

## FILE 5.4—TRANSPORTATION

### FILE 5.4.1—TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK

#### **Board of Education:**

The Board of Education is empowered by law to provide transportation for children to and from school who live a distance of:

Elementary (K-8)	2 Miles
Secondary (9-12)	3 Miles

The voters of the District, under provisions of the State Education Law, may authorize transportation on a more liberalized policy than that specified by law. This was the case in Ballston Spa on July 12, 1960 at which time a referendum was presented to the residents of the District and passed which authorized the following distance changes in transportation eligibility:

Elementary (K-8)	$\frac{7}{10}$ of a mile
Secondary (9-12)	1½ miles

As for bus riders, the same distances apply for the allowable distance a student can be required to walk to a bus stop. The actual distance a child may be required to walk to the bus stop is determined by the District transportation department. They will take into account a number of safety factors when actually setting up a bus stop and requiring a child to walk to it. Because of this, not all students will be walking the same distance to the bus stop. But, no student will walk to a bus stop farther than the distance set for the walk/ride eligibility for that student's grade level.

#### **Transportation Eligibility:**

Transportation eligibility requirements for the above prescribed distances are determined by measuring from the legal residence of the pupil to points predetermined by the Board of Education at each school. According to State Education Law, this measurement is to be taken using the most direct public walking route from home to school. Only those children outside of the prescribed walking distances are eligible for transportation to and from school on a daily basis.

In addition, the Board of Education provides transportation services for the following:

#### **As required by law:**

- Handicapped Children
- Private and Non-public Schools

For more information regarding the laws that govern District transportation, contact the Transportation Operations Supervisor for the District.

**As authorized by voter approval:**

Extra Curricular Run  
Late Athletic Run  
Field Trips  
Interscholastic Athletics

Aside from establishing a policy concerning the eligibility of children for transportation, and the services rendered, the Board of Education is empowered:

- A. To establish and operate the necessary school bus routes. The routes established must be approved by the Bureau of School Business Management of the State Education Department. No financial aid is granted to unapproved routes.
- B. To provide maximum safety precautions.
  1. To specify the vehicles to be used.
  2. To approve bus drivers who:
    - a. Pass a yearly physical exam by a school appointed physician.
    - b. Hold the proper motor vehicle license.
    - c. Show good moral character.
    - d. Pass a physical strength test.
  3. To establish a time schedule with some flexibility for the operation of routes depending, of course, on the length of the route and conditions of the highways.
  4. To establish adequate space for loading and unloading children on school property.
  5. To provide adequate supervision for loading and unloading children on school property.
  6. To give safety instructions in the schools.

The Board of Education may delegate these responsibilities to the appropriate administrative staff.

**Rules Governing Conduct Prior to Boarding and When Leaving a School Bus:**

- A. Respect the property of others while waiting for the bus or on the way to and from the bus stop.
- B. Always cross the highway in front of the stopped school bus so that the driver is always visible in the front windshield and check with the driver for final approval to cross.
- C. Punctuality is important. Arrive at your bus stop at least five minutes prior to scheduled pick-up times. Buses are only authorized to pick students up at their assigned bus stops.
- D. Observe all safety precautions while waiting for the bus:
  1. Do not play in the road.  
If possible, avoid crossing streets. If it becomes necessary to cross the street, look both ways and cross only if you are sure no moving vehicles are approaching from either direction.

2. Do not push, pull or chase any other students.
  3. Avoid trespassing on private property.
  4. Do not use improper language or verbally tease or physically fight with other students.
- E. As your bus approaches, line up at least Fifteen Feet off the curb or highway, if practical, and do not approach the bus until it has stopped and the driver has opened the door. Again, avoid pushing others in the line.
- F. When leaving the school bus, you must leave the bus in an orderly fashion and walk at least fifteen feet away from the bus and remain that distance until the bus has driven away. If you are required to cross the street to get to your home, you are to exit the bus in an orderly fashion, walk ahead of the bus at least Ten Feet, make eye contact with the driver and wait for the driver to cross you to the other side of the road. At no time will a student walk along the side of the bus or near the rear of the bus.

