2026-2027

PARENT HANDBOOK – TRANSPORTATION

Special Education
General Education
Expanded Learning

DISPATCH OFFICE (925) 825-7440 extension 3710

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

Provide equitable transportation with outstanding customer service to our students, parents and guardians, and schools. Provide the safest, most efficient, and most cost-effective transportation service. Improve self through personal and professional growth opportunities, and continually develop a work environment where each group member is respected, valued, and cherished while being their authentic selves and conducive to achieving our mission.

Transportation Team

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TRANSPORTATION ELIGIBILITY

IEP teams determine eligibility for transportation as a related service based on the child's unique needs related to their disability.

Generally speaking, students placed by the district at a school, other than their home school, in order to access a particular program are eligible for transportation services. This does not apply to students whose families request intra-district transfers for their own non-disability-related reasons. All parents, guardians, or educational rights holders have the right to request inter-district transfers per district policy. However, students whose parents, guardians, or educational rights holders elect to transfer their students to programs other than those assigned by the district as part of the IEP process (i.e. Intra-district transfers, etc.), transportation will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian/educational rights holder.

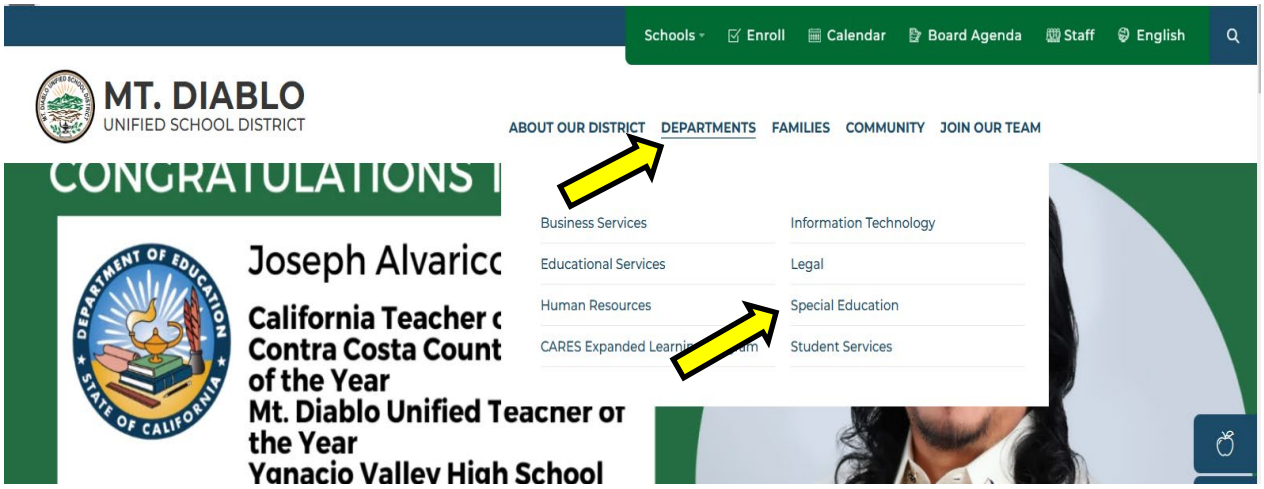
In addition, students who are unable to access transportation options similar to other students of the same age, because of their disability, may also be eligible for transportation. This does not include preschool students or other reasons, such as parents' ability to drop off the child due to work commitments or other non-disability related reasons.

EMERGENCY FORM

In order to keep emergency information on each child as current as possible, parents, guardians, or educational rights holders will be required to provide transportation information two times per school year, once at the beginning of the school year and once for extended school year. This may be completed electronically. Address information submitted is subject to verification, including documentation, home visits by district staff, or through a contracted private investigator in agreement with board policy.

The Special Education Office will provide a link to an electronic form for parents, guardians, or educational rights holders to complete. The link to the Transportation Request Form may be found on the MDUSD website under the Special Education Department Tab.

Start by going to www.mdusd.org, then clicking on the departments tab as shown, and then selecting Special Education, and then clicking the Yellow Bus.



If the internet is not available, parents, guardians, or educational rights holders may contact the District Office, Special Education Department, Wing D, or the student's school office for assistance in accessing and completing the form.

