

TRANSPORTATION

The Board of Education is aware that district operated transportation for pupils in the Schodack Central School District is necessary for the following reasons:

1. Transportation reduces walking time, safeguards pupils' health and provides a high degree of safety for pupils.
2. Transportation is a convenience for parents and greatly reduces the instances of tardiness and non-attendance.
3. Transportation is mandatory under State Law as follows:
 - a. All pupils in grades K-8 must be provided transportation in the event they live two or more miles from the school they attend.
 - b. All pupils in grades 9-12 must be provided transportation in the event they live three or more miles from the school they attend.

Transportation Policies

1. The District will provide school bus transportation to all pupils in the district, provided that voter approval has made transportation available to everyone. Buses will travel only on municipally maintained roads over which such buses can conveniently and logically run.
2. Suitable transportation shall be provided to district children with a handicapping condition whose right to suitable transportation from home to school is provided by law.
3. Subject to approval of the school administrator and the Board of Education, special transportation may be provided for pupils participating in field trips approved in accordance with the Board of Education policy.
4. Transportation shall be provided, upon approval of the budget, for regularly scheduled athletic events and other organized activities in accordance with a plan designed by the school administrator.
5. School vehicles will be used only for school purposes, school related activities and other purposes authorized by law.
6. A late bus may be provided for those students participating in after school activities within the limits of the budget.

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7. Non-public school transportation- When transportation is requested and such transportation is approved when required by law, the pupil or pupils concerned will be expected to ride the bus at all times and not on an occasional basis. Full participation will be required or the pupil will not be permitted to ride at all.
8. For purposes of establishing distances for calculation of transportation requests and for purposes of establishing distances used in determining numbers of quota and non-quota pupils reported to the State Education Department, such distances shall be measured from the main student entrance of the applicable school building.
9. The transportation supervisor shall report to the school business administrator and shall be responsible for carrying out Board policies and procedures relating to transportation. The transportation supervisor shall carry out such duties as may be established by the Board.
10. For all field trips, athletic and other school sponsored activities which take place away from the District schools, it shall be the responsibility of the building principal or the athletic director, and their staffs, to:
 - a. Provide adequate supervision of students;
 - b. Require consent slips from parents or other persons in parental responsibility for each child participating; and
 - c. Require that all students be transported back to the school unless permission has been given by the parent or guardian, in writing, for alternative transportation.
11. The district will provide “like-in-kind” transportation services to parochial and private school students, pursuant to Education Law, section 3635. The district will transport such students during its own regularly scheduled attendance days, as established in the official school calendar. Transportation will not be provided to parochial or private schools during legal holidays, weekends, school recess periods, or on days of emergency school closing where, in the determination of the superintendent, undue risk to personnel and equipment is involved.
12. The district will maintain a policy of transporting resident pupils to locations within the district, other than the pupil’s residence, upon written request by the parent. Such transportation services may be afforded to individual resident pupils or to groups of resident pupils (such as youth groups, instructional groups and other student gatherings meetings) subject to space availability. Requests must be made in accordance with procedures adopted by the Board.

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13. The transportation supervisor shall be responsible for recruitment, selection, training and supervision of all bus drivers and maintenance personnel. School bus drivers must be at least 21 years of age. School bus drivers shall be employed in accordance with regulations of the Commissioner of Education.
14. Only persons who have the appropriate license for the vehicle to be operated and who have complied with the Regulations of the Commissioners of Transportation, Motor Vehicles and Education may be compensated by the District to drive pupils to or from home on regularly scheduled routes. No other persons may operate a school bus on a scheduled route for the purpose of transporting pupils to and from home.
15. No person shall be permitted to operate a school bus without first completing required training under the direct supervision of a New York State Education Department –approved school bus driving instructor.
16. All school bus drivers shall possess the appropriate commercial drivers license (CDL) needed in New York State to operate a school bus. An individual who operates a bus designed to carry no more than 14 passengers and drives fewer than thirty (30) days per year, shall be exempt from the CDL requirement.
17. All bus drivers shall undergo medical and physical examinations as required by the regulations of the Commissioner of Education. When the superintendent of schools or the physician who is conducting bus driver physical examinations pursuant to Part 156 of the Commissioner's Regulations, requires, a bus driver shall undergo any diagnostic tests and physical performance tests that are necessary to determine whether the driver has the physical and mental ability to operate safely a school transportation conveyance and to satisfactorily perform the other responsibilities of a school bus driver. Any test that may be required under this provision shall be conducted and reported as required by the Commissioner's Regulations. The superintendent may require a driver to undergo such diagnostic or physical performance tests when, in his or her judgment, such testing is warranted by articulable concerns about the driver's physical and mental ability to operate safely a school transportation conveyance and to satisfactorily perform the other responsibilities of a school bus driver. The report of the physician in writing and the results of any prescribed performance test shall be considered by the superintendent in determining the fitness of the driver to operate or continue to operate any transportation conveyance used by pupils.

