations.
6. To promote a sympathetic public understanding of the entire transportation program, including safety, adequacy, efficiency and standards of service.
7. To comply with all laws, regulations and mandates.

Types of Transportation **Section 3545.1**

In meeting and carrying out the above objectives, it will be necessary to provide the following types of transportation:

1. Regular transportation for public, private, parochial, and students with identified special needs (i.e. handicapping conditions) necessary to transport such students to and from school.
2. Field trips for public school students, which are of an instructional nature, organized and supervised by a member of the instructional staff, which are conducted during the normal school day, evenings, weekends, or holidays.
3. Extracurricular transportation of a non-instructional nature for events which are conducted after normal school hours, during weekends or holidays.
4. Remedial transportation for students who are receiving instructional assistance before, during, or after normal school hours.

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5. Transportation on Saturdays, Sundays, Holidays or During Summer Recess

- a. Transportation on Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays -
Transportation shall be provided on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays for resident, district public school pupils who are participating in approved school district programs which are under the supervision of certified instructional staff members.

Transportation to private or parochial schools, and schools for students with identified special needs (i.e. handicapping conditions), on these days shall be provided only as required by law.
- b. Transportation During Summer Recess - Transportation funded by the general fund shall not be provided during the summer months unless specifically authorized by resolution of the Board of Education.

Routing
Section 3545.2

Bus routes shall be established under the direction of the superintendent of schools. Bus routes shall be reviewed annually and adjusted as necessary by the transportation supervisor or designee to minimize costs and maximize efficiency.

1. Limitations

Bus routes will be established so that no pupil spends more than sixty (60) minutes on a bus from the time of loading to the time of discharge. Excepted from this policy will be pupils who attend school outside of the district boundaries.

Authorized bus stops will be located at convenient intervals in places where pupils may be loaded and unloaded, may cross highways, and may await the arrival of buses with the utmost safety allowed by road conditions. No pupil being transported will be required to cross the following more heavily traveled highways: Sunrise Highway, Woodside Avenue, Suffolk County Road/Route 83, Route 112/Medford Avenue, and Patchogue-Yaphank Road. All loading and unloading along the aforementioned highways will be accomplished at the pupil's residence-side of the street.

2. Fixed Stops

Fixed bus stops shall be established using the following guidelines:

- a. Whenever possible, dead-end and loop streets shall not be serviced by school buses. Whenever possible, stops will be at the intersection of two (2) streets.
- b. In an effort to reduce traffic tie-ups, it shall be the practice, whenever possible, to have pickup points on lesser traveled roads, rather than major thoroughfares.
- c. Numbers of pupils at bus stops will be varied according to the concentration of

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riders in an area, the degree of traffic, the presence of stop signs, speed limits, and bus turn-around requirements.

- d. A maximum of thirty (30) pupils at a stop shall be considered an acceptable limit. Fifteen to twenty (15-20) pupils will be the usual number scheduled at any one point.
- e. Walking distances to pick up points may be varied according to grade level. Grade levels K-5 shall not be required to walk distances in excess of one-half (1/2) mile; Grades 6-8 shall not be required to walk distances in excess of one (1) mile; and Grades 9-12 shall not be required to walk distances in excess of one and one-half (1-1/2) miles.

3. Side Roads

Transportation shall not be provided on streets that are not maintained by town, village, county, or state highway departments.

4. Turnarounds

Turnarounds will not be established unless adequate space is available and this space is properly maintained by village, town, county, or state highway departments.

Mileage Limitations for Resident Pupils

Section 3545.3

As authorized by the eligible voters of the school district in a public referendum, school bus transportation shall be provided for all resident pupils to public and private schools they regularly attend as follows:

1. Kindergarten through Grade five pupils must reside more than one-half (1/2) mile from the school of attendance to be eligible for transportation.
2. Grades six, seven, and eight pupils must reside more than one (1) mile from the school of attendance to be eligible for transportation.
3. Grades nine, ten, eleven and twelve pupils must reside more than one and one-half (1-1/2) miles from the school of attendance to be eligible for transportation.
4. Private school pupils shall observe the transportation limits cited for the above three (3) grade level groupings. In addition, the school of attendance shall not be more than fifteen (15) miles distant from the pupil's residence.

