

## **BUS STOPS**

Under most conditions, special education students are transported from their home to school and back. All transportation services are during the student's school day. Services may allow for pick-ups and drop offs at day care providers. With the exception of therapy, all alternate addresses must be within a ten (10) mile radius of the student's pick-up address and each student will be limited.

Unless physically impossible for the bus, the stop will be in front of and on the same side of the roadway as the student's address. Pick up or release of a rider will not be made in any area determined to be unsafe. Safety always takes precedence over other criteria.

Each child is assigned to a definite bus route and may be assigned to a particular seat. State law requires that no child be permitted to leave the bus at a point other than his/her assigned stop. Parents or guardians must not make private arrangements with the bus driver. All changes in bus stops or times must be communicated and approved through the Transportation Office (707) 837-8531 or (707) 837-8569, not through the driver.

**Drivers must follow established routes. They may not make changes in these routes unless authorized by the transportation office.**

## **BUS SCHEDULES**

Prior to the beginning of each school year, you will be notified of your child's pick-up and drop-off schedules. Buses, routes and times may need to be changed throughout the school year to accommodate new students. You will be notified of time changes of more than ten (10) minutes. Buses may run late during days of unfavorable weather conditions such as rain or fog. Buses may also be delayed by unusually heavy traffic.

## **PICK-UP PROCEDURE**

You are expected to have your child ready for pick up ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled bus arrival time and watch for the bus to arrive. You are responsible for promptly assisting the student from the house to the bus as soon as the bus arrives.

There is a Motor Vehicle regulation prohibiting drivers from honking their horns (except in a driving emergency.) This means that you must watch to see the bus arrive. Buses will not depart from a stop prior to the designated pick-up time and will wait two (2) minutes past the designated pick-up time before continuing on the route. We need your assistance and advanced planning to get your child onto the bus on time.

**A bus can't be sent back to pick up a child who was not ready on time.**

**The bus driver may not leave the bus except to operate the lift gate for students in wheelchairs.** It is the bus driver's responsibility to load and unload students on the bus, to secure wheelchairs, car seats and to fasten safety vests and seat belts.

Unless physically impossible for the bus, the bus stop will be in front of and on the same side of the roadway as the student's address.

## **DROP OFF PROCEDURE**

You or your designee must be at the assigned stop to receive the student when delivered by the bus driver. No student will be permitted to leave the bus at any point other than the assigned stop. If there is an emergency and the designated adult is unable to meet the bus, arrangements must be made for another adult to be there when the bus arrives. If you decide that the student does not need to be met by an adult, then this option must be authorized in advance on the "Transportation Emergency Form" that is completed each summer before transportation services begin.

In the event that no responsible adult is available to meet the student at the designated drop-off point, and there is no authorization on file to drop the student off unattended, the following procedure will be observed:

The bus driver will immediately notify the Transportation Office by radio and if other students are on board will continue the route on the established schedule. This can take up to two (2) hours or more. The Transportation Office will make every attempt to locate a parent/guardian or an alternate drop-off point using the information provided on the "Transportation Emergency Information" form. At the completion of the route, if no responsible adult has been located, the student will be delivered to the appropriate authorities such as the Police Department or the Sheriff's Office.

**Consistent failure to meet the bus may cause suspension of your child's transportation service.**

## **If THE BUS DOESN'T SHOW UP ON TIME**

On extremely foggy or rainy days the buses may run behind schedule. Please be patient and don't worry; the school will be notified of any late arrival.

If the delay is not due to weather conditions, the delay may be due to traffic problems. School buses have to endure the same rush hour traffic conditions that plague commuters. A traffic snarl, traffic accident, or longer than scheduled loading at a previous stop can easily throw your bus 10-15 minutes off schedule. If the bus has not arrived fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled time, you may wish to call the Transportation Office at (707) 837-8531 for an update on the bus arrival.

# CHANGES THAT AFFECT YOUR CHILD'S TRANSPORTATION

If you move or make any schedule changes that will affect your child's bus transportation, you must notify your child's principal and the Transportation Office at (707) 837-8531 or (707) 837-8569, five (5) days in advance to insure continuous transportation service.

**Note: Bus drivers cannot accept address or schedule changes from parents. Changes can only be made through the Transportation Office.**

## LOST ARTICLES

Please label all personal items sent to school on the bus with your child. The Transportation Office assumes no responsibility for lost articles. Any articles found on a bus will be stored at the Transportation Office for approximately two weeks.

## ILLNESS

Please notify the Transportation Office by telephone at least one hour prior to the pick-up time whenever you are not sending your child to school due to illness.

