



Cache County School District

Policy Series 4300: Special Education

Policy No. 4300 P1

Special Needs Transportation Services Procedures

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the safe, efficient, and respectful transportation of students with special needs. It provides guidelines and procedures to be followed by all employees involved in special education and 504 transportation services.

Scope

These procedures apply to all drivers, aides, case managers, and administrative personnel involved in special needs transportation.

Determination of Need

The need for special needs transportation services is determined by an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team or a 504 team in an accommodation plan. IEP teams and 504 teams are obligated to follow state and federal rules under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The determination of need is based on the individual student. Students should be transported with non-disabled peers to the maximum extent reasonable. Accommodations, supplemental aids, and reasonable modifications should be considered prior to removing a student from the same transportation services that are provided to non-disabled peers.

Schedules and Route Planning

Schedules and routes are determined by the transportation department. Routes are determined based on school boundaries, the student's address, and other factors that may need to be considered in individual circumstances. Special needs transportation services are curb-to-curb. Students will be picked up and dropped off at the curb line or other point as designated by the transportation department. Students will only be picked up and dropped off at their assigned stops within the catch boundary of the school. Students that have been approved as an Open Enrollment student within the school district, do not qualify for special needs transportation as they live outside the school and/or district boundaries.

Private parking lots, private driveways, and dead-end roads may have other restrictions and may be determined too dangerous for buses. Drivers are to avoid situations that would require backing up the bus. Other locations may also be determined to be too dangerous by the Transportation Special Services Coordinator.

Drivers will notify parents/guardians of pick-up and drop-off times at least two days prior to the beginning of services at the beginning of the school year. New student additions and changes during the school year require at least 24 hours notice of pick up and drop off times. Parents/guardians can expect the bus to arrive within 10 minutes (plus or minus) of the scheduled time. If the bus is going to be earlier or later than the scheduled window, the attendant will attempt to phone the parents/guardians. The driver will wait no more than 3 minutes after arriving at the residence during the scheduled window. The attendant will attempt to call if a parent/guardian does not come out of the residence to meet the bus. After school, the bus will wait for 5 minutes past the scheduled departure time from the school.

Students who are not on the bus at that time remain the responsibility of the school. Other arrangements will need to be made for the student to return home.

Schedule Adjustments

Parents/guardians should notify the driver when a student is not going to be riding the bus. If the absence is known ahead of time, the parent/guardian may notify the driver on the bus cell phone or the transportation department.

If a student who typically rides the bus home after school will not be riding the bus home on a given day, the parent/guardian should notify the student's case manager and the transportation department.

If a student will not be riding the bus for 5 consecutive days, the parent/guardian must notify the student's case manager as well as the transportation department. When the student is ready to return, the student's case manager and the transportation department must again be notified. The transportation department may take up to 3 school days to adjust the route and resume services.

If a student does not ride the bus for 3 consecutive days without prior notice of an absence, transportation services will be suspended. When the student is ready to return, the student's case manager and the transportation department must be notified. The transportation department may take up to 3 school days to adjust the route and resume services.

Any request to change times or locations or for changes over 5 days in duration must be communicated to the IEP or 504 case manager and approved by the transportation department prior to implementation and at least 3 days in advance. One-time changes and changes less than 5 days in duration cannot be accommodated due to the disruption to the other families, drivers, and the routes. The case manager will complete the transportation request form and forward the information to the transportation. If the change is reasonable and falls within procedures, the transportation department will approve the request and notify the parent/guardian. The transportation department may take up to 3 school days to adjust the route.

Special Requests

Any other special request outside of changes and adjustments in the previous section must be approved by the Director of Special Education and/or Director of 504 Programs and the Transportation Special Services Coordinator prior to accommodating the request.

Siblings on the Special Needs Bus

At times it might be beneficial for a qualified rider to have a sibling on the bus with them. Prior approval is required from the IEP team or 504 team, the Director of Special Education and/or Director of 504 Programs, and the Transportation Special Services Coordinator. The decision to allow a sibling to ride will be made on a case-by-case basis and based on the needs of the qualified rider. If a sibling is approved, they are required to be on time and follow driver and attendant instructions. This approval may be denied or revoked as conditions change on the bus (e.g. seats are needed for qualified riders) or a sibling fails to follow bus rules or procedures. If the qualified student is not riding the bus on a particular day, the sibling will not be picked up or taken home by the special needs bus. A sibling cannot displace a qualified rider. A sibling cannot ride the bus for family convenience or to mitigate attendance issues of the sibling.

