

## **Transportation of Pupils**

It is the School's policy to provide transportation services to all eligible students within the limitations established by the "Ohio School Bus Operation Regulations" issued by the Ohio Department of Education, Ohio State Highway Patrol and the Ohio Department of Highway Safety, and as otherwise required by State law.

The Board or its designee is responsible for planning and operating the School's transportation program. The Board may contract with a qualified transportation provider that is authorized to provide pupil transportation ("Transportation Service Provider"), in which case the Transportation Service Provider may be responsible for planning and operating the School's transportation program, subject to the Board's approval. The Board or a Transportation Service Provider shall maintain all records, reports, policies, and procedures as required by law, which shall be subject to production and inspection upon request from the Board or its designee. The Board or a Transportation Service Provider shall maintain all buses and other vehicles used to transport children in a safe and operational condition, and shall pass inspection, and shall immediately notify the School and the Ohio State Highway Patrol in the event of a motor vehicle accident.

Requests for transportation of Eligible Students shall be made to the Board or its designee. The Board or its designee shall determine if transportation will be provided individually. Students will be eligible for transportation services if all of the following apply:

- a. They attend Kindergarten through twelfth grade;
- b. Their residence is located at or beyond a two (2) miles radius of the School;
- c. Transportation to the School by bus requires no more than thirty (30) minutes of direct travel time as measured by school bus from the public school building which the student would be assigned if attending the public school designated by the district of residence; and
- d. Their home district is not obligated to transport the student.

The Board recognizes that State law and this Policy do not require the School to provide transportation to those students in grades Kindergarten to twelve who reside less than 2 miles from the School, or for those students whose transportation requires more than 30 minutes of travel time. However, the Board may choose to offer transportation to these students, so long as transportation services are provided in an equitable and non-arbitrary basis. The Board shall resolve to offer transportation to such students individually, and any decision to offer

transportation services beyond the legal requirements or the requirements of this Policy shall be based upon:

- a. Special needs;
- b. The availability of funds and the cost of additional transportation services;
- c. The number of students that would be transported, and if those students are sufficiently “clustered”;
- d. The need for transportation based on concerns for safety brought about by an unusually hazardous condition; and
- e. Any other factor deemed pertinent by the Board.

Unusually hazardous conditions may include, but are not limited to: (1) high traffic roadways or highways; (2) absence of adequate sidewalks, crosswalks or traffic signals; (3) high speed limits; (4) roadway construction; (5) the presence of particularly dangerous individuals; or (6) other conditions deemed unnecessarily dangerous by the Board. Under these circumstances, transportation may be provided by yellow bus or payment in lieu of in-kind transportation.

The Principal, in conjunction with the Board, shall take all necessary steps to secure the transportation services required by this Policy.

Students Meeting the Federal Definition of "Homeless". Homeless students will be transported from their temporary place of residence to the School, at the request of the parent, guardian or unaccompanied minor, to the same extent as all other students of the School and consistent with this Policy. If the homeless student’s temporary residence is located outside the boundaries of the School, the Liaison for Homeless Children will coordinate with the Principal to contact the district in which the student temporarily resides to arrange for transportation of the student and to seek an agreement on apportioning the cost of such transportation. Under no circumstances will a homeless student be denied enrollment based on issues related to student transportation.

Students With Disabilities. Where transportation services are included in the student’s individualized education program (IEP), the School shall not deny the Student transportation services, regardless of distance from the student’s residence to the School. Transportation services shall also be provided for all children who are so disabled that they are unable to walk to and from the School. All other students with disabilities will be transported in the same manner as nondisabled students.

Bus Routes and Stops. Bus routes shall be established by the Board or its designee so that each bus stop is within a defined reasonable walking distance of the home of every Eligible Student who is receiving transportation services, though not more than half a mile from the residence of

any Eligible Student in grades kindergarten through eight. School bus stop locations shall provide for the maximum safety of pupils giving consideration to distance from residence, traffic volume, physical characteristics, visibility and weather conditions. Bus stops shall be established on the residence side of all four-lane highways and other roadways posing unusually hazardous conditions. Bus stops shall be located at a distance from the crest of hills or road curvatures to allow motorists adequate visibility. Each student shall be assigned and required to use a specific bus stop. Bus routes shall be approved by the Board annually. Any subsequent changes to designate or relocate bus stops may be made by the Board or its designee. Bus stops and time schedules shall be adopted and put in force by the Board no earlier than thirty (30) days prior to, and no later than ten (10) days after the beginning of the school year.

