

BUSINESS**Transportation**

The primary purpose of district-provided transportation is to provide safe, economical, and regular transportation for eligible students to and from school.

Use of transportation equipment for field trips, extra-curricular activities, and other authorized educational, cultural, and recreational activities is permitted when it does not conflict with the primary purpose of transportation.

The superintendent shall be responsible for implementation of the rules and regulations pertaining to school transportation.

Legal Reference: Pupil Transportation Act (PA 187) of 1990, as amended.
Public Acts 107 and 108, 2006
M.C.L. 257.1801-1877
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended.

See Also:
Board Policy 5131.1: Responsibility for Student Behavior on School Buses

Policy
Adopted: 01-13-75
Amended: 12-08-08
Reviewed:

In organizing and operating the transportation system, all applicable statutes and rules and regulations of the State of Michigan, or its agencies, shall be strictly adhered to and all recommendations and suggestions shall be carefully considered.

I: General Conditions

- A. In all cases, first consideration shall be to provide safe transportation for students to and from school.
- B. Careful consideration shall be given to efficiency and economy of operation. Any new housing development that falls within walking distance - regulations should be developed to allow safe walking.
- C. School bus transportation shall be considered a privilege to be enjoyed by eligible students only as long as the students accept responsibility for their own personal conduct and carefully follow all rules and regulations.
- D. Most school bus riders will find it necessary to walk some distance to the designated bus stop.
- E. School transportation equipment shall be used only for the transportation of students to and from school and school-sponsored activities.
 - 1. Exceptions are senior citizen groups when it does not conflict with its use for school purposes; and adult groups, for school-related activities, when it does not conflict with its use for school proposes.
 - 2. When transportation is furnished to senior citizen groups and other adult groups, a charge calculated in accordance with state regulations equal to the actual cost of the trip shall be made, unless specifically waived by the board of education.
- F. No charge shall be made for transportation on the school buses of this district to and from regularly scheduled classes along scheduled routes.
- G. There shall be no charge for student transportation to and from non-mandatory, non-credit events unless it is determined by the board of education that funds to support these activities are not available. In this case, a charge calculated in accordance with state regulations shall be made in a consistent manner for all such activities.

II: Eligibility

There will be no student options regarding boarding the bus at alternative bus stops nor choices regarding the established eligibility requirements.

- A. Eligibility classifications K-12 are as follows:
 - 1. Any student living within the one and one-half (1½) mile demarcation line is to be considered in the non-transportation area.
 - 2. Any student living one and one-half (1½) miles or more from the school building is eligible for bus transportation.
- B. A person identified to be a disabled person, in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, who would otherwise be unable to participate in an appropriate special or regular education program or service operated or contracted for by the Okemos Public Schools, shall be eligible for only that additional transportation necessary for the person to participate in the program or service for a full school day as prescribed for that child.
- C. The superintendent may, upon the request of the parent, declare a student to be temporarily disabled and in need of special transportation if it is determined that the child is temporarily physically unable to walk to school.
- D. A student enrolled in a nonpublic school shall be eligible for transportation to the public school the student would otherwise attend. This transportation shall be along the regular routes and schedules in effect for public school students.

III: Transportation Service Limitations

Bus routes shall be planned to achieve reasonable economy of operation with maximum safety.

- A. Bus routes will not be extended or stops scheduled unless a student would otherwise be required to walk in excess of one and one-half (1½) miles to a bus stop.
- B. Routes are planned to keep individual riding distance and time to a practical minimum, not to exceed 90 minutes a day per child.
- C. For certain special education center program, a maximum one-way riding time may be 1-1/2 hours if the distance and pick up schedule cannot be reasonably reduced. The stamina and physical well being of each disabled student shall be considered prior to being scheduled on these extended runs.

IV: Administrative Responsibility

- A. The general supervision of the organization and operation of the school transportation system shall be the responsibility of the Director of Transportation under the authority of the Superintendent of Schools.
- B. The administrative responsibility for the maintenance and operation of all district-owned vehicles and the supervision of the transportation system shall include, but are not limited to, the following responsibilities:
1. To continually appraise the student transportation system and to make recommendations to the superintendent of schools for its improvement in terms of service, safety, efficiency, and economy.
 2. To develop, publish, and regularly review bus routes and stop locations.
 3. To properly maintain all school buses and other district vehicles so that they may operate with optimum safety and efficiency.
 4. To evaluate and recommend equipment needs for regular and special student transportation.
 5. To recommend and maintain an adequate staff of qualified and certified school bus drivers and other personnel necessary for the safe and efficient operation of the transportation system.
 6. In certain cases, to authorize the use of special education transportation aides when the health or safety of the students warrants these.
 7. To arrange for the in-service training and improvement of all transportation personnel.
 8. To develop safety regulations and promote safety practices for all transportation personnel.
 9. To work with the superintendent and other school personnel to develop rules and procedures for student conduct relating to transportation and keep the building principals and other school officials fully informed on all matters concerning the transportation system.
 10. To enforce all state and national regulations and board of education policies.
 11. To design and maintain adequate records regarding personnel, vehicle, and other functions necessary to promote efficiency, effectiveness and economy of operation.