**Rules Governing Conduct on School Buses for Students:**

- A. Pupils transported in a school bus are under the authority of and directly responsible to the driver of the bus.
- B. Students are expected to treat one another and the driver in a respectful and courteous manner.
- C. The use of loud, boisterous or improper/profane language is prohibited.
- D. Students must remain in their seats until they arrive at their destination. It is expected that all students will wear their seat belts. They are to remain seated until the bus had reached a complete stop before entering the aisle to leave the bus.
- E. Defacing the bus in any way is prohibited and students or their parents will be held financially responsible for all damages.
- F. Tobacco products and tobacco paraphernalia of any kind are prohibited on District buses.
- G. Carry only those items aboard which you can hold in your lap. Gym bags, lunch boxes and other objects may not be placed in the aisle or in front of the bus. Large musical instruments are not permitted on school buses. Parents will be required to make special arrangements. Hazardous items and glass products are prohibited.
- H. Radios/cassette players larger than the hand held variety are not allowed on the bus. The playing of radios of the “walkman” variety is allowed providing the volume is played at a reasonable level. The driver will determine whether the volume level is reasonable.
- I. Use of cell phones on school buses is prohibited except in case of emergency. The use of cell phone cameras is strictly prohibited at all times.
- J. Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner and only when the door is fully opened.
- K. The consumption of food or beverages on the bus is prohibited.
- L. Do not extend any part of your body out of the windows or doors.
- M. Do not throw anything within the bus or in/out of the window or doors.
- N. Do not do anything to distract the driver.

- O. Do not touch windows, doors, brooms, two way radios, emergency equipment, levers, or any controls in the drivers compartment unless given permission by the driver or in case of an emergency.
- P. Do not touch other students and/or their property. Horseplay of any kind is prohibited.
- Q. Spitting/littering of any kind is prohibited.
- R. All students will have assigned seats.

### **School Bus Discipline:**

The goal of the transportation department is to provide the safest most efficient transportation network possible for the District. To do this, it is imperative that the disciplinary guidelines and procedures outlined in this handbook be followed by students, administrators and drivers so that the safest possible riding conditions can be maintained on the school buses at all times.

### **Disciplinary Procedures:**

We expect responsible behavior from all students who ride the District's buses. When a student commits an infraction of the rules that endangers the well-being of other students, the driver of himself, he will be dealt with as outlined below. In all cases of disciplinary action, the students of the District will be afforded their rights to due process. The District administration is subject, but not limited, to the following disciplinary procedures:

#### **First Offense:**

All student referrals of this type will be handled by the Transportation Coordinator/Lead Driver and the principal/designee in conjunction with the students' parents. Final determination of consequences will be made by the principals or their designees. The principal/designee will notify the student's parent or guardian about the incident, in writing, as soon as possible after receiving the incident report. A phone call will also be made to the parent/guardian to explain the circumstances surrounding the incident. A parent conference may also be scheduled. This conference may include the driver, Transportation Coordinator, Lead Driver, parent, student and principal/designee.

#### **Second Offense:**

A School Bus Incident Report to Parents (Referral) will be issued and the principal/designee will take disciplinary action in the form of a verbal reprimand, parental conference, detention, or in school suspension.

#### **Repeated Violations:**

Repeated violations will result in short term bus privilege suspensions and ultimately a loss of bus riding privileges for the school year.

The following are examples of the above-mentioned infractions (but they are not limited to only these). The use of tobacco products and/or related paraphernalia, fighting, destruction of property, throwing of objects or challenging the authority of the bus driver will result in an automatic suspension of bus privileges for a period of one (1) to five (5) school days.

