

2026-2027 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION PLAN



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DESCRIPTION OF RIALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Rialto Unified School District (RUSD) is located in the City of Rialto within San Bernardino County. The District services the community of Rialto including bordering cities of Fontana, Colton, and San Bernardino. RUSD has a diverse population of approximately 23,000 students. RUSD is the city's largest employer, with more than 3,000 employees. Preschool through adult-aged students, and the community, are served by nineteen (19) elementary schools, five (5) middle schools, three (3) comprehensive high schools, one (1) continuation high school, one (1) independent study program/virtual academy, and one (1) adult school. Transportation Services provides transportation to approximately 3,100 students each school year.

THE LAW

Per Education Code 39800.1, the District must develop a plan to prioritize and offer transportation to students with disabilities, McKinney-Vento (students experiencing homelessness), and unduplicated pupils in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and any of grades 1 to 6, inclusive, and low income students, which must be approved by the Board of Education by April 1, 2023, and every year thereafter.

Unduplicated pupils are students classified in two or more of the following categories:

- English learner
- Foster Youth
- Eligible for free or reduced-price meals

GOAL

Review the Student Transportation Plan approved by the Board of Education at the March 5, 2025 meeting. The Student Transportation Plan prioritizes transportation for students with disabilities, McKinney-Vento (students experiencing homelessness), and unduplicated students in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 6, inclusive, and low-income students.

CONSULTATION

The District consulted with parents, students, families, classified staff, teachers, school administrators, regional local transit authorities, local air pollution control districts, air quality management districts, and other educational partners.

Outreach: The District received feedback and recommendations from the Student Ridership Program webpage from April 1, 2025, through December 12, 2025; 18 responses were received. Quality Transportation Services Committee (QTSC) completed one (1) meeting in December 2025 to review and update the plan. QTSC consisted of parents, students, staff, community members, and Leaders from Education Services (Elementary, Secondary, Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA), Special Services, Technology Services, and Multilingual Programs) and Business Services (Risk Management, Fiscal Services, Facilities Planning, and Transportation).

Current Transportation Routes and Services for Students

Board Policy 3540: Transportation; The Board of Education desires to provide for the safe and efficient transportation of students to and from school as necessary to ensure student access to the educational program, including expanded learning programs, promote regular attendance, and reduce tardiness. In determining the extent to which the district provides transportation services, the Board shall weigh student and community needs against the cost of providing such services.

Administrative Regulation 3541: Transportation Routes and Services; describes students who reside beyond the minimum transportation distances (walking boundaries) and attend their school of residence are eligible for transportation service. The District may authorize transportation to students who live within the maximum walking distance from the attending school when safety problems or hazards exist. Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are eligible when the IEP team determines transportation services are needed as a related service. Students with a McKinney-Vento or Foster Youth classification are eligible for transportation.

Modes of Transportation

Potential modes of transportation for transporting students to and from a school include, but are not limited to, existing school bus routes; public bus transportation; carpooling; and contracted passenger van services.

Rialto Unified School District students are eligible for free public transportation (Omnitrans). To utilize this service, students must present a valid school-issued identification card upon boarding the bus.

Transportation Services

The transportation fleet consists of:

- 39 large buses (56 - 62 passengers)
- 25 mid-size buses (39 passengers or less) with wheelchair access
- 12 small buses (25 passengers or less)
- 5 passenger vans (7 passengers or less)

District-owned school buses average 583,879 miles per school year. The District operates 36 routes (22 for walking distance and 14 for Special Service routes). In addition, the District contracts out transportation services, and these contractors operate 14 wheelchair buses, 49 small buses, and 57 passenger vehicles to various schools within the District, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (SBCSS), and non-public schools. The District provides transportation services for approximately 2,000 educational and athletics field trips annually.

Transportation Services transports and arranges transportation for 2469 General Education students, 600 students who receive transportation as a related service, 21 students to SBCSS programs, six (6) students to California School for the Deaf Riverside (CSDR), one (1) Community Day School, and 10 students to non-public schools for the 2025-2026 school year.

