

***Transportation
Procedures For Students
With Exceptionalities And
Health Care Needs***



***Parent-Pupil Handbook
2014/2015***

Revised 7/2014

Introduction

The Transportation Department is dedicated to providing the safest and most efficient transportation service for all students. We strive to meet the needs of each student as we remain within the policies and procedures of the school system. The handbook will provide vital information about the special transportation services your child may receive.

The following procedures are intended to help you understand how we can work together to provide the best and safest service for your child. Should you have any questions, you can reach our department at 861-7000.

Debbie Rike

Transportation Supervisor – Shared Services



STUDENTS REQUIRING SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION

The safety and welfare of the school bus riders shall be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to transportation. The IEP Team determines the transportation requirements for students. The IEP Team will evaluate the need for special equipment annually such as integrated child restraint seats and buckle guards. All students requiring special transportation are assigned to a bus by the Transportation Department approximately 5 school days after the student's IEP Team determines the transportation requirements and school assignment.

The **SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES** handbook outlines the guidelines to meet the transportation needs of:

Non-ambulatory students who need assistance to board and/or depart the school bus

Ambulatory students capable of going to and from the school bus independently

Students requiring a nurse who have an individual health care plan

Student bus behavior

Students who are capable of riding regular school buses

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

Curbside service will be provided for all students riding special school buses, except when this is determined to be unsafe. If a curbside stop is unsafe, the Transportation Supervisor has the responsibility to determine a safe stop placement.

Students become the responsibility of the school system at the time they board the school bus. The responsibility ends when students are delivered to their designated stop.

Students may only ride their assigned school bus to or from school/home except in emergencies.

Parents/Guardians must provide an updated Student Information Form before service can begin. When information previously provided on the Student Information Form changes the Transportation Department must be notified immediately by the parent/guardian. The Student Information Form must be updated twice a year.

The special education teacher and principal at the child's school must be notified in writing by the parent/guardian 5 school days before service to a new address and/or school will begin. This is to ensure that transportation services will not be interrupted.

NON-AMBULATORY STUDENTS

Students who are non-ambulatory must board the school bus via the wheelchair lift seated in a wheelchair or stroller. Students may **not** be carried on/off the school bus via the step well. Students who use a walker or require minimal assistance may be assisted on/off the school bus via the step well or by sitting in a wheelchair in order to use the lift. A bus assessment will be completed by school and Transportation Department personnel to specify the level of assistance required. This will be monitored yearly. Students may **only** be transported in a wheelchair or on a bus seat.

Parents/Guardians of students using a wheelchair are responsible for the wheelchair being in safe condition and working properly. Tires must be inflated fully. Brakes must hold the wheels securely. Trays must be secured tightly. All equipment provided by the parents/guardians must be in good condition and working properly in order to be transported on the school bus. A student using a wheelchair must be assisted when loading/unloading by the parent/guardian at the curbside stop or responsible adult at the school site. Parents/Guardians or Responsible Adults who assist wheelchair students must:

Open the lift door and secure the cable used to prevent the door from swinging.

Always load the student on the wheelchair lift facing away from the bus.

Secure all wheelchair brakes prior to using the wheelchair lift

Electric power must be disengaged before the wheelchair is placed on the lift. Power will remain disengaged on the lift and while inside the bus.

Stand to the side of the lift and hold onto the arm of the wheelchair while the chair is going up/down on the lift.

THE WHEELCHAIR

It is best if you have a wheelchair that has been designed and tested for use as a seat in motor vehicles, often referred to as a WC 19 wheelchair which is a transit wheelchair. These wheelchairs comply with ANSI/RESNA WC 19, a voluntary standard developed by safety and rehabilitation experts. Wheelchairs that meet the design and performance requirements of this standard will be labeled to show that they comply with WC19.

Most importantly a WC19 wheelchair has four, crash-tested securement points where tiedown straps and hooks can be easily attached. These points are clearly marked with a hook symbol.