Please do not send even a mildly ill child to school because he/she may become acutely ill on the bus. In fairness to your child and other children, keep a sick child at home. Most doctors recommend that children be free of fever for at least 24 hours before sending them back to school.

If your child becomes ill at school, you will be asked to transport your child home.

After three (3) consecutive days of a student not riding the school bus, the bus service may be discontinued until you call the Transportation Office to restart service.

The expectation is that children who are scheduled for special education transportation will ride the bus daily. If you drive your child to school you are expected to notify the Transportation Office 24 hours in advance and inform the Transportation Office about whether your child will need a ride home on the bus that day.

**Medication:** For safety purposes, medication must be placed in a plain, brown paper bag and handed directly to the bus driver and must not be placed among the child's personal belongings.

**Personal Hygiene:** For the comfort of the others on the bus, it is important to maintain adequate standards of hygiene. Please toilet your child before he/she boards the bus. If your child has a problem in this area, please be sure to supply the school with a change of

clothes and a bag for transporting soiled clothing.

**Emergency Medical Information:** Please notify the school nurse and Transportation Office of your child's medical conditions (seizures, asthma, allergy to bee stings, etc.). The school bus will carry a copy of your child's emergency medical information card so the driver will have basic information available if there is a medical emergency on the bus.

## **BUS RULES FOR STUDENTS**

Students are expected to be courteous, respectful and obedient to the driver at all times.

The school bus rules include the following:

- A. Students may be assigned to a particular seat.
- B. Students must remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
- C. Seat belts are to be worn at all times.
- D. For safety, conversations and singing need to be kept within reasonable limits.
- E. Head, hands, arms, legs and feet must be inside the school bus at all times.
- F. No foul or abusive language is to be used.
- G. Eating or drinking is not permitted on the bus.
- H. No items may be brought aboard the bus that could be hazardous to other passengers. Examples of items that should not be brought aboard include large toys, glass, straight pins, insects, animals (with the exception of seeing eye dogs and canine companions), plastic bags, knives, skateboards, bowling balls, weapons of any kind, irritants and objects that are too large for a student to safely hold on their lap.
- I. Smoking is not permitted on the bus.
- J. Fighting, pinching, hitting, biting, spitting, etc. are not permitted.
- K. Vandalism to the interior or exterior of the bus is prohibited.

## **BUS SUSPENSION POLICY**

The driver has the authority to recommend the suspension of a student for disruptive and/or dangerous behavior, including, but not limited to not following the bus rules. A student may receive the maximum suspension and/or be denied bus transportation if it is determined that he/she created a safety hazard on the bus. The principal of the student's program and/or the Transportation Office will make the determination of the suspension.

The driver will provide interventions that will address most incidents of student misbehavior. These interventions include:

- A. Positive reinforcement for appropriate bus behavior
- B. Verbal warning for misbehavior.

However, when misbehavior is serious or the student exhibits chronic violations, Incident reports will be issued. Within a 30-day period the following steps will be taken:

**1st incident** (serious or chronic violations)

Student is warned. Incident report is presented to the transportation director who will provide copies to the teacher, principal, district special education director and parent. The director will contact the case provider (teacher) to develop interventions that connect with the classroom and use incentives to increase the behavior wanted.

**2nd Incident**

Student is warned. Incident report is presented to the transportation director who will provide copies to the teacher, principal, district special education director and parent. Director will contact district behavior specialist for consultation. Behavior specialist will consult with the director, driver and teacher, and may observe bus video of student and/or ride the bus to observe the function of behaviors. Behavior specialist will then consult with the director and/or driver to suggest strategies.

**3rd Incident**

Student is warned. Incident report is presented to the transportation director who will provide copies to the teacher, principal, district special education director and parent. Director will contact district behavior specialist for consultation. Behavior specialist will request an IEP meeting to develop a bus behavior support plan (BSP) which may include the use of a vest or other safety equipment.

**4th Incident**

Student is warned. Incident Report is presented to the transportation director who will provide copies to the teacher, principal, district special education director and parent. Students will be taken home that day. The school administrator or transportation director will suspend the student from the bus for the next one (1) to five (5) days. In an emergency situation the student may be suspended for not more than one (1) day and the parent/guardian will be notified by phone. A bus suspension notice and copies of incident reports will be mailed to the parent/guardian. The school administrator will notify the teacher, the parent and the transportation director of any suspension and the reason for the suspension. The IEP team will meet to review and possibly revise the BSP. Parents may request a meeting with a school administrator and/or district special education director to discuss the discipline.