**General Information:**

- A. If a child misses the bus to school, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to transport the child. If for some reason the transportation department is at fault, it will make arrangements to transport the child to school.
- B. If a child becomes ill during the course of the day, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to make arrangements to pick the child up from school.
- C. Any student who has bus riding privileges suspended, or who is suspended from school, is not allowed to ride any District vehicle until the suspension is ended. This includes the extracurricular runs, the athletic run, field trips and athletic events.
- D. For their own protection, once students have boarded the bus, they will not be allowed to get off the bus until the driver has reached the students' designated stops unless the bus driver receives prior approval from the transportation department. This includes releasing children to their parents from the school bus for appointments, surprise pick ups, etc. Prior approval must be given. No student may ride a bus other than their assigned bus without a bus pass issued by the attendance office of the school the student attends.
- E. It is up to parents to make sure the following procedures are followed so that their children can be released from the bus:
  - 1. The school office is notified in advance that the child will be picked up by a parent. The school office will then notify the transportation department.
  - 2. The parent will provide the driver with a note that authorizes release of the child, and which explains why the child must get off the bus.
  - 3. The parent signs the driver's Student Release Sign-off Sheet.
  - 4. The parent may be required to provide identification.
- F. The District will not transport a student to another student's house for any reason except in an emergency. This emergency must be reported to the school office and to the transportation department so that appropriate arrangements can be made for transportation. Approval will be dependent upon the nature of the request and the available seating capacity for the bus. Requests will be denied if additional cost will be incurred by the District for the extension of routes or the establishment of new routes.
- G. Only those students staying after school for participation in school sponsored activities are allowed to ride extracurricular or late athletic run buses home. Student must present buss pass when boarding bus. Students will be transported only to their home address.
- H. New York State law mandates that all buses manufactured after 1987 have seat belts. By 1998, there will be seat belts on all District buses. Therefore, it is the District's expectation that all students will wear their seat belts while riding on District buses. Parents who object to this expectation, based on safety or other concerns, may communicate this objection to the District and their wishes will be respected.

### **Special Transportation for a Temporary Injury or Incapacitating Condition:**

Request for special transportation services will be in writing and dropped off at the transportation office. The request must be accompanied by a medical certification form, to be provided by the District, and completed by the physician. Forms are available at the transportation office. Approval will be required by the Transportation Operations Supervisor and services will be provided on an as available basis. The transportation department will make every effort to provide the special transportation required.

### **Responsibilities of Parents:**

Parents have an important role to play in the safe and efficient operation of the school's transportation system. If the system is to function effectively, parents must assume an obligation to the program and to the people responsible for its operation. They need to recognize that our goal is to transport the students of the District in a safe, efficient manner. Proper student behavior while on the bus must be encouraged by the parents so that we can meet our transportation goals.

The following is a list of suggestions for parents that will aid the transportation department in the achievement of these goals:

- A. Recognize that the job of the school bus driver is a difficult and important one in that the health and safety of the students carries with it great responsibility. Parents must support the driver and his or her interpretation of student behavior.
- B. Instill in their children the need for good behavior while waiting for and riding on the bus.
- C. Notify the Facilities and Operations Coordinator of any incidents that occur that they believe to be hazardous.
- D. See to it that their children arrive at the bus stop at least five minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time and that they are properly clothed.
- E. Cooperate with the principal and driver, if the occasion arises, that a child is being disciplined.
- F. Reinforce the District's expectation that seat belts will be used on the school bus.

### **Responsibilities of the School Bus Driver**

#### **To the Principal:**

- A. Respect the principal's authority and comply with his/her requests and direction.
- B. Report all matters of discipline and attend parent conferences as required.
- C. Aid and support a School Bus Safety Program for children.
- D. Remain on the school bus at all times during loading and unloading.

#### **To the Parents:**

- A. Be on time at bus stops.

- B. Exercise good personal habits.
- C. Maintain maximum safety practices.
- D. Insist on appropriate pupil conduct.
- E. Be courteous to parents.
- F. Be cooperative at all times.
- G. Commend pupils to their parents and principals for good behavior.