Qualifying Distance Measurements

Section 3545.4

To determine the eligibility of resident pupils for transportation to schools they regularly attend as provided in Section 3545.3 of this policy, the following procedure shall be observed to measure distances:

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1. The route shall be over paved roads which are maintained by a village, town, county, or state government.
2. The route shall be the shortest possible alternative between the pupil's residence and the school of attendance.
3. The superintendent of schools or designee shall have the authority to determine the exact distance between the residence and school for which the superintendent of schools or designee may rely upon odometer readings of official school district vehicles, or mileage calculated by computer program.
4. The starting point shall be the point on the pupil's residential property line which is directly opposite the main entrance of the house. The stopping point shall be the entrance of the school of attendance which has been designated by the principal as the main driveway entrance for pupils attending on a daily basis.

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TRANSPORTATION PHILOSOPHY REGULATIONS**I. Superintendent's Responsibility**

The responsibility for administering the transportation program rests with the superintendent of schools, who will adhere to all applicable laws, regulations, and policies established by federal, state, and local authorities. It is recognized that the superintendent of schools will delegate this authority, in part, to the transportation supervisor or designee who reports to the assistant superintendent for business or designee.

The transportation supervisor or designee shall report to the assistant superintendent for business or designee for the following:

- A. Recommending bus routes.
- B. Assigning bus drivers.
- C. Arranging for, recording, and reporting bus drivers' overtime.
- D. Arranging transportation for special trips, such as outdoor education, recreational programs, educational trips, routes for children with special needs (i.e. handicapping conditions), BOCES, and private schools.
- E. Arranging for special transportation for students attending schools in other districts.
- F. Planning and arranging for preventative maintenance on vehicles.
- G. Reviewing and approving payment of bills for maintenance, special transportation, and overtime.
- H. Maintaining a continuous analysis of transportation costs and providing reports as requested.
- I. Assisting in the preparation of transportation contracts and New York State Education Department reports.
- J. Assisting in school bus driver personnel management.
- K. Assisting in the transportation budgeting process.
- L. Keeping accurate records of the number of pupils transported at public expense.

TRANSPORTATION PHILOSOPHY REGULATIONS**II. Principal's Responsibility**

Each school principal is responsible for the following:

- A. Requiring that regular classroom instruction and pertinent safety regulations, as provided by law, are given to all pupils.
- B. Providing adequate supervision at bus loading and unloading zones at the school; bus riders should not be permitted to move toward the bus at school loading zones until the bus has been brought to a full stop; pupils should line up behind the curb line or safety line and take their turn when entering the bus in an orderly manner.
- C. Requiring that the pupil behavior expected in the classroom is practiced on the school bus.
- D. Taking prompt action concerning all behavior problems and completing a bus conduct report.
- E. Enforcing safe traffic regulations on the school site.
- F. Reporting, in writing, any overcrowding or other unsafe conditions or practice relating to the transportation program to the assistant superintendent for business, or designee.
- G. Informing parents and children of the necessity of following safety rules and regulations.
- H. Requiring that pupils ride their assigned school bus and do not board a bus going to any destination other than their home or an assigned activity. The building principal must obtain written permission from the transportation supervisor or designee and the assistant superintendent for business or designee to alter this requirement.
- I. Maintaining logs (arrivals and departures).

III. Parents' Responsibility

Parents have an important role to play in the safe and efficient operation of the school district's transportation system. If the system is to function effectively, parents must assume an obligation to the program and to the people responsible for its operation.

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Parents are obligated to have their children report to the proper bus stop on time and properly clothed for the weather.

Parents are invited to make written suggestion to school authorities for improvement of the student transportation program. The building principal is the direct contact for parents. Communication(s) received shall be forwarded to the Transportation Department.

Parents should insist on the good behavior of their children at bus stops and on the bus so that drivers may concentrate on safely driving the bus.

IV. **Students' Responsibility**

A. **Waiting for the Bus**

1. Students shall be on time but should not arrive at the stop earlier than ten minutes before expected bus arrival.
2. Students shall not allow children who are not riding the bus to accompany them to the bus stop.
3. Students must observe the following safety precautions while waiting for the bus:
 - . Do not play in the roads.
 - . Whenever you must cross a street, look both ways and cross only if you are sure that no moving vehicles are approaching from either direction.
 - . Do not push, pull or chase other persons.
 - . Avoid trespassing on private property and being noisy.
 - . Respect the property of others.
4. As the bus approaches, students must line up off the highway, and shall not approach the bus until it has stopped and the driver has opened the door. Again, avoid pushing others who are waiting in line.

B. **Loading the Bus**

1. Students shall get on their bus quickly and be seated at once.

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2. If seats are not available, the students shall proceed toward the rear of the bus, to find an available seat. Standees are not permitted while the bus is in motion. Bus drivers will notify the building principal if this condition exists. The principal will notify the transportation supervisor or designee who will work with the principal to correct the overcrowded condition.
3. Students shall listen carefully and obey the directions issued by the driver.

