

Southern Kern Unified School District

Transportation Service Plan

2025–2026

Pursuant to California Education Code §39800.1



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Mandate

California Education Code §39800.1

(a) As a condition of receiving apportionments under Section 41850.1, a local educational agency shall develop a plan describing the transportation services it will offer to its pupils, and how it will prioritize planned transportation services for pupils in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and any of grades 1 to 6, inclusive, and pupils who are low income. The plan shall be adopted by the local educational agency’s governing board on or before April 1, 2023, and updated by April 1 each year thereafter. The plan shall include the following components:

1. A description of the local educational agency’s transportation services that would be accessible to pupils with disabilities and homeless children and youth, as defined pursuant to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.).
2. A description of how unduplicated pupils, as defined in subdivision (b) of Section 42238.02, would be able to access available home-to-school transportation at no cost to the pupils.

(b)

1. The plan shall be developed in consultation with classified staff, teachers, school administrators, regional local transit authorities, local air pollution control districts and air quality management districts, parents, pupils, and other stakeholders.
2. The plan shall be presented and adopted by the governing board of the local educational agency in an open meeting with the opportunity for in-person and remote public comment.

(c) The plan may provide for the local educational agency to partner with a municipally owned transit system to provide service pursuant to this section to middle school and high school pupils.

(d) Nothing in a local educational agency’s plan shall preclude a local educational agency from providing no-cost transit passes to pupils.

(e) For purposes of this section, “local educational agency” means a school district, excluding a school district with a districtwide charter petition approved pursuant to Section 47606, or a county office of education.

Overview

The Southern Kern Unified School District (SKUSD) Transportation Service Plan has been developed in accordance with California Education Code Section 39800.1. As a condition of receiving transportation funding pursuant to Education Code Section 41850.1, the District hereby adopts this plan to describe the home-to-school transportation services provided to pupils and the manner in which transportation services are prioritized.

Consistent with statutory requirements, this plan outlines how the District prioritizes planned transportation services for:

- Transitional kindergarten and kindergarten pupils
- Grades 1 through 6 pupils
- Pupils who are low income

This plan further describes the District's commitment to providing accessible, equitable, and legally compliant transportation services, including accommodations for:

- Pupils with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan requires transportation
- Pupils experiencing homelessness, as defined under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §11301 et seq.)
- Foster youth
- Unduplicated pupils, as defined in Education Code Section 42238.02(b)

The District ensures that unduplicated pupils—including low-income pupils, English learners, and foster youth—have access to available transportation services at no cost, consistent with state and federal law.

Development of this Transportation Service Plan included consultation with classified staff, certificated staff, school administrators, parents/guardians, pupils, local transit authorities, and other stakeholders. The plan is presented to and adopted by the SKUSD Governing Board at a public meeting, with opportunity provided for both in-person and remote public comment.

This Transportation Service Plan shall be reviewed and updated annually to reflect current enrollment, fiscal conditions, operational capacity, and community needs. The District remains committed to maintaining compliance with applicable state and federal laws while promoting equitable access to safe and reliable transportation services for all eligible pupils.

Transportation Services Offered

Southern Kern Unified School District provides home-to-school transportation within district boundaries in accordance with Board Policy and Administrative Regulation requirements. Transportation services are established based on distance eligibility criteria, pupil safety considerations, efficiency of routing, and traffic mitigation around school campuses.

Bus routes and designated stops are developed using district mapping systems and safety evaluations to ensure safe access while maximizing operational efficiency.

Distance Eligibility Guidelines

(AP 3541 – Transportation Routes and Services)

Pupils are eligible for home-to-school transportation when the distance between their residence (or assigned bus stop) and school exceeds the following minimum distances:

- Transitional Kindergarten through Grade 5: Three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) mile
- Grades 6–8: One (1) mile
- Grades 9–12: Two (2) miles

Distances are determined by the District using established mapping methodologies and safety review procedures.

Transportation may be provided for distances less than the minimum thresholds when documented safety hazards, roadway conditions, or other accessibility concerns impact pupil access to school.

Pupils with Disabilities

(BP/AR 3541.2 – Transportation for Students with Disabilities)

The District provides transportation services for pupils with disabilities when required by the pupil's:

- Individualized Education Program (IEP), or
- Section 504 Plan

Transportation is provided when Southern Kern Unified School District is the pupil's district of residence and when transportation is identified as a related service necessary for the pupil to access a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

Such transportation services are provided at no cost to the pupil or parent/guardian.