Procedure if Parent/Guardian is not at the Residence

Most qualified students are unable to care for themselves. The parent, guardian, or a responsible person designated by the parent/guardian must be at the stop to receive the student.

The person receiving the student must promptly make their presence visible to the driver or attendant. If they do not, the attendant will attempt to contact the parent/guardian or other contacts by phone. If the driver is unable to make contact by phone, they will knock on the door of the residence. If, after

reasonable attempts, the designated receiving person cannot be located, the driver will keep the student on the bus and continue along the route. The driver or attendant will notify the transportation department that there was no one present to receive the student and ask if there are any other emergency numbers. The attendant will continue trying to contact a designated person. If contact is made, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to meet the bus later in the route to retrieve the student. The bus will not go back to the residence. At the second to last bus stop, if a designated person has not been successfully contacted, the Transportation Special Services Coordinator or designee will contact Police Dispatch at 435-753-7555 to report an unaccompanied minor. The police will then determine the next course of action. The parent/guardian will have to contact Police Dispatch to make arrangements to pick up the student.

Release of Student without Parent/Guardian Present

Prior written parent/guardian consent is required if any student is going to be released from transportation without a parent/guardian present. This is not an option for students under 12 years of age. The Parent/Guardian Release Form must be signed by the parent/guardian and approved by the Transportation Special Services Coordinator and the Director of Special Education and/or Director of 504 Programs prior to leaving the student unattended. If the Transportation Special Services Coordinator and the Director of Special Education and/or Director of 504 Programs have concerns about the safety of the child if left unattended, the request might not be approved.

Communication

Each employee involved in special needs transportation must take any questions or concerns to their direct supervisor. When necessary, the Transportation Special Services Coordinator and the Director of Special Education and/or Director of 504 Programs will communicate and determine the appropriate course of action.

Safety Restraints

School bus seats are designed for the safety of students. All preschool students will be transported in a child safety restraint system. Students who cannot or will not safely stay seated while on the bus will be required to use a seatbelt or other safety restraint system. If a seatbelt or restraint system is required it must be documented in the student's IEP or 504 plan prior to the use of the restraint.

Equipment

Parents/Guardians must ensure that wheelchairs and other special equipment are in safe operating condition for transportation. It is highly recommended that wheelchairs meet the WC-19. These standards come from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and define standards for forward facing seats in a motor vehicle. If the wheelchair does not meet the WC-19 standards, the student will still be transported to school either seated in the wheelchair or in a seat on the bus. This decision is made by the IEP team in consultation with the transportation department.

Power Wheelchair Operation During Transportation

General Guidelines:

1. **Ground -Level Maneuvering:** The student may independently drive the wheelchair onto and off the ramp while the ramp is on the ground.
2. **Power Off:** The wheelchair's power must be turned off during the following:
 - a. Loading the wheelchair onto the lift
 - b. Unloading the wheelchair from the lift
 - c. While the bus is in motion
3. **Student Independence:** If the student does not possess the necessary skills and judgement for safe, independent operation, the IEP team in consultation with the transportation department can determine necessary accommodations based on the student need and specifics of the power

wheelchair.

Incident Management and Reporting

Special transportation students must abide by the same rules as other students while on the bus. This is to ensure the safety of the drivers, attendants, and all students. Problem behavior on the bus will be addressed by following the school district's procedures and/or using procedures indicated on the student's IEP or 504 plan. Concerns or questions from the driver, attendants, or school staff must be taken to the direct supervisor of the person raising the concern or asking the question.

If a driver arrives for pick up at the residence or at the school and a student appears to be too aggressive to transport safely, the driver must contact the Transportation Special Services Coordinator immediately.

The Transportation Special Services Coordinator will contact the Director of Special Education and/or Director of 504 Programs or a designee and they will determine if the student will be transported.

If the student cannot be transported safely they will be left at the residence (in the morning) or at the school (in the afternoon). In the morning, the parent/guardian can make other arrangements to transport the student to school. However, if a student is not transported to school via the special needs bus, it will count as a day of suspension from school. The case manager must be notified that day in order to document appropriately. After school, the case manager will contact the parent/guardian to arrange for pick up at the school.

General Emergency Protocol

Refer to Emergency Protocol

Diabetes	Asthma
Severe Allergy/Epi-Pen	Convulsive Seizure

Other Emergencies

In case of other emergencies, the driver, in coordination with the transportation department will determine the course of action. Emergency services will be called when necessary.