

Northern Adirondack Central School District

Transportation Policy

Policy 8410

Goals

The Board of Education affirms its goal of providing a safe and economical transportation system for district students. Transportation shall be provided at District expense to those students who are eligible as authorized by the Board.

The major objectives in the management of the student transportation program shall include the following:

1. to provide efficient, effective and safe service;
2. to ensure that all students whose disability or distance from school requires them to receive necessary transportation do, in fact, receive it;
3. to adapt the system to the demands of the instructional program;
4. to maintain transportation vehicles in the best possible condition;
5. to review at least once a year school bus schedules and routing plans to ensure that maximum efficiency and safety are maintained; and
6. to review at least once a year the eligibility for transportation of students residing in the district, to ensure that all entitled to the services receive them.

The Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for administering the transportation program. The program shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations and policies established by federal, state and local authorities.

Policy Parameters

According to the Commissioner of Education, a student may only have a singular residence for the purposes of school district residency. The District shall transport resident students from the student's primary residence or domicile. Consistent with law the District will not transport a student (whose parents share joint custody) to one parent's home on certain days of the week and to the other parent's home on the remaining days. See, e.g., (Appeal of Dickenson, 39 ED Dept Rep 41(1999); Appeal of Van Der Jagt, 33 Ed Dept Rep 517 (1994).

School buses are an extension of the classroom; all rules and expectations in the classroom apply to students utilizing district transportation services. Parents should be aware that the District's policies apply in the transportation context regardless of whether such information is put forth here in this Transportation Policy or reflected in the Northern Adirondack Student Code of Conduct / Student Handbook.

1. Transportation of Resident Students Attending District Schools

The District will provide transportation to all K-2 resident students living at least one-eighth (1/8) of a mile from school; to all grades 3-5 resident students living at least one-quarter (1/4) of a mile from school; and to all grades 6-12 resident students living at least three-quarters (3/4) of a mile from school. In no case shall the District transport a student further than 15 miles except in the case of a student with special needs.

The District also provides transportation to all resident students with disabilities whose disability requires transportation in accordance with the “Accommodating Disabilities” section detailed below and in accordance with state and federal law.

The District shall establish pick-up and drop-off points for all bus routes. The District shall not necessarily provide pick-up and drop-off to and from a student’s home. Where a student’s home is on a dangerous road or at a remote location, the parents are not free from the obligation to assist the student in reaching the pick-up point. It is the responsibility of the parent, not the district, to see that the child safely reaches the pick-up point

2. Requests for Transportation to and from Non-Public Schools

The parent or person in parental relation of any student attending a parochial or private school, who is residing in the District, and who desires his or her child to be transported to a non-public school outside of the District during the next school year, must submit a written request to the Board of Education, or its designee no later than *APRIL 1* of the preceding school year, or within thirty (30) days of moving into the District. Requests made after April 1 shall not be granted except in accordance with law.

Any agreed upon transportation arrangements will be made as soon as practicable, with eligibility beginning at the commencement of the new school year, and only if the transportation can be provided at no additional cost or hardship to the District.

3. Transportation to Non-Public Schools on District Holidays

The District will share its yearly calendar, as well as start and dismissal times, with non-public schools before the start of the school year. The District is not required to provide transportation to non-public schools on days on which the District's schools are not in session.

4. Transportation of Non-Resident Students

Non-resident families must provide their own transportation for students who do not reside within the District.

5. Parents' Responsibilities for Transportation Safety

The parent(s) or person in parental relation to any student must become familiar with District rules, policies, regulations, and the principles of school bus safety, and thoroughly review them with their children.

For safety reasons and timeliness of bus runs, drivers have been directed to not allow parents to enter the bus. If parents attempt to enter a school bus, the driver is to shut the door when safe to do so and restrict adults from entering. If there are questions or concerns parents are to contact the Transportation Supervisor.

Parents must have their children to the bus stop prior to the bus arriving. Our philosophy is the student waits for the bus, not the bus waits for the student.

Parents are responsible for promoting safe riding and walking practices, communicating safety concerns with school administrators, monitoring their children upon drop off and arrival, properly clothing their children in preparation for weather conditions, and communicating to their students that they are responsible for the student's actions.

6. Student Pick Up

Students are to be ready and waiting at their respective arrival location when the bus arrives. In the event a bus does not arrive as scheduled, we ask, as a general rule of thumb, that Parents wait no less than 10 minutes for the bus's late arrival prior to contacting the District. The only exceptions are extreme weather conditions (which the Superintendent will notify with media releases) and CVES buses. Bus routes are relatively consistent, and delays of an extended nature will not commonly occur.

The District retains all rights under law to determine the safety and viability of a bus route(s) and may, in accordance with parameters set forth by the Commissioner, including through Commissioner decisions, determine a route or road is not safe for pick up and/or drop off.