**Incident #5**

Student is warned. Incident report is presented to the transportation director who will provide copies to the teacher, principal, district special education director and parent. Student will be taken home that day. Transportation may be suspended for a period of time to be determined by the school principal, district special education director and transportation director. Parents may request a meeting with school administrator and/or special education director to discuss the discipline. The school administrator will notify the teacher, the parent and the transportation director of any suspension and the reason for the suspension. The IEP team will meet to review and possibly revise the BSP.

This process will be followed except when the circumstances and/or the severity of the misbehavior warrant immediate action.

## **VANDALISM**

The California Civil Code, Section 1714.1 states: *“Any act of willful misconduct of a minor which results in injury or death of another person or in any injury to the property of another shall be imputed to the parent or guardian having custody or control of the minor for all purposes of civil damages, and such parent or guardian having custody or control shall be jointly and severally liable with such minor for any damages resulting from such willful misconduct up to a maximum of \$10,000.”*

## **CAR SEATS AND WHEEL CHAIRS**

Students who cannot sit and be safely secured by a seat belt or safety vest must be transported in approved car seats or wheelchairs. Parents are responsible for providing a properly equipped car seat and wheelchair that meets minimum state safety requirements. Any wheelchair that does not meet minimum state requirements shall not be transported.

Wheelchairs shall be equipped with brakes and seat belts properly maintained by the parent (Velcro fasteners do not meet minimum state requirements and shall not be the sole source of seat restraint). Wheelchair brakes must be maintained to prevent wheels from moving when brakes are applied. Electric wheelchairs transported on school buses shall be capable of being locked in gear when placed in a school bus or shall have an independent braking system capable of holding the wheelchair in place. Wheelchair power shall be turned off prior to the student being transported on the bus. Batteries used to propel electric wheelchairs shall be both leak-resistant and spill-resistant or shall be placed in a leak-resistant container. Batteries shall be secured to the wheelchair frame in such a manner as to prevent separation in the event of an accident.

Supports may include the use of a safety vest or special safety equipment such as helmets, face guards, neck braces, gloves, Velcro wrist restraints (if a child is in a wheelchair), etc.

## **SCHOOL BUS EQUIPMENT**

To ensure equipment safety, all school buses are inspected daily by the bus driver and annually by the California Highway Patrol. Buses are regularly serviced to ensure safe operation. Each vehicle is certified to meet all applicable California regulations and laws related to pupil transportation. In addition, all buses are equipped with two-way radios.

California law does not require seat belts for bus passengers. If the vehicle is equipped with seat belts then students will be required to wear them while riding the school bus. Seat belts are not to be unfastened until the bus has stopped at the student's destination. Safety vests are available for students unable to sit upright without the extra support.

## **SCHOOL BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS**

Special education transportation drivers are trained to give safe and high-quality service to your child. All drivers attend regularly scheduled safety meetings and training sessions to improve their skills in transporting and addressing the behavior and unique needs of special education children. Consistent with state law, your child's driver has a valid School Bus Driver Certificate, first aid training, and has passed a physical examination, as well as traffic and criminal clearances.

## **SCHOOL BUS INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS**

A school bus **incident** is any unusual occurrence on a school bus while students are on board resulting in possible upset or injury to a student(s). Examples of a school bus incident would include a driver suddenly applying brakes or veering hard to avoid an accident; a student causing injury to him/herself or another person on the bus; and/or a student vandalizing the school bus or acting out so severely that an officer or administrator must be called to the scene.

A school bus **accident** typically involves the bus hitting another object while students are on board. For an **accident** a law enforcement officer must respond to the scene and delays of up to one hour are common.

In the event of a school bus **accident**, the driver will immediately notify the Transportation Office. The Transportation Office will determine if there are any injuries, the extent of any damages and to notify the proper authorities. The Transportation Office will notify you and schools immediately upon determining the names of the students on board, the extent of the injuries (if any), the location of the accident, and a description of the accident.

You will also be informed about any minor **incidents** that occurred while your child was on the bus. A "Notification of Minor Incident" form will be completed for each child on the bus and this form will be given to the child and/or placed in each child's backpack to be given to you. If you have a question about a bus incident then please call the Transportation Office for more information.

## **SERVICE PROBLEMS OR COMPLAINTS**

The Transportation Office and your child's bus driver are committed to providing the finest quality school transportation service to you and your child. For any service related questions, please contact the Transportation Office at (707) 837-8531 or (707) 837-8569.