

SECTION 601 TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

A. REGULAR TRANSPORTATION

Students in the School District of Portage who reside outside the city limits and are two or more miles from their school of attendance shall be provided bus transportation to and from school.

1. Unusual Hazards: In accordance with Wis. Stats. 121.54(9), students living in areas of unusual hazard shall be provided transportation regardless of distance from school of attendance.
 - a. All such areas must be so designated by the sheriff of the county in which the principal office of the school district is located
 - b. Specific pick-up stops will be established for all such areas
2. Rural Areas: Students will be expected to walk reasonable distances to bus stops in order to enhance efficient transportation. Walking distances may vary, but in no case shall they exceed .5 miles for K-5 and .7 of a mile for grades 6-12.
3. Transportation Within City Limits: The school district will not provide transportation to students within the city limits except under the following circumstances:
 - a. Shuttle runs exist for the area in question and space is available.
 - b. Areas in question represent a significant safety hazard--Board may provide shuttle or other transportation service.
4. Private School Transportation: Each student who attends a private school located two or more miles from the student's residence shall be provided transportation to and from the school attended if:
 - a. Such private school is a school within whose attendance area the student resides; and
 - b. Such private school is situated within the school district or not more than five miles beyond the boundary of the school district measured along the usually traveled route
 - c. In accordance with Wis. Stats. 121.54(2)(b)(3), by April 1 each private school shall submit its proposed attendance areas for the ensuing school year to the school board or its designee
 - d. No later than May 15 in each year, private schools must notify the school board of all pupils eligible to have transportation during the forthcoming school term
5. Other than Primary Residence: Transportation to/from residences other than the student's primary residence may be approved as long as the following conditions are met:
 - a. The pick-up/drop-off point does not cause the route to deviate from its present status; and
 - b. The student(s) involved will be riding the bus on a consistent basis.
 - c. Each student may only have one pickup location and one drop off location. The pick-up and drop off location do not have to be the same address.
6. Transportation Outside School District Boundaries: The school district will not provide transportation to students who live outside the school district boundaries (i.e. .Public School Open Enrollment).
 - a. Transportation can be requested for an existing group stop within the district boundaries.
 - b. Requests will be based on available space.
7. Transportation for Home School Students attending our School District for Class:
 - a. Transportation can be requested for an existing group stop within the district boundaries.
 - b. Requests will be based on available space.

B. SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION

Efforts will be made to provide transportation for students in special education programs that require transportation. Time and other constraints will be considered in any and all decisions. Students receiving special education transportation must have a special education transportation accommodation in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). The school administration/bus contracts will implement the district's policy relating to transportation of special education students with consideration given to the following:

1. health and safety of students
2. special apparatus on school vehicles when necessary
3. vehicle routes
4. transportation by parents/guardians
5. transportation to private schools
6. inservice training for operators of vehicles carrying special education students
7. evaluation of transportation programs.

SECTION 601 TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES (continued)

C. PARENT CONTRACT

In cases where transportation is needed but it is not considered feasible for the school district to furnish bus transportation, contracts may be established with parents/guardians to furnish student transportation. A parent contract is entered into/on behalf of the school district and parent/guardian involved.

D. EXTRACURRICULAR EVENTS

The following guidelines shall be adhered to:

1. Whenever possible, all requests for special trips must be submitted to and received by the Business Administrator or Athletic Director no later than one week before the scheduled date of the trip.
2. Professional staff member(s) and/or adult resident(s) of the school district must be present for all such trips. Standards of conduct shall be the responsibility of the professional staff member/adult supervising the trip.
3. Students participating in an extracurricular sport are expected to return home on the same bus unless:
 - a. the parent presents a signed note to the advisor/coach stating that they are taking responsibility for transporting their child; and
 - b. the parent must personally see the advisor/coach after the event, reiterating that they are taking responsibility for the child.
4. For any extra-curricular events not budgeted for by the school district, the cost of transportation must be borne by the sponsoring group.

E. PRIVATE VEHICLE TRANSPORTATION

Alternative methods of transportation may be used in the school district provided such use is in accordance with state law and the following procedures:

1. Insurance:

When the vehicle being used is owned or leased by the school or school bus contractor, the vehicle must be insured as required by Wis. Stats. 121.53.

When the vehicle being used is not owned or leased by the school or school bus contractor, the following minimum insurances must exist before the vehicle's use is authorized:

1. property damage coverage not less than \$10,000.00
2. bodily injury liability coverage not less than \$25,000/person
3. subject to the limit for each person; total bodily injury liability limits of not less than \$50,000 per each accident

2. Supervision: If the vehicle is to be used for the transportation of passengers to extracurricular activities, it shall be under the immediate supervision of a competent adult (Wis Stats. 121.54(7)).