**To the Pupils:**

- A. Maintain the highest degree of safety at all times.
- B. Cultivate proper attitudes of respect and regard for discipline.
- C. Be able to identify and explain emergency exits and emergency procedures.
- D. Be able to explain in full the expectations the driver has of the student regarding their behavior while riding the bus.
- E. Inform students of the expectation that they will use their seat belts and instruct them on the proper use of seat belts on the school bus.

**Responsibilities of School Administrators**

**Transportation Department:**

- A. Implement and carry out policies of the Board of Education consistent with legal requirements.
- B. Maintain records of the department.
- C. Participate in special transportation studies and safety programs.
- D. Complete and review all accident reports.
- E. Develop and maintain up-to-date bus lists of children eligible for transportation and make such lists available to other school departments. To make determinations regarding transportation eligibility.
- F. Plan bus loading procedures, stops, routes and schedules.
- G. Supervise bus routes and schedules.
- H. Plan transportation schedules for athletic trips, field trips and special education needs.
- I. Prepare the school transportation budget.
- J. Interpret transportation procedures and policy to the public.
- K. Work with the administration and staff in promoting safety in school bus transportation.

- L. Inspect the credentials of all school bus drivers with regard to all necessary criteria for driving a school bus prior to certifying the individual for Board of Education appointment.

**Building Principals:**

- A. Enforce Board of Education policies relating to transportation and student discipline.
- B. Provide supervision for loading and unloading school buses with the assistance of school staff.
- C. Work with the transportation department so that essential student file information is exchanged in an orderly, efficient manner.
- D. Enforce regulations governing the transfer of students from one bus route to another.
- E. Maintain proper standards of pupil conduct on a bus in cooperation with the driver.
- F. Enforce all regulations pertaining to discipline of students as prescribed in this policy handbook.
- G. Provide the same support to the bus driver relative to disciplinary incidents as is afforded the classroom teacher.

**Superintendent of Schools:**

The responsibility for administering the transportation program rests with the Superintendent of Schools who is responsible to the Board of Education in enforcing all applicable laws, regulations and policies established by federal, state and local authorities. This responsibility is, in part, delegated to the Facilities and Operations Coordinator and the individual building principal.

**Closing of School Due to Weather Conditions:**

On occasion, the Superintendent finds it in the best interest of the District either to delay opening school or to close school for the day due to poor weather conditions or other emergencies. In the event that this occurs, the following radio and television stations will be notified so that notice can be given to all individuals in the District:

WTRY	FM 98.3		Channel 10
WGY	AM 810	WRGB	Channel 6
WRVE	FM 99.5	WROW	AM 590
WGNA			FM 955
WJKE	FM 101.3		Channel 13
WABY	FM 101	WQBK	FM 104
	AM 1400		AM 1300
WSTL	AM 1410	WCKM	AM 900
	FM 101.7	WKBE	FM 100.3

Every effort will be made to make these determinations as early as possible in the morning. It is advisable for students to listen to one of the above named radio stations if it appears as though the weather may make travel hazardous.



In case of early closing of schools due to weather, or other special closings due to emergencies in individual schools, notice will be given to parents prior to actual dismissal time via local radio stations. The District will try to provide this information at least an hour prior to the actual dismissal.

### **Emergency Procedures for Illness or Accident While on the School Bus:**

The following procedures have been developed to identify students who are occupants of a bus accident, to ensure that all injured students receive first aid, to inform parents of children who have been involved in a bus accident, and to make sure the proper authorities are notified of an accident when it occurs.

### **Transportation Department - School Bus Accident**

All bus accidents are covered under New York State No Fault Insurance. Any medical claims from a bus accident are therefore paid for by the student or parent's no-fault automobile insurance policy. If the student or parent does not carry no-fault automobile coverage, the District's automotive insurance coverage will then be dealt with as prescribed by law.

### **Bus Accidents Before School**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. To identify all students who are occupants of a bus involved in an accident to and from school or a school sponsored activity.
- B. To ensure that all injured students received first aid, and when appropriate, are referred for further medical treatment.
- C. To allay concern of parents involved in bus accidents by informing them of the nature of the accident and the condition of their child.