Pupils Experiencing Homelessness

(AR 6173 – Education for Homeless Children)

The District provides transportation to and from the school of origin for pupils experiencing homelessness who reside within district boundaries, upon request of:

- The parent/guardian, or

- The District’s homeless liaison (for unaccompanied youth)

If a pupil experiencing homelessness resides outside district boundaries but continues attending the school of origin within Southern Kern Unified School District, the Superintendent or designee shall coordinate with the district of residence to determine cost-sharing and transportation responsibility.

All transportation fees authorized by law shall be waived for pupils experiencing homelessness. Transportation is not required once the pupil secures permanent housing, unless transportation is required by the pupil’s IEP or Section 504 Plan.

Foster Youth

(AR 6173.1 – Foster Youth Services)

The Superintendent or designee shall collaborate with the local child welfare agency to arrange cost-effective transportation that enables a foster youth to remain in the school of origin for the duration of the pupil’s time in foster care, when determined to be in the pupil’s best interest.

Transportation costs may be:

- Paid by the child welfare agency,
- Paid by the District, or
- Shared between agencies.

All district transportation fees authorized by law shall be waived for pupils in foster care.

Unduplicated Pupils and Transportation Fees

(BP 3250 – Transportation Fees)

When state transportation funding is insufficient to fully support home-to-school transportation services, the Governing Board may charge transportation fees as expressly authorized by law.

However, fees shall be waived for:

- Pupils eligible for free or reduced-price meals
- English learners
- Foster youth
- Pupils experiencing homelessness
- Pupils with disabilities whose IEP or Section 504 Plan requires transportation

The District remains committed to equitable access to transportation services and ensures compliance with all applicable state and federal requirements.

2024–2025 Transportation Ridership and Operational Data

For the 2024–2025 school year, Southern Kern Unified School District reported home-to-school transportation data through the California Basic Education Data System (CBEDS). The following information summarizes ridership demographics and operational data. Expenditure data is not included in this section.

Home-to-School Transportation Services by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Total Riders
American Indian or Alaska Native, Not Hispanic	20
Asian, Not Hispanic	14
Pacific Islander, Not Hispanic	1
Filipino, Not Hispanic	21
Hispanic or Latino, Any Race	1,225
African American, Not Hispanic	268
White, Not Hispanic	360
Two or More Races, Not Hispanic	20
Total Annual Riders	1,929

The demographic data reflects the diversity of pupils receiving home-to-school transportation services within the District’s attendance boundaries.

Ridership Summary

- **Average Daily Riders:** 1,929
- **Number of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Riders:** 1,595

General Transportation Operational Information

- **Number of Days Transported:** 180
- **Total Home-to-School Miles Driven:** 244,470 miles
- **Number of Home-to-School Routes:** 13
- **Number of Buses Equipped with Lap/Shoulder Belts:** 22

The District maintains a fleet equipped to meet California safety standards and provides daily transportation services across regular education and specialized routes.

Types of Fuel Used

The District operates transportation vehicles using the following fuel types:

- Diesel
- Gasoline

Funding and Fiscal Accountability

In accordance with California Education Code Sections 39800.1 and 41850.1, Southern Kern Unified School District has developed this Transportation Service Plan to describe the funding methodology and fiscal accountability for home-to-school transportation services.

Basis for Revenue Calculation

Pursuant to Education Code Section 41850.1, the District's home-to-school transportation funding allocation is based on prior-year reported transportation expenditures (Function 3600), less disallowed costs, and calculated at the applicable reimbursement percentage.

For the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the projected funding for home-to-school transportation for pupils is based on 2024–2025 reported expenditures, as detailed below:

Revenue Calculation	
Total 2024-25 Transportation Expenses (Function 3600)	3,690,863.47
Less Capital Outlay (object 6XXX, Function 3600)	725,241.30
Less Nonagency Expenditures (Goal 7110,7150, Function 3600)	-
Estimated 60% Reimbursement	1,779,373.30
Less 2024-25 Transportation add-on (from LCFE Calculator)	454,318.00
Total Revenue (Object 8590, Resource 0000)	1,325,055.30
Expenditures and Other Financing Uses	
2000-2999 - Classified Salaries	1,430,753.81
3000-3999 - Employee Benefits	840,907.35
4000-4999 - Books and Supplies	381,390.97
5000-5999 - Services and other Operating Expenditures	312,570.04
6000-6999 - Capital Outlay	725,241.30
7000-7999 - Other Outgo	-
Total Expenditures	3,690,863.47

Board Approval Date: March 25, 2026

This Transportation Service Plan was presented for public hearing and adopted by the Governing Board on this date.