V: Operation of the System

- A. The Director of Transportation will be responsible to measure the distance to determine eligibility for regular transportation. Any person who feels the measurements are inaccurate may request a meeting with the Director of Transportation and have the measurements verified.
- B. Each eligible student will be assigned to use a specific bus and bus stop and shall not be permitted to use any other without permission.
- C. The Director of Transportation may grant permission for a student to ride a different bus or use a different stop. Such permission may be granted only upon receipt of a written request of a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult to the building principal for a specified period of time subject to the following conditions and limitations:
 - 1. The requested change must not result in the overcrowding of any bus, alteration of any regular bus route, bus stop or time schedule, or in any other way interfere with the regular operation of the transportation system.
 - 2. Drivers are to transport only their regularly assigned passengers unless other authorization is received from the Director of Transportation or building principal.
 - 3. In an emergency, written requests may be waived. Emergency requests should be made to the child's principal who will be responsible to coordinate necessary actions with the Director of Transportation.

VI: Student Conduct

- A. The Director of Transportation shall develop and recommend rules and regulations for student conduct necessary to the safe and efficient operation of the transportation system. Such rules and regulations shall be:
 - 1. Developed in cooperation with other transportation personnel and school principals, and shall be approved by the board of education on the recommendation of the superintendent of schools.
 - 2. Reviewed and published annually with a copy mailed to all parents of students residing in the district.
- B. The safety and conduct of a student while walking to and from school or to a bus stop, and while waiting at a bus stop, is the responsibility of the parent. The school recognizes a secondary responsibility to assist and cooperate with the parents.

VII: Procedure for Bus Behavior

A. Discipline on the School Bus

School bus transportation is an extension of the school, and the standards set by the individual school are carried over into the school bus. Every effort should be made to maintain the same behavior standards on the bus that are expected by the school. Good behavior on a school bus is even more important because of the safety factor. Students are expected to conform to the following bus regulations as developed for the safety of the student riders. How well bus riding rules are adhered to and the manner in which they are adhered to constitute good or bad discipline.

Bus Rider Rules and Regulations:

1. Be on time at designated bus stop. Buses cannot wait for tardy students.
2. The driver is in charge. Students are expected to obey the driver cheerfully.
3. Expect to walk some distance to a bus stop as required by state regulation.
4. Stay off the roadway while waiting for the bus. Form a line to get on the bus.
5. Cross in front of the bus when crossing road, not in back of the bus.
6. Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before attempting to get off or on the bus.
7. Leave the bus only at the consent of the driver.
8. Occupy any seat assigned by driver. Keep feet out of the aisles, off seats and off backs of seats; and refrain, at all times, from moving around while the bus is in motion.
9. Remain in seat and in a sitting position when bus is in motion.
10. Observe classroom conduct. Avoid unnecessary disturbing noises. Driver should not be distracted while bus is in motion. Do not shout at passing persons or vehicles.
11. Be courteous. Use no profane or vulgar language.
12. Eating, drinking or smoking is not permitted on the bus.
13. Fighting, pushing, shoving or other rowdiness will not be tolerated.
14. Report to the driver at once any damage to the bus that is observed.
15. Animals and dangerous objects are prohibited.
16. Respect owner's property at bus stop locations.
17. Items that are too large for the student to hold on his or her lap will not be permitted on the bus.
18. Leave your seat only after the bus has come to a complete stop.
20. Except in an emergency, only enter or exit from the front door of the bus.

B. Transportation Personnel

Although many factors are involved in maintaining good behavior, transportation personnel should be courteous and considerate, firm and just, as well as friendly, but not familiar. It is the responsibility of the driver to maintain proper conduct. If a student refuses to comply, transportation personnel are expected to follow the following procedure:

1. Regular Trips

- a. The driver shall review with the students the rules and regulations for bus riders.
- b. The driver shall enforce the rules uniformly, consistently, and with good judgment.

2. Field Trips

- a. Faculty personnel are responsible for the conduct of the students. Prior to a field trip, faculty personnel and the driver should discuss the school bus rules and regulations and the expected conduct of the students.
- b. In the event the driver feels the conduct of students presents an unsafe condition for the safe operation of the bus, the driver shall have the final authority to determine the proper behavior of the students to assure a safe operation.
- c. The bus driver and faculty personnel shall discuss, prior to a trip, the route to be followed. In the event there should be a difference of opinion, the driver shall determine the route.

C. Continual Misconduct

1. Bus drivers are expected to handle routine discipline.
2. If there is continual misconduct by a student after the driver has attempted to resolve the problem, the driver will fill out a Bus Misconduct Notice. A copy will be mailed to the parents; one will be given to the building principal; one will be given to the student; and one will be retained by the bus driver to be placed on file in the transportation office. The copy given to the student should be signed by the parent(s) and returned to the bus driver the next day.

C. Continual Misconduct (continued)

3. In the event the problem continues, the driver will again fill out a Bus Misconduct Notice and contact the building principal. The principal will talk with the student and take appropriate action which may include a warning, a telephone call to the parent(s) and/or the bus driver, and/or removal from the bus for a period of time. Whatever action is taken by the principal will be communicated in writing to the bus driver and parent(s).
4. Any appeal by the parents or bus driver of a decision by the building principal shall be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools or designee.

D. Severe or Extreme Misconduct

1. In the event of a severe act of misconduct, the driver is to deliver the student to his destination and may suspend bus riding privileges. The principal should be notified immediately and a conference scheduled with the principal, driver and student as soon as possible.
2. The principal will take appropriate action which may include a warning, a telephone call to the parent(s), a conference with the parent(s) and/or the bus driver, and/or removal from the bus for a period of time. Whatever action is taken by the principal will be communicated in writing to the bus driver and parent(s).
3. Any appeal by the parents or bus driver of a decision by the building principal shall be appealed to the superintendent of his designee.