Parents, guardians, or educational rights holders will be provided with a deadline by which all information must be provided, typically six to eight weeks before the start of the school term. Delays in sending the information may result in a delay in the transportation starting.

BUS STOPS

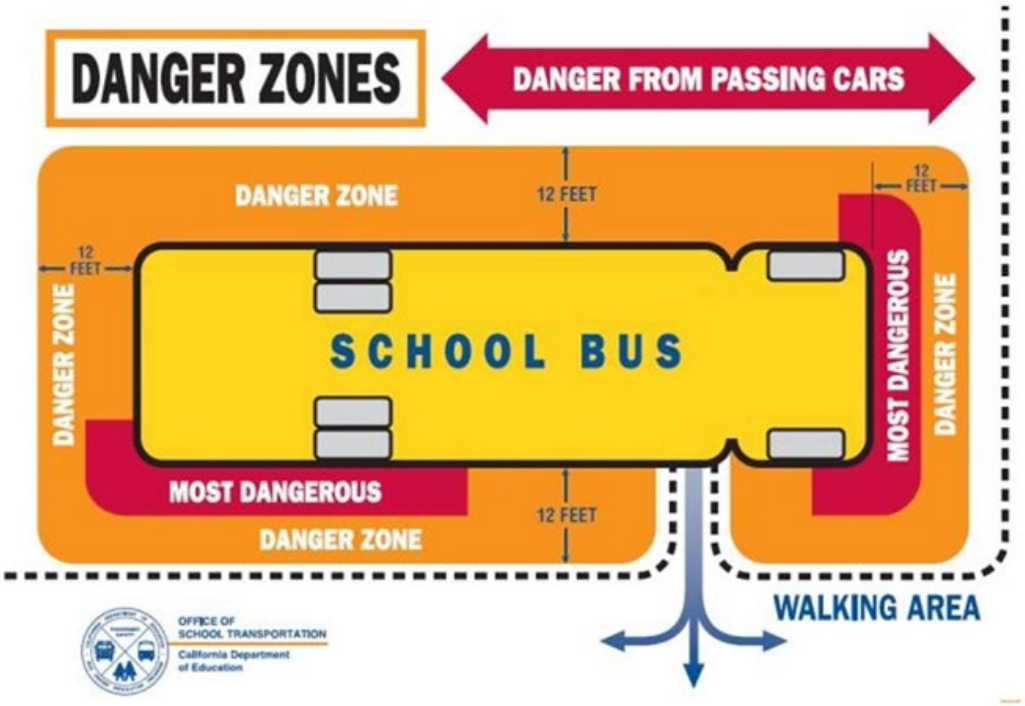
Under SOME conditions, when a student is eligible for transportation services per their IEP, special education students are transported from their home to school and back. In other instances, students may be assigned to ride the bus on existing routes or provided with bus passes to transportation services.

Services allow for pick up and drop off at a daycare facility within the boundaries of the Mt. Diablo Unified School District. Please be advised that no student may have more than one pick up location and one drop-off location.

Unless physically unsafe for the bus, the stop will be in front of and on the same side of the street as the student's address. Pick up or release of a rider will not be made in any area determined to be unsafe. Safety always takes precedence.

Each child is assigned to a defined bus route and may be assigned to a particular seat. State law requires that no child be permitted to leave the bus at a point other than his/her assigned stop.

BUS SAFETY DIAGRAM



CHANGES

Parents, guardians, or educational rights holders may **not** make private arrangements with the bus driver.

Routes are established by the transportation schedulers and software that provides the shortest, safest route possible. Drivers must follow these established routes. They may not make changes in these routes to accommodate parent/guardian requests unless authorized by the Transportation office. Onboard cameras and GPS systems are used to monitor departure and arrival times and to ensure the most efficient route possible.

If you have a change of address or make changes that affect transportation during the school year, please notify your student's school office at least ten (10) school days in advance. You will need to submit proof of residence (address) to your child's school. For students with IEPs, you will need to complete a new Request for Transportation, indicating all changes. For expediency, this form is available on the website under the Special Education Department Tab.