C. Riding the Bus

1. Students shall not eat food on the bus.
2. Students shall not throw anything on the bus.
3. Students shall avoid extending their arms or any other parts of their body out of the windows.
4. Seats shall not be changed while the bus is moving.
5. Shouting and other excessive noise that may lead to a serious accident shall be avoided.
6. Students shall help keep the bus clean and sanitary.
7. Students shall be courteous to other riders.
8. Students shall listen carefully and obey the directions issued by the driver.
9. Students shall remain on the bus until its arrival at the school or bus stop.
10. Students will be allowed to disembark from the bus in the afternoon prior to arriving at the authorized bus stop only upon written authorization by the school principal.
11. Pupils transported in a school bus are under the authority of and directly responsible to the driver of the bus.

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12. Students will not bring on the bus objects, backpacks, rolling cases, etc. that do not fit on the student's lap.
13. No school bus may stop or load or discharge pupils except at stops designated by the superintendent of schools or designee.
14. Smoking is prohibited.
15. No intoxicating or narcotic substance may be consumed or transported.
16. No animals may be transported.
17. No weapons or dangerous implements may be transported.
18. No persons may be allowed to occupy a position on a school bus that interferes with the vision of the driver.
19. Pupils who leave the bus last are to occupy seats in the rear of the bus.

D. Unloading the Bus

1. Students shall not leave their seat until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver has opened the door.
2. Directions issued by the driver are to be obeyed.
3. Pupils shall leave the bus quickly but in a courteous manner without pushing other pupils.
4. If students must cross a street as they leave the school bus, they must walk in front of the bus (never in back) at a distance of at least ten feet from the bus. If students get too close to the front of the bus, the driver will not be able to see them.
5. Again, all students shall be sure to observe all safety precautions as they travel from their bus stop to their home.

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All pupils must behave appropriately as passengers on a school bus. Clearly understood and well-enforced rules are necessary for the successful management of pupils who ride school buses.

Misbehavior problems on the buses will be managed as follows:

A. First Offense

The bus driver will correct discipline problems by asking the pupil to observe proper behavior and, if necessary, by assigning seats.

B. Second Offense

After more than one verbal warning has been given to the pupil by the driver, the "Conduct Report" (Exhibit "A") must be completed and sent to the school principal. At this point, the principal may notify the parents of the complaint if deemed necessary. The action which has been taken by the principal will be noted on the report and a copy will be sent to the bus company. Other copies will be retained by the school principal and by the transportation supervisor or designee.

C. Third Offense

For the third offense, the "Conduct Report" will once again be completed and sent to the school principal indicating that severe discipline is recommended as a result of these multiple offenses. Upon receiving this report, the principal will contact the parents in writing. If the pupil is suspended, a conference with the parents will be held. The action which has been taken by the principal will be noted on this report, a copy of which will be sent to the bus company and the transportation supervisor or designee. Another copy will be retained by the principal.

D. Fourth Offense

For a fourth offense, another "Chronic or Severe Bus Discipline Report" will be completed and sent to the principal. After this report is received, the pupil will be suspended from riding the bus and a conference will be held with the parents. A hearing on the matter may be held by the superintendent of schools, or designee, in which case suspension from bus services may result. The action taken by the principal and the superintendent of schools, or designee will be noted on this report, a copy of which will be sent to the bus company, the principal, and the transportation supervisor, or designee.

Suspension from bus riding privileges may be short term (five days or less) or long term (beyond five days) if action is taken by the superintendent of schools.

TRANSPORTATION PHILOSOPHY REGULATIONS**E. Short-Term Suspension**

Short-term suspensions may be imposed by the school principal or the superintendent of schools, or designee. No other employee may impose a short-term suspension.

F. Long-Term Suspension

A long-term suspension is any suspension from transportation service in excess of five (5) days. Because it is obviously more serious than the short-term suspension, a student is given significantly greater procedural safeguards.

1. Only the superintendent of schools, or designee, may suspend for more than five (5) days.
2. An opportunity for a full hearing must be given.
3. The hearing itself is quasi-judicial in nature. Pupils suspended under long-term conditions shall be afforded the rights and privileges stated in school district policy.