Bus drivers shall comply with all required procedures regarding loading and unloading students at bus stops. Each bus shall have a detailed route sheet on board, which shall include the direction to designated stops; a time schedule; a list of designated stops, including the residence side of the street and the number of riders expected at each stop; a driver-designated place of safety; and, a list identifying and known road hazards.

Idling. Buses that utilize diesel engines shall not be permitted to idle in excess of five minutes while in school loading zones, unless the operation of a wheelchair lift is required.

Safety Instruction. The School, or Transportation Service Provider if any, shall annually provide safety instructions regarding transportation services on and around the school bus to all Eligible Students receiving transportation services and their parents, and to any passengers participating in non-routine use of a school bus. Eligible Students in grades Kindergarten through three (3) shall be provided safety instruction within the first two (2) weeks of classes each school year, which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. Safe walking practices to and from the bus stop;
- b. Wearing appropriate light-colored or reflective clothing when walking to and from the bus stop in the dark;
- c. How and where to wait safely for the bus;
- d. How to avoid risky behavior, including risks involving strangers;
- e. What to do if the bus is late or fails to arrive;
- f. How to enter and leave the bus safely, including concerns for snagging clothing, backpacks, and other items that may be caught or dropped around or under the bus;

- g. Safety precautions when crossing the highway before boarding and after leaving the bus or when trespassing in a railroad right-of-way and other dangerous areas; and
- h. Respect for the rights and privileges of others and safe riding practices.

Safety instructions shall be modified for preschool and special needs children as deemed necessary by the School or bus driver.

Pupil Transportation Management. Bus drivers shall be employed by the School or the Transportation Services Provider and shall meet all federal, state and local laws and rules regarding driver qualifications. The bus driver shall have the authority and responsibility for overseeing all pupils while they are on-board the bus, at loading and unloading zones, or in traffic areas on the School's premises. Bus drivers are also responsible for insuring that each student boards and disembarks at his or her designated bus stop. Bus drivers should report any overcrowding or otherwise unsafe conditions to the Board or its designee. Bus drivers shall also report in writing to the Principal all rule violations or conduct that justifies the immediate removal, suspension or expulsion of a student from the bus.

Bus drivers must be provided with access to appropriate information about the child to the degree that such information might affect the safety and well-being of the student on the bus. This information must be kept strictly confidential.

Eligible Students who receive transportation shall arrive at the bus stop before the bus is scheduled to arrive and must wait in a location clear of traffic, leaving adequate distance for the bus to safely stop. Pupils must board and exit the bus at assigned locations, unless a student has parental and administrative authorization to do otherwise. Students must go directly to an available seat or an assigned seat, if applicable, so that the bus may resume motion safely. Pupils must remain seated keeping aisles and exits clear. Students may only board the bus with objects that can be held in a student's lap.

Students must comply with the School Code of Conduct while at bus stops, boarding and disembarking, and riding the bus. Students shall observe classroom conduct and obey the bus driver promptly and respectfully at all times while waiting at bus stops, boarding, riding and departing the bus. Profane language while riding the bus is prohibited. Pupil behavior, including while at school bus stops, shall not threaten life, limb or the property of any individual. Students must not throw or pass objects on, from or into the bus and shall keep all parts of the body inside the bus while the bus is moving. Students may not eat or drink on the bus, except as required for medical reasons. Students shall not possess or use tobacco, alcohol and drugs, except for drugs prescribed by an authorized physician, while on the bus.

The Bus Driver shall be responsible for determining guidelines regarding the use and storage of equipment and other means of assistance required by preschool and special needs children based upon those needs.

*O.R.C. 3327 et seq.; O.A.C. 3301-83 et seq.*