Description of Contracted Transportation Services

To provide quality transportation for our students and to support the educational programs, Transportation Services utilizes services from private transportation contractors. Contracted services assist the District in meeting students' needs.

General Education

Administrative Regulation 3541: Transportation Routes and Services; provides students residing beyond the prescribed distance from their school of residence eligible for transportation:

- Grades K: one (1) mile
- Grades 1-5: one and one-half (1.5) miles
- Grades 6-8: two (2) miles
- Grades 9-12: three and one-half (3.5) miles

When safety problems or hazards exist, the District may authorize transportation within the maximum walking distance. Students residing within the walking boundaries of and attending Carter High School receive transportation due to the safety of the walking path.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are offered transportation as a related service under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (IDEA) as a related service. IEP team members determine the students' needs to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) through the IEP process. Special Services has procedures and guidelines in place as a reference. It is the responsibility of the IEP team to determine if transportation is required to assist the student in benefiting from special education services.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides students with disabilities not outlined in the IDEA with accommodations and modifications to ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment. Providing transportation services to students with disabilities, creates opportunities for the students to participate in activities alongside their peers without a disability.

The 504 Plan team, in coordination with Student Services, will review the request submitted for transportation, and determine whether transportation is a required and reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to the educational programs.

Student Transportation Plan for Priority Groups

Per Education Code 39800.1, the District must develop a plan to prioritize and offer transportation to students with disabilities, McKinney-Vento (students experiencing homelessness), and unduplicated pupils in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and any of grades 1 to 6, inclusive, and low income students, which must be approved by the Board of Education by April 1, 2023, and every year thereafter. The following are the priority groups:

Students with Disabilities (Transportation as a Related Service)

Transportation is a related service in the IEP and 504 plan. Personal factors that influence the mode of transportation include health, physical abilities, social/emotional judgment, behavioral characteristics, safety, cognitive development, and communication ability. The District will provide transportation for students with disabilities at no cost to the student, guardian, or family. The IEP team or 504 plan team must determine whether transportation is required to assist the student in meeting their unique educational needs.

Foster Youth and students experiencing homelessness (McKinney-Vento), who already receive transportation as a related service outlined in the Individualized Education Program (IEP), will continue being transported under their IEP. Special Services will notify Transportation of any change of address and/or school site.

Section 1. Students with Disabilities

1. Transportation will be provided to those students with orthopedic or other physical disabilities that significantly impair mobility. For this population of students, the need for transportation shall be based upon the decision of the IEP or 504 plan team.
2. Transportation will be provided to those students whose safety and well-being are at risk due to severe sensory impairment, such as blind, partially sighted, deaf, or hard of hearing. For this population of students, the need for transportation shall be based upon the decision of the IEP or 504 plan team.
3. Transportation will be provided when it is determined that there is a substantial risk to the student's safety and well-being due to significant social, emotional, or cognitive developmental delays. For this population of students, the need for transportation shall be based upon the decision of the IEP or 504 plan team.
4. Transportation will be provided based on the IEP or 504 plan team's determination of the most appropriate transportation service and/or accommodation which may include:
 - a. Curb to Curb – (pick-up/drop-off) transportation is provided at the safest location near the student's residence.
 - b. Corner to Corner – (pick-up/drop-off) transportation is provided at the closest cross streets (corner) to the student's home. Corner to Corner may occur when the vehicle is unable to travel safely on the roadway due to a road hazard, construction, or other emergencies, in a private community, or to provide the student with more independence.

- c. School to School - (pick-up/drop-off) transportation is provided at the student's school of residence to the school of attendance as determined by the IEP or 504 plan team.
5. Transportation will be provided to students who would otherwise not be eligible for transportation when Special Services assigns the student to a site other than the school of residence to offer program availability.
6. Appropriate Transportation will be provided to students with qualified services for Extended School Year (ESY).

Procedures to Implement Transportation Services for Students with Disabilities

1. After the IEP or 504 plan, which includes transportation services, is completed and signed, a representative from the respective service area will send a Bus Service Request (BSR) to Transportation.
2. Transportation Services may take up to ten (10) business days to assign the student to a route. Bus stops for other passengers may need adjustment, and families must receive notifications of time changes for their students.
3. Transportation Services representatives will complete and send the BSR with the route information, including pick up/drop off time, location of the bus stop, route number, and effective date, to the respective service area. The respective service area will notify the family.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.)