VI. Emergency Procedures

In spite of precautions, the possibility of an accident cannot be entirely eliminated. In the event of an accident, the following procedures are to be followed:

A. Vehicular Damage Only

1. The driver will turn off the ignition and set out reflectors at once.
2. Students are to remain seated and observe a strict code of behavior.
3. For District owned buses, the driver will notify the transportation office, who will, in turn, call 911, the school principal, the superintendent's office, and the business office. For contracted transportation, the driver will notify the contractor, who will in turn call 911 and the transportation office. The transportation office will notify the principal, superintendent's office and the business office.

TRANSPORTATION PHILOSOPHY REGULATIONS**B. Vehicular Damage and Bodily Injury**

1. Complete steps 1 through 3 above.
2. Render first aid to those in need of same.
3. If the driver is unable to give directions, students must follow practiced safety procedures.
4. The bus driver should have a list of the name and address of every student on the bus.

C. Administrative Responsibility During an Accident

1. If available, a school nurse will be dispatched to the accident involving personal injury. The school nurse will make a visual assessment and report same to the principal.
2. If needed, the building principal or his/her designee will go to the scene.
3. Upon returning to the school, the school principal will arrange to have parents called in order to notify them of the reason for delay in returning home.
4. If needed, another vehicle will be dispatched to complete the route.
5. The transportation office will notify the superintendent of schools. The staff in the principal's office will remain in the building until the emergency situation is resolved. One appropriate staff member will be dispatched to the hospital.
6. Radio communications will be established between the various mobile units. Communications headquarters will remain at the transportation office.

D. Student Medical Records

The school principal shall provide the hospital with the names of students who have a medical history of seizures, bee sting or other allergies, diabetes, etc.

TRANSPORTATION PHILOSOPHY REGULATIONS**VII. Vehicles****A. Vehicle Maintenance**

A preventative maintenance program for inspection, service, and correction shall be operated for the purpose of preventing breakdowns, lowering operating costs, providing more dependable service, and longer vehicle life.

Each vehicle will be carefully inspected once per each three thousand (3,000) miles. The three thousand-mile inspection will include all items on, but not limited to, the form found in "Exhibit B" (attached). This inspection record shall be maintained until the vehicle is removed from service.

B. Safety

Good safety habits are as important as a good preventative maintenance program in prolonging the life of all vehicles, improving their crash worthiness, and insuring the safety of the occupants. With this in mind, the following is required of each driver prior to each departure before loading pupils:

1. Visual check of the tires.
2. Inspection of the brakes, horn, lights, signaling devices and windshield wipers.
3. All instrument gauges shall be scrutinized, particularly to determine that the generator or alternator is charging and that the proper oil pressure is indicated.
4. Windows, mirrors, and the interior of each vehicle will be inspected prior to each departure. The driver shall be responsible for maintaining the interior in a clean and sanitary condition.

C. Vehicle Replacement

Vehicle safety and efficiency of operation are paramount to the successful operation of a pupil transportation system. With this in mind, the following considerations will be observed:

1. Those vehicles reaching 100,000 miles or ten (10) years old will be recommended by transportation supervisor or designee via memo to the business office for replacement.

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2. Those vehicles for which parts are difficult or impossible to obtain will be recommended for replacement.
3. Those vehicles which are experiencing structural or body deterioration and are no longer safe to transport pupils will be recommended for removal from service.

VIII. Accounting**A. Accounting for Pupils**

The following is a list of essential information which shall be maintained relative to all students:

1. A listing of all pupils transported on each bus, with scheduled time for loading and unloading on each trip.
2. The change of status of any pupil during the academic year.
3. All necessary pupil information for filing state transportation reports.

B. Accounting - Financial

1. Annual records of total mileage will be kept for each bus, separated into the following categories:
 - a. Daily trips to and from school
 - b. Field trips
 - c. Extracurricular trips
 - d. Trips for students with special needs (i.e. handicapping conditions)
 - e. Remedial trips
 - f. Other
2. Financial records will be maintained for all transportation expenditures.

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3. Account codes will be maintained for each of the following expenditures:

- a. Driver wages
- b. Equipment
- c. Parts
- d. Gasoline
- e. Oil, lubricants and antifreeze
- f. Tires and chains
- g. Liability and property damage insurance
- h. Equipment repair

IX. Insurance

Insurance coverage will be reviewed by the District with the District's current insurance company.

X. Personnel Authorized to Transport Students**A. Bus Drivers**

Only employees who have the appropriate operator license for the vehicle being operated, and who have complied with Regulations of the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, the New York State Commissioner of Education and all other applicable laws and regulations, may drive pupils to and from home on regularly scheduled routes.

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