#### **Procedures - Bus Garage:**

- A. Bus driver if capable will immediately call the bus garage to report the following information:
  1. the location of accident;
  2. nature and severity of accident;
  3. number of students on bus; and
  4. need for ambulance service.
- B. Dispatcher on duty at the bus garage will immediately notify the following:
  1. 911
  2. Coordinator of Community Relations, Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and appropriate school nurse or school.
- C. Police will also assess the need for emergency medical treatment and assist the bus driver in emergency first aid until the ambulance arrives. Bus driver will provide the address and phone number for seriously injured students from the student list on the bus so immediate parent contact can be made by the police.
- D. Bus driver will take census of students on the bus and complete seating chart.
- E. Dispatcher will send another bus to get the students to their destined school (if necessary) and bring student list from bus.

- F. District administration will comply with all federal and state guidelines pertaining to post-accident drug testing of drivers with commercial drivers' licenses.

**Procedures - Health Office:**

- A. All students involved in an accident while riding the bus to school who are uninjured and subsequently transported by the replacement bus to school will immediately report to the health office.
- B. The nurse will interview and assess for injuries all students riding on the bus when the accident occurred. Names will be obtained from student list on bus.
- C. The nurse will record any statements of all students riding the bus when the accident occurred as to the nature of their involvement and any claim of injury.
- D. If signs and symptoms warrant, the nurse will administer first aid, attempt to inform the parent of the nature of the injury, and recommend further observation and/or seek appropriate medical assistance for treatment of the student.
- E. A bus accident form will be completed by the nurse. Copies will be sent to the bus garage and the Superintendent. The original will be kept in a folder in the Health Office.
- F. The school personnel will contact parents and/or guardians of all students riding the bus during the accident who are not contacted by the nurse, to inform them of the accident, and that their child was seen by the nurse and does not appear to have any apparent injury.
- G. If unable to contact parent and child does not appear to have received any injury, a letter will be sent home with the student.
- H. The nurse will submit the names of students involved in the accident to Pupil Benefits on school letterhead.

**Bus Accidents-After School & Late Buses**

**Objectives:**

- A. To identify all students who are occupants of a bus involved in an accident to and from school or a school sponsored activity.
- B. To ensure that all students injured received first aid, and when appropriate, are referred for further medical treatment.
- C. To allay concern of parents involved in bus accidents by informing them of the nature of the accident and the condition of their child.

**Procedures - Bus Garage:**

- A. Bus driver if capable will immediately call the bus garage to report the following information:
  - 1. The location of accident;
  - 2. Nature and severity of accident;
  - 3. Number of students on bus;

4. Need for ambulance service.
- B. Dispatcher on duty at the bus garage will immediately notify the following:
  1. 911
  2. Coordinator of Community Relations, Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent.
- C. Police will also assess the need for emergency medical treatment and assist the bus driver in emergency first aid until the ambulance arrives. Bus driver will provide the address and phone number for seriously injured students from the student list on the bus so immediate parent contact can be made by police.
- D. Bus driver will prepare a list of students on the bus at the time of the accident with date of birth, address, and phone number, and take the list back to the bus garage to be sent to the appropriate school nurse by the commencement of school the next school day. Transportation personnel will contact parents of students and apprise them of situation that occurred.
- E. Dispatcher will send another bus and driver (if necessary) immediately to pick up the uninjured students and resume the required run.
- F. The bus driver will give each student a bus accident notification form upon leaving the bus.
- G. District administration will comply with all federal and state guidelines pertaining to post-accident drug testing of drivers with commercial drivers' licenses.

**Procedures - Health Office:**

- A. School nurse will interview and assess all involved students from the list provided by the bus garage the following morning or school day.
- B. School nurse will contact parents if any signs or symptoms warrant further medical evaluation.
- C. A bus accident form will be completed by the nurse. Copies will be sent to the bus garage and the Superintendent. The original will be kept in a folder in the Health office.
- D. If signs and symptoms warrant, the nurse will administer first aid, attempt to inform the parent of the nature of the injury, and recommend further observation and/or seek appropriate medical assistance for treatment of the student.