The board of education and/or its designee, may exercise its discretion when designating pick-up and drop-off points. The Board uses reasonable care in exercising such discretion. Where a student's home is on a dangerous road or at a remote location, the parents are not free from the obligation to assist the student in reaching the pick-up point. This is something the Commissioner of Education has ruled on many times. In such cases, it is the responsibility of

the parent, not the district, to see that the child safely reaches the pick-up point. If the student misses the bus at the designated pick up point. It becomes the parent's responsibility to transport the student to school. At no point will the driver stop and allow students to load the bus at any pick up location other than the designated pick up location.

7. Routing

Bus routes shall be reviewed annually. Changes shall be made to maximize safety and efficiency.

Bus routes will only include roads maintained by the Town, County, and State. Such roads must also be two-lane roads which are capable of supporting two vehicles passing each other without making contact. Non-public roads and seasonal (dirt) roads will not be utilized for District transportation. In the event a student lives on such a road, that student or that student and their parents will need to meet the bus at the adjoining road designated for pickup.

The District will not send a bus down a dead-end road without a proper turnaround at the end, if this includes a student's driveway the District will need proper written permission to utilize the turnaround; alternatively, if permission is not provided, the student will have to meet the bus at the adjoining road.

If a driveway is utilized as the turn around, the bus will pull up to the driveway, pick up the students (at the end of your driveway) and then turn around in the driveway. If this procedure cannot be adhered to, the District will remove the turn around and utilize a bus stop, where necessary.

Bus drivers are not allowed to and will not deviate from scheduled bus routes without the approval of the Transportation Supervisor. Doing so causes timing, delivery, and safety issues.

8. Parent Visibility

Parents are responsible for their children from the time prior to boarding the bus in the mornings and after they get off the bus in the afternoon each day. The District encourages parents to make time to meet their child's bus driver to establish a relationship that will support their child's success as a bus rider.

9. Drop off locations

One alternate location, other than the primary location, may be designated for drop off. In order for a student to be dropped off at a designated alternate location, that location must be on file with both the District (or child's specific school) and the Transportation Department.

The planned drop off locations must be consistent for the duration of the school year and submitted by the end of the first full week of school. In the event a plan is not submitted by the deadline, a parent or guardian will have to wait until the next 10-week period for review. Communication directly with a driver will no longer be an acceptable means of establishing accepted drop off locations and or alternate drop off locations.

Planned drop off locations and alternate drop off location variations can include but are not limited to such scenarios as e.g. M-F get on at home, M-F get off at daycare.

10. Bus Safety

Similar to classroom expectations, potentially dangerous items may not be carried on a school bus. Large items transported inside buses must be able to be stowed away in or under the seat with the student rider. Items must not block the aisle or any emergency exits. Discretion will be used by the driver in collaboration with the Transportation Supervisor to ensure student safety.

11. Accommodating Disabilities

The District will provide transportation to those students whose disability or distance from the school make the service essential. Except as otherwise mandated in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), riding these buses is a privilege and may be withdrawn if the student does not comply with the rules and regulations set forth in this District Transportation policy or Student Code of Conduct.

Transportation of students with disabilities in the District may not exceed fifty (50) miles (one way) from the student's home to the appropriate special service or program, unless the Commissioner certifies that no appropriate nonresidential special service or program is available within fifty (50) miles. In that event, the Commissioner may then establish transportation arrangements.

If a student with a disability, who receives transportation as a related service as part of his/her Individualized Education Program, is being considered for suspension from transportation, and that suspension would effectively result in a change in placement, the student shall be referred to the Committee on Special Education.

12. Transportation to School Sponsored Events

Where the District has provided transportation to students enrolled in the District to a school sponsored field trip, extracurricular activity or any other similar event, with the exception of certain interscholastic athletic competitions, it will also provide transportation back to either the point of departure or to the appropriate school in the District unless a student's parent or legal guardian has provided the District with written notice, consistent with District procedure, authorizing an alternative form of return transportation for the student, and where it does not pose an undue hardship to the District.

In cases where intervening circumstances would make transportation of a student back to the point of departure or to the appropriate school in the District impractical, and the parent has not authorized alternative return transportation, a representative of the District will remain with the student until the student's parent or legal guardian has been contacted and informed us of the intervening circumstances and the student has been delivered to his or her parent.

13. Transportation for Interscholastic Athletics

Unless approved by the Superintendent of Schools for state-level competitions, transportation at District expense shall be confined to participants in interscholastic athletic

events. Student spectators or any other spectators shall not be transported to athletic events at District expense.

14. Transportation in Personal Vehicles

Personal cars of teachers and staff will not be used to transport students except in the event of extenuating circumstances, or certain interscholastic athletic competitions as authorized by the administration.

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