If a WC19 wheelchair is not available, the next best choice is a wheelchair with an accessible metal frame where tie down straps and hooks can be attached at frame junctions. For more information about WC19 you may consult the following websites:

www.travelsafer.org

www.rercwts.org

AMBULATORY STUDENTS

When it is necessary for a student to be escorted to the bus, the parent/guardian will escort the student to the bus in a timely manner and assist with the student's possessions. **Lap belts** are provided for all students and **must** be worn. **Integrated Child Restraint Seats or car seats** are provided for students who are under 4 years of age or weigh less than 40 lbs. and are less than 40 inches tall. A **buckle guard** (device that covers the lap belt release button) is provided for students who release their lap belt. **Safety Vests** may be used as determined by the IEP team for specific situations.

STUDENTS WITH INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CARE PLAN

Many students transported on a Special Education bus have an individual health care plan. If your child has a plan, please be sure the Transportation Department has a copy of the current plan. This document provides information needed to transport your child safely.

The parent/guardian of a student requiring a nurse on the bus must contact Durham School Services and Coordinated School Health when the student is unable to attend school. You will receive a letter from Coordinated School Health with the contact phone numbers.

Students requiring medical equipment, such as: oxygen tank, suction machine, etc., to be transported on the bus will be provided a copy of the protocol after completion of an IEP team meeting with school staff, Coordinated School Health and Transportation Department personnel.

STUDENT BUS BEHAVIOR

All students are expected to adhere to the school bus rules. The rules are established to ensure the safety of all riders.

STUDENTS ON REGULAR SCHOOL BUSES

The IEP Team will determine if a student is capable of going to and from a regular school bus stop. In most instances students in the general education classroom for the majority of the school day will be assigned to ride the regular school bus.

Students may be assigned to the front of the bus for seating. Where it is feasible, a bus stop may be placed at the student's address. This would be determined by the Transportation Department on an individual basis.

REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS RIDING REGULAR BUSES

Live in the assigned school zone and transportation zone

Go to and from regular designated bus stop independent of supervision

Cross in front of bus when necessary

Board the bus independently

Follow regular bus rules requiring minimal supervision

PICK-UP INFORMATION

Students will only be picked up at their designated bus stop. The school bus driver will inform the parent/guardians of the specific pick-up time.

***School bus drivers and bus assistants are not authorized to carry remote control devices or leave the school bus to activate a security gate. Where students are picked up in a gated community, the parents may be asked to operate the gate.**

Students must be ready to board the school bus at least 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. The parent/guardian of a student not going to school will contact **Durham School Services at 743-1277** as early as possible so the driver can be notified. Drivers are not allowed to utilize the school bus horn to notify parent/guardian of their arrival. If the student is late due to an emergency, the parents/guardians will inform the driver of the emergency. The driver will wait 3 minutes beyond the scheduled pick-up time before continuing on the bus route. The driver will not be able to return if the student misses the bus.

DROP-OFF INFORMATION

The driver will inform parent/guardian of the approximate drop-off time.

***School bus drivers and bus assistants are not authorized to carry remote control devices or leave the school bus to activate a security gate. Where students are picked up in a gated community, the parents may be asked to operate the gate.**

A responsible adult such as the parent/guardian should be home to receive the student unless the student is at least 11 years old and independent of supervision. A statement signed by the parent/guardian stating that the student may be left unsupervised must be provided to the Transportation Department annually. This determination should be made during an IEP team meeting. A student will not be dropped off if they are unable to enter the home. In some instances a responsible sibling (minimum 11 years) may be designated to meet the bus. **In that case, the parent must submit a notarized statement annually to the Transportation Office including the name and date of birth of the sibling.**

In the event the parent/guardian has an emergency and cannot meet the school bus at the designated drop-off time, the parent/guardian must make arrangements for a responsible adult to meet the school bus and notify **Durham Schools Services**. **Students may only be released to an authorized person listed on the Student Information Form.** If the Transportation Department is not notified regarding a parent/guardian emergency the following steps will begin.

- The driver will wait 3 minutes and contact **Durham School Services**.

- Durham School Services will make every effort to contact the parent/guardian using the **Student Information Form**.
- If the parent/guardian or emergency person cannot be reached the school will be notified.
- The driver will be advised to continue on the route until all stops are completed or to return and deliver the student to the school.

The parent/guardian of a student on a hardship waiver who is delivered to an address other than their home, must ensure that a responsible person will meet the bus **promptly**, or service will be discontinued to the alternate address.

REFER TO PARENT-SCHOOL HANDBOOK FOR INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING:

*Bus Rules

*Evacuation Drills

*Suspension