BUS SCHEDULES

Parents, guardians, or education rights holders are notified of the pick-up and drop-off schedule before the beginning of each school year. Buses, routes, and times may change throughout the school year. Parents, guardians, or educational rights holders will be notified of time changes. Please note that buses may run late during days of unfavorable weather conditions, traffic accidents, or road construction.

PICK-UP PROCEDURE

Students are scheduled onto routes that are the most expedient way to ensure all students arrive at school for instruction with the shortest ride time possible.
Requests for earlier or later pick-up times to address parent work schedules or daycare schedules cannot be accommodated.

Students **must be** supervised by an adult, be ready five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled time and watch for the bus. Drivers are prohibited from honking the bus horn, texting parents from the bus or using any other method to announce their arrival (i.e. using back up beepers).

For students who qualify for transportation through their IEP and require wheel chair service, the parent /guardian is responsible for getting the student to the bus. The bus driver may not leave the bus except to operate the lift gate for students in wheelchairs. It is the bus driver's responsibility to load and unload the students and to ensure that the wheelchairs are secured and all seatbelts are fastened.

Buses must operate on a definite schedule in order for classes to start on time. Buses will not depart from a stop prior to the designated time and will wait only one (1) minute before continuing on the route. This wait time is only for occasional delays, not scheduled in the route as part of the daily route time.

Repeated delays are reported to the Special Education Department and your child's transportation service may be affected.

After three (3) days of "NO SHOW" rides in which the driver arrives at the pickup location and the student does not ride the bus, the student will be placed onto a "Will Call"" route status where the bus will no longer go by for pickups unless the parent calls in to request the service.

After four weeks on "Will Call" status, the student will be dropped from the route and a new application will need to be submitted for re-routing.

PROCEDURE FOR DESIGNATED DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

The parent/guardian or designated adult must be at the assigned stop to receive the student from the bus unless the student transportation form indicates that the student may be left unattended. No student is permitted to leave the bus at any point other than the assigned stop.

If there is an unforeseen event, and the designated adult is unable to meet the bus, arrangements must be made for another adult to be there when the bus arrives. If the parent/guardian feels the student does not need to be met by an adult, please complete

and submit the Drop-Off Permission Slip form available from your driver or online at the district website under Departments/Transportation. Completed forms may be given to the driver.

In the event that no adult is available to meet the student and there is no unattended authorization on file, the bus driver will notify the dispatcher by radio immediately. If other students are on board, the bus driver will continue on route.

The Transportation Office will make every attempt to locate a parent/guardian or alternate adult contact using the information provided on the Transportation Form. At the completion of the route, if no responsible adult is located, the student may be returned to the school or the district office or the local law enforcement may be contacted.

Repeated instances of not being met by an adult at drop off may affect your child's service.
In the event that your child misses the bus in the morning or after school, it is the parent's, guardians, or educational rights holder's responsibility to transport the student to/from school. The buses wait up to 10 minutes after the dismissal bell for the students to board the bus.

ILLNESS OR ABSENCE PROCEDURES

DO NOT SEND A SICK CHILD TO SCHOOL

In order to minimize the spread of illness, and to give your own child time to recover, keep a sick child at home. Most doctors recommend that children be free of fever for at least 24 hours before sending them back to school. If a child becomes ill at school, the Parent/guardian/educational rights holder is required to transport the child home.

RIDE CANCELLATIONS

Please notify the Transportation Office at 925-825-7440 extension 3710.

- If your child will be absent from school for one day. (at least one hour prior to the scheduled pick-up)
- If your child will be absent from school for an extended period of time. • If you choose to drive your child to/from school.

If your student is a no show/no call for three (3) days, the student will be placed on Will Call and a parent, guardian, or educational rights holder must call the Transportation Dispatch office at least 24 hours in advance to resume the bus. After 4 weeks on the Will Call list, the student will be dropped from the transportation route and a new application will need to be submitted.

Please note - a parent, guardian, or educational rights holder must also notify your school office of absences. If your nonpublic school (NPS) student is transported on a district bus, absences should also be reported to the Transportation Department at 925-825-7440 x 3710.