**Bus Accidents-Sports Activities, Field Trips**

**Objectives:**

- A. To identify all students who are occupants of a bus involved in an accident to and from school or a school sponsored activity.
- B. To ensure that all injured students receive first aid, and when appropriate, are referred for further medical treatment.
- C. To allay concern of parents involved in bus accidents by informing them of the nature of the accident and the condition of their child.

### **Procedures-Bus Garage:**

- A. Bus driver if capable will immediately report the accident to the bus garage if possible, or the Transportation Coordinator or Operations Supervisor the following information:
  1. the location of accident;
  2. nature and severity of accident;
  3. number of students on bus;
  4. need for ambulance service; and
  5. notify police or 911.
- B. Person notified will immediately notify the following:
  1. 911; and
  2. appropriate school personnel.
- C. Coach or staff member accompanying the students will provide the bus driver with a list of student names, dates of birth, addresses, and phone numbers, and assist in the taking of the census.
- D. Coach or staff member will assist the bus driver and police in determining the need for ambulance and first aid treatment.
- E. Person notified of the accident will immediately send another bus and driver to pick up the students and resume normal run. Transportation Department personnel will contact parents of students and apprise them of the situation.
- F. The bus driver will give each student a bus accident notification form upon leaving the bus.

### **Procedures-Health Office:**

- A. School nurse will interview and assess all involved students from the list provided by the bus garage the following morning or next school day.
- B. School nurse will contact parents if any signs or symptoms warrant further medical evaluation.
- C. A bus accident form will be completed by the nurse. Copies will be sent to the bus garage and the Superintendent. The original will be kept in a folder in the Health office.
- D. The nurse will submit the names of the students involved in the accident to Pupil Benefits on school letterhead.

### **Illness While on the School Bus:**

- A. Students who become ill while they are being transported on a District school bus are asked to do the following:
  1. Notify the Bus driver immediately.
  2. Let the Bus driver know what the nature of the illness is.
  3. Listen to the Bus driver's instructions and follow them.
- B. Bus drivers who have students who become ill while they are in route, are asked to do the following:
  1. Find out the nature of the problem.
  2. Take whatever measures are necessary to comfort the student.
  3. Call the dispatcher and let him/her know what the problem is.

4. If on the way to school, have the dispatcher notify the school that there is a sick child aboard and that you will be sending the child in to school upon arrival. Have another child accompany the sick child to the health office.
5. If on the way home, call the dispatcher and let him/her know the situation. Try to reach the parent of the child so that they can meet the child at the bus stop if at all possible.

Any child who is injured while being transported on the bus will follow the same procedures as outlined above. The driver will also follow the same guidelines except that the nurse or principal will come out to the vehicle and meet the child.

### **Transportation of Non-Public School Students:**

Under State Education Law, the Board of Education is required to provide transportation for resident pupils who attend non-public schools. The provision of this transportation is broken into two categories. They are: (1) schools located within a fifteen mile radius of the pupils' home and (2) schools located outside of a fifteen mile radius of the pupils' home.

For schools located within the fifteen mile radius of the pupils' homes, the District will provide transportation for those students under the same eligibility guidelines as those set for the public school students. The District will utilize established bus stops and pick-up/drop-off the students in a manner that is consistent with State Education regulations. For schools located outside of a fifteen mile radius of a pupil's home, but are within fifteen miles of a home in the District, the District will provide transportation to the school providing there is at least one student attending the school that lives inside the fifteen mile radius. If the one qualifying student leaves that school, the Board of Education has the option of discontinuing transportation for those students who live outside the fifteen mile radius. The District will utilize established bus stops and pick-up/drop-off students that live within the fifteen mile radius. The students that live outside the fifteen mile radius will be required to find their own transportation to a designated pick-up/drop-off point from which the District will then transport from and to on a daily basis. This pick-up/drop-off point must be located within the fifteen mile radius from the non-