3. Passengers: All such request shall be restricted to no more than nine (9) or less passengers in addition to the operator. Use of a motor vehicle to transport ten (10) or more passengers in addition to the operator may be allowed for purposes set forth under Wis. Stats. 340.01(56)(a). Requests to transport ten (10) or more passengers must be made in writing to the School Administrator or designee. Such request must specify the purpose and need for emergency transportation services. In no case shall the vehicle be used to transport more passengers than can be seated on the permanently mounted forward facing seats without interfering with the operator.

4. Operator Requirements:

- a. valid Wisconsin operator's license
- b. at least eighteen (18) years of age
- c. a medical opinion on file stating that he/she is not afflicted or suffering from any mental or physical disabilities or disease which could prevent the operator from exercising reasonable control of the vehicle. Such medical opinion must be updated every three years (editor's note: this applies only if the vehicle is owned or leased by a school or school bus operator or is operated by a school employee).

SECTION 601 TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES (continued)

- d. have not been convicted of reckless driving, operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of an intoxicant or controlled substance or any other offenses which result in the mandatory revocation of the individual's operating license within the last two years
- e. the school district will obtain certification from the Department of Transportation that the operator meets the requirements of paragraph (d)
- f. It is the responsibility of the adult supervisor and/or group to adhere to the guidelines outlined above.
- g. Certificate or Proof of Insurance
- h. All proper notification and documentation will be made to the School Administrator or his/her designee

F. BUS DISCIPLINE

The following procedures apply to all students, both public and private, who ride school buses. They are designed to provide a fair and responsible system in dealing effectively with unacceptable bus rider behavior and violation of bus rider rules.

The primary objectives include correcting unacceptable behavior on the bus, providing for the best interest of all parties, and affording an individual and his/her parents due process should it be necessary to temporarily suspend or more permanently deny transportation services.

All school administrative staff and bus transportation staff shall be expected to be fair and consistent in the administration of these established procedures.

1. The driver may first attempt to talk to the student individually to resolve the problem. Such action is only appropriate for non-critical situations.
2. If talking with the student proves ineffective, the driver shall be instructed to fill out a school bus discipline report on the rider. The result of this report shall be an official warning and an assigned seat on the bus.
3. If the discipline problem persists, the driver shall be required to fill out a second discipline report. Second referral shall result in suspended bus riding privileges for three (3) days. .
4. A third referral from the bus driver shall result in suspended bus riding privileges for five (5) days.
5. Copies of the discipline report concerning all referrals shall be sent to the parent of the child involved, Business Administrator, bus company and put in the student discipline file.
6. Any subsequent referrals may result in a formal hearing to consider whether or not the evidence justifies a recommendation to the Transportation Committee for expulsion from transportation services. The parties to be present at the hearing include student, student's parent, principal, bus driver, Business Administrator, and District Administrator.

If it is determined that expulsion is appropriate, the Board, or its committee, shall be notified and a date set for the hearing. The individual involved will be suspended from transportation services until the date of the hearing.

The Board may enforce an expulsion for a period up to one calendar year. Any student who is expelled from bus rider service will be given an opportunity to ride the buses following the term of expulsion and will again be subject to the discipline procedure.

7. Some behaviors are severe enough to warrant automatic suspension/expulsion and/or hearing. In such cases, the guidelines listed above may be bypassed. Such behaviors shall be at the discretion of the respective school officials.

The discipline procedure is designed to reasonably assure that the problems involved should be solved at the lowest possible level. Any report or complaint filed by parent/guardians should be made directly to their child's principal or Business Administrator who will attempt to investigate the situation and initiate the discipline procedure as may be appropriate.

SECTION 601 TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES (continued)G. INCLEMENT WEATHER

Buses shall run whenever and wherever weather permits. In the event of inclement weather, the following procedures shall be employed:

1. Announcements as to delays/cancellations shall be made on local radio stations and other radio/TV. stations as may be appropriate.
2. School officials may designate various properties to be excluded from transportation services, as to provide such service would present an undue risk for the driver and other students involved. Such properties will be given alternative pick-up/drop-off points.

The Business Administrator, under the direction of the District Administrator, shall be responsible for the student transportation program. He/she shall continually appraise the student transportation program and make recommendations for its improvement in terms of maximum service, safety, economy and efficiency.

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