TRANSPORTATION FOR GENERAL EDUCATION, SPECIAL EDUCATION, AND EXPANDED LEARNING

LOST ARTICLES

Please label all personal items sent to school. The Transportation Department assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen articles including cell phones or other electronic devices. Any articles found on the bus will be held until claimed or ten (10) days past the end of the school year. The school district will not be responsible for personal items lost or damaged on the bus.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior to and from school while riding the school bus. The district employs cameras on each bus and tape is maintained for a period of time after each ride. Video may be used to verify claims of misconduct on the bus. Parents, guardians, or educational rights holders may be held responsible for intentional damages caused by a student.

The following rules apply at all times when students are riding a school bus, including when on school activity trips:

Please discuss the following with your child:

1. Riders shall follow the instructions and directions of the bus driver at all times.

2. Riders should arrive at their designated bus stop on time and stand in a safe place at the stop to wait quietly for the bus.

3. Riders shall enter the bus in an orderly manner and go directly to their seats.

4. Riders shall sit down and fasten any passenger restraint systems. Riders shall remain seated while the bus is in motion.

5. Riders shall not block the aisle or emergency exit with their body or personal belongings. Riders may bring large or bulky items, such as class projects or musical instruments, on the bus only if the item does not displace any other rider or obstruct the driver's vision.

6. Riders should be courteous to the driver and to fellow passengers. Vulgarity, rude, or abusive behavior is prohibited.

7. Any noise or behavior that could distract the driver, such as loud talking, scuffling or fighting, throwing objects, or standing or changing seats, is prohibited and may lead to suspension of riding privileges.

8. Riders shall not use tobacco products, vape, eat, or drink while riding the bus.

9. If the use of cellular telephones or similar devices disrupts the safe operation of the school bus, the bus driver may direct the student to no longer use the device on the bus.

10. Riders shall not put any part of the body out of the window nor throw any item from the bus.

11. Riders shall help keep the bus and the area around the bus stop clean. Riders shall not damage or deface the bus or tamper with bus equipment. Vandalism to the interior or exterior of the bus is prohibited and violators may be held liable.

12. Service animals are permitted on school transportation services; all other animals, including birds, and reptiles, are prohibited. (Education Code 39839; 13 CCR 1216)

13. Upon reaching their destination, riders shall remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop and upon the signal from the driver, unfasten any restraint system, enter the aisle, and go directly to the exit.

14. Riders should be alert for traffic when leaving the bus and shall follow the district's transportation safety plan when crossing the road and exiting the bus.

15. The driver or any passenger shall report any violation of the district's bus rules to the principal or designee. The principal or designee shall notify the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder of the misbehavior, determine the severity of the misconduct, and take action accordingly. In instances of a severe violation or repeated offenses, the rider may be denied transportation for a period of time determined appropriate by the principal or designee.

16. No large items or glass containers are allowed on the bus.

17. Be courteous, respectful and cooperative with the driver and fellow passengers at all times.

    Bus drivers shall not deny transportation services except as directed by the principal or designee.

SCHOOL BUS MISCONDUCT CITATION

A citation system is used by our Transportation Department as a means of informing you and the school principal and program when the students violate our rules relating to conduct on school buses.

All rules are aimed at safety and good manners, and will be enforced. The rules are listed in the School Board Policy, Title 13, or Parent Handbook. Any continued violation will be sufficient reason to deny school bus transportation privileges.

The district employs cameras on each bus and tape is maintained for a period of time after each ride. Video and audio may be used to verify claims of misconduct on the bus. Parents, guardians, or educational rights holders may be held responsible for intentional damages caused by a student.

Authority of Driver: Pupils transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of, and responsible directly to the driver of the bus, and the driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils while they are on the bus or being escorted across the street or highway. (Title 13, Motor Vehicles, Calif. Adm. Code)

Please discuss proper bus conduct with your children and thank you for your cooperation.

All drivers use the citation procedures as a last resort. They will always attempt to achieve results by asking passengers to behave. The citation is written by the bus driver. The school handles the following disciplinary action, when the citation process is started.

1st Citation: Warning from the school & review of transportation safety rules.

2nd Citation: Warning and review of transportation safety rules. Transportation can be denied on 3rd citation.

3rd Citation: Warning, probable denial of transportation for up to 5 days.