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.) supports the students who are experiencing homelessness with the same educational opportunities as other students. Transportation is a related service for students to continue at the school they attended prior to experiencing homelessness.

The District's Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) Foster Youth/McKinney-Vento Liaison is responsible for tracking McKinney-Vento students for the District. Each school site has one designated Foster Youth/McKinney-Vento Representative who provides and assists families/guardians with the required forms. Upon following the procedures for requesting transportation, the District will provide the best available mode of transportation to the Foster Youth at no cost to the student, guardian, or family.

Section 1. McKinney-Vento (Students Experiencing Homelessness) – Public and School Bus Transportation

Families requesting transportation for their students are offered a public bus pass at no cost. Families who decline public bus transportation may request another mode of transportation. The school site Foster Youth/McKinney-Vento Representative or CWA Foster Youth/McKinney-Vento Liaison will complete the required form with an explanation for the request of another mode for transportation. CWA will process all transportation requests for McKinney-Vento students.

Foster Youth (Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015)

The District's Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) Foster Youth/McKinney-Vento Liaison is responsible for tracking Foster Youth students for the District. Each school site has one designated Foster Youth/McKinney-Vento Representative who provides and assists families / guardian with the required forms. Upon following the procedures for requesting transportation, the District will provide the best available mode of transportation to the Foster Youth at no cost to the student, guardian, or family.

Section 1. Foster Youth – Public and School Bus Transportation

Families requesting transportation for their students are offered a public bus pass at no cost. Families who decline public bus transportation may request another mode of transportation. The school site Foster Youth/McKinney-Vento Representative or CWA Foster Youth/McKinney-Vento Liaison will complete the required form with an explanation for the request of another mode for transportation. CWA will process all transportation requests for Foster Youth.

Section 2. Foster Youth - Continuance after exiting foster placement

Transportation to and from the student's school of origin will be provided for the duration of the placement in foster care, as long as it remains in the student's best interest. A student who is in kindergarten or any grades 1 to 8, inclusive, who exits foster care before the end of the school year will continue with transportation services to and from the school of origin for the remainder of the academic school year. In addition, if a student exits placement while enrolled in high school, transportation services will continue to be offered to and from the school of origin through graduation.

Unduplicated Students

Unduplicated pupils are students classified in two or more of the following categories:

English learners, Foster Youth, or Eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Students classified as having a home school outside walking distance of their home address, as defined in Administrative Regulation 3541, will receive transportation. Students classified as unduplicated who live within the walking distance as defined in AR 3541 may apply for transportation services through the Ridership Program. In addition, students are eligible for free public transportation (Omnitrans). To utilize this service, students must present a valid school-issued identification card upon boarding the bus.

Low Income Students

Students classified as low-income whose home school is outside of the walking distance from their home address, as described in Administrative Regulation 3541, will receive transportation. Students classified as low-income who live within walking distance of their home address, as defined in AR 3541, may apply for transportation services through the Ridership Program. In addition, students are eligible for free public transportation (Omnitrans). To utilize this service, students must present a valid school-issued identification card upon boarding the bus.

Ridership Program

The Ridership Program offers access to transportation services to individuals who would not usually qualify. Students who access services through this program will be assigned ridership on school bus routes. Students residing within the prescribed distance from their school of residence may obtain transportation services through the Ridership Program at no cost to students or families. Families must submit a transportation application to receive school bus service. Electronic applications are located on the Rialto Unified School District's webpage under Transportation Services. To qualify, a student must live near an existing route with available seats.

Transportation Services will:

- Determine the maximum capacity for each bus route at the beginning of each year.
- Establish bus stops at designated locations in accordance with California Highway Patrol and Vehicle Code regulations.
- Review applications that are submitted annually. Applications must be submitted annually.
- Assign students to school bus routes with available seating.
- Place students on a waiting list when routes are not readily available. When seats on the route become available, the students will receive a notification of route assignment.

The District reserves the right to revise this Student Transportation Plan as needed.