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(1st Reading 8/21/03; 2nd Reading 9/18/03; 3rd Reading 10/16/03)

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TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

- I. Transportation Supervisor:
 - A. The transportation supervisor shall be directly responsible to the school business administrator.
 - B. All school bus routes, changes or additions should be recommended by the transportation supervisor to the school administrator.
 - C. School bus stops shall be designated within the practical limitations of safety, time of schedule and efficient mechanical operation of the school bus.
 - D. The transportation supervisor shall prepare, with the aid of the school business administrator, a booklet of directions and procedures to be followed in the operation and maintenance of district owned buses. This booklet shall be issued to all regular and substitute drivers.
 - E. The transportation supervisor shall see that all necessary reports are made concerning school bus accidents. He or she shall immediately report such accidents to the superintendent and the school business administrator who, in turn, shall inform the Board of Education. He or she shall provide copies to state agencies, as required by law or regulation, and to the insurance carriers.
 - F. The transportation supervisor shall design and operate a system of “preventative maintenance” and cost analysis which will provide for maximum efficiency of operation of all district owned transportation equipment and non-transportation vehicles. In carrying out this policy, it shall be the duty of the transportation supervisor to maintain and operate a bus garage shop where service repairs shall be performed. He shall cause repairs beyond his facilities or capabilities to be done at outside agencies or at factory branches if, in his judgment, such action becomes necessary. He shall keep the school business administrator fully informed at all times concerning his work and decisions.
 - G. All school buses shall operate over regular routes for all bus trips wherever possible.
 - H. The transportation supervisor shall be responsible for recruitment, selection, training and supervision of all bus drivers and maintenance personnel. School bus drivers must be at least 21 years of age. School bus drivers shall be employed in accordance with regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

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- I. Persons seeking employment as regular or substitute school bus drivers shall provide the transportation supervisor at least three statements from three different persons who are not related either by blood or marriage to the applicant that demonstrate that the applicant is of good moral character and is thoroughly reliable.
- J. Each regular or substitute driver who is to be initially employed shall have had a physical examination by a physician within four weeks prior to the beginning of service, in accordance with regulations of the Commissioner of Education. Each regular or substitute driver shall be required to pass the driver physical performance test, as required by regulation of the Commissioner, before he or she may transport pupils.
- K. Each regular and substitute driver of a school bus owned, leased or contracted for by the district shall be examined annually by a physician in accordance with regulations of the Commissioner of Education. The physical examination shall be reported immediately, on forms prescribed by the Commissioner, to the superintendent. Each regular or substitute driver shall pass a physical performance test, approved by the commissioner, at least once every two years. Additionally, the test shall be administered to any driver following an absence from service of 60 or more consecutive days from his or her scheduled work duties.
- L. The superintendent or the physician who is conducting bus driver physical examinations may require a driver to undergo such diagnostic or physical performance tests as authorized by Board policy.
- M. Each regular and substitute driver shall have the appropriate operator's or commercial driver's license to operate such motor vehicle. Additionally, each regular and substitute school bus driver shall have received the training as may be required by the Commissioner of Education, including:
 - 1. Two hours of instruction on school bus safety practices; and
 - 2. Two hours of refresher instruction in school bus safety at least two times a year, at sessions conducted prior to the first day of school and prior to February first of each year

II. Transportation Plan

A. Regular Routes and Schedules

1. Bus routes shall be planned to make the most efficient use of district owned buses. In establishing routes, careful consideration shall be given to transportation needs and highway conditions throughout the district. The transportation supervisor shall file recommended school bus routes for district owned buses with the school business administrator. The final, exact routes must be filed no later than September 15 of each year.
2. All changes in bus routes shall be brought to the attention of the school business administrator as they occur, so that proper notation will be made on the Transportation Data Sheets. These routes shall become the legal bus routes of the district for the year filed.
3. Bus drivers shall be informed that there may be no deviation from established routes without prior authorization by the transportation supervisor.
4. When transportation is required which cannot be furnished by district owned buses, bids will be taken for such transportation.
5. Drivers of district owned buses shall pick up and discharge students at scheduled bus stops only.
6. Wherever possible, the driver of each school bus shall be furnished before the opening of school with a list of kindergarten students riding the bus. This list shall be kept up to date at all times.
7. Except for private or parochial, handicapped, vocational education, approved field trips, sports trips, bus turnarounds designated for safety purposes, and approved bus driver competitions, district owned buses will operate wholly within the school district boundaries. Non-resident pupils will be transported if they meet a district bus at a regular school bus stop at which resident pupils are boarding, subject to space availability. Any exceptions to these rules must be explicitly approved by the business administrator.

B. Special Requests for Transportation

1. Individual requests for special transportation for resident pupils will be honored whenever space on a particular bus run is available. All requests must be made in writing, signed by the parent or person in parental relationship to the pupil, and submitted *at least three days before* special transportation is required. These requests should include the child's name, address to which the child should be transported, the reason for the request and the parent's name and phone number. Requests must be submitted to the building principal, who will notify the transportation supervisor of the request. Parental requests will be forwarded to and retained by the transportation supervisor for the balance of the school year.
2. Groups requesting special transportation for after-school programs shall be required to apply directly to the transportation supervisor on a form to be provided by the district. Such requests must be submitted at least one full week prior to the requested date of transportation. The transportation supervisor will evaluate requests and grant special transportation, subject to space availability. Additionally, parents must submit individual requests for special transportation of their own children, as outlined in B.1., above. If such special transportation would crowd a bus beyond legal capacity, the transportation supervisor will deny the request, but will contact the group representative to offer the following alternatives:
 - a. A change of date to the same location (same bus run)
 - b. A change of location (different bus run) on the same date
 - c. A change of location to one of the district's school buildings (for group meetings or activities for which approval has been given to use a district school building)

C. Safe Operation of Buses

1. Drivers shall be required to report violators of the School Bus Passing Law to the transportation supervisor within 24 hours of the occurrence and to cooperate with all law enforcement officials in their investigation of the violation.
2. The transportation supervisor and all drivers shall work in cooperation with all municipal and police agencies in safe school bus operations.

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3. District operated buses will use red flashing stop lights and stop-arms (if available) whenever they are loading or unloading students, whether or not the bus is on a public roadway. Drivers will remain inside their buses during all normal loading and unloading operations. If for any reason it becomes necessary for the driver to leave the bus, he or she will turn off the engine, set the parking brake and remove the ignition key before leaving the bus.
4. The transportation supervisor shall inform the superintendent, by approximately 5:30 a.m., of any weather or road conditions which would make the operation of school buses unsafe and could necessitate the closing of school or delay in opening school.
5. The transportation supervisor shall inform the superintendent of hazardous weather or poor road conditions which develop during the school day which could necessitate early dismissal of students.

D. Attendance and Transfers

1. No student shall be permitted to leave the bus at an unauthorized stop unless a written request from the parent or person in parental relation has been received and approved at the building principal's office. Unless authorization is received from the building principal's office, a bus driver shall require each student to leave the bus at night at his regular stop.
2. Unauthorized transfers or deviations in bus attendance shall be reported to the transportation supervisor who shall take the necessary corrective action.

E. Insurance and Inspection

1. District owned buses shall be operated only with required insurance protection.
2. District owned buses used to transport students shall be operated only with current Department of Transportation approval.

F. Maintenance

1. Preventive maintenance shall be emphasized.
2. A reasonable supply of tires, chains, anti-freeze, gasoline, lube oil, grease and other items frequently used shall be kept on hand at the school owned garage. All purchases shall be made in conformity with Board policies.

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3. A system of records shall be developed by the transportation supervisor including: daily reports on drivers, monthly inspection by the transportation supervisor, job sheets by mechanics, monthly service records, annual service reports and annual fleet reports.

G. Records and Reports

1. One rough copy of the Routing Data Sheet shall be filed with the school business administrator.
2. One rough copy of all final reports will be filed with the school business administrator.
3. Reports of accidents shall be reported to proper authorities promptly
4. An attendance record of all drivers and substitute drivers shall be kept.
5. The school business administrator shall be informed of anticipated need for new school buses on or before April 1 of each year.
6. The district will maintain a map, with an accurate scale of miles, showing all streets and roadways used as transportation routes and the allowable pupil/non-allowable pupil distance limitation of 1.5 miles clearly indicated for each building.

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