4th Citation: School bus transportation suspended for the remainder of the semester.

CAR SEATS, WHEELCHAIRS AND SEAT BELTS

If the driver determines that due to safety reasons a student requires a seat belt securing device, one may be used to ensure your child remains fastened into his/her seatbelt.

Students who cannot sit safely secured by a seat belt must be transported in an

approved car seat/star seat (if appropriate to their size), safety vest, or wheelchair. Special equipment must be listed in the student's IEP.

Wheelchairs must be equipped with brakes and seat belts and are to be properly maintained by the owner of the chair. (Velcro fasteners do not meet minimum state requirements and cannot be the sole source of seat restraint). All wheelchair brakes must be maintained to prevent the wheels from moving when the brakes are applied.

Power wheelchairs transported on school buses shall be capable of being locked in gear when placed in a school bus, or they must have an independent braking system capable of holding the wheelchair in place. Wheelchair power must be turned off prior to being transported in a school bus. Batteries used to propel power wheelchairs shall be both leak-resistant and spill-resistant or must be placed in a leak-resistant container. Batteries must be secured to the wheelchair frame in such a manner as to prevent separation in the event of an accident.

Any wheelchair, which does not meet minimum state requirements, will not be transported. It is the parent's, guardians, or educational rights holder's responsibility to provide equipment that meets the minimum safety requirements and maintain such equipment in proper, working order.

Wheelchairs must be occupied by the student. At no time, will an empty wheelchair be transported.

All students are required to wear seat belts while riding the school bus. Seat belts are not to be unfastened until the bus has stopped at the proper destination.

SCHOOL BUS EQUIPMENT

All school buses are inspected daily by the driver, routinely by District mechanics, and annually by the Department of California Highway Patrol. Each vehicle must be certified so that it meets all applicable regulations and laws relating to pupil transportation in the State of California. All district operated buses are equipped with GPS which may be used to track arrival and departure times of buses. In addition, some buses may be equipped with video cameras which may be reviewed at a later time if needed by district staff and outside agencies.

BUS SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

The Board believes that the use of surveillance systems on school buses will help to deter misconduct and improve discipline, ensure the safety of students and bus drivers, and prevent vandalism. Therefore, surveillance systems may be installed and used on school buses to monitor student behavior while traveling to and from school and school activities. There shall be signs posted in the buses with the message, "For your safety, you may be recorded by a video surveillance system which may also include audio recording."

The Superintendent or designee shall notify students, parents/guardians, and staff that surveillance may occur on any school bus and that the contents of a recording may be a student record and, as such, may be used in student disciplinary proceedings or referred to local law enforcement, as appropriate. In addition, a prominent notice shall be placed in each bus stating that the bus is equipped with a surveillance monitoring system.

Regulation MT. DIABLO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, Approved on 09/01/1988**,** Last Revised Date: 01/18/2023 | Last Reviewed Date: 01/18/2023, Concord, California

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

The Mt. Diablo Unified School District and State law require that all school bus drivers attend regularly scheduled safety meetings and in-service training sessions to maintain skill levels. State law requires each driver to have a valid School Bus Driver Certificate, first aid training, a physical exam, and traffic and criminal clearance.

SCHOOL BUS ACCIDENTS

A school bus accident is any accident, no matter how minor, involving a school bus with students on board. When an accident occurs, it is the Transportation Department's responsibility to determine the extent of the damages and if there are any injuries and, in every case, to notify the proper authorities which includes California Highway Patrol, the driver's supervisor and an ambulance if necessary. The Transportation Office will notify school and district personnel as soon as it is safe to do so.

If students are involved in an accident, the parents, guardians, or educational rights holders must be notified by their school of attendance and if after hours, by the Transportation Department. The school sites have the emergency cards with the current emergency information. The Dispatcher will call the school and let them know which students are involved in the event.

If you are notified that your child is on a bus and there has been an incident with your child's school bus, DO NOT go to the accident site as this may slow down the investigation. California Highway Patrol will not release students until the investigation is over and going to the site may cause delays, even in minor incidents. Parent, guardian, or educational rights holder will be notified of drop off location and time or dropped at assigned drop location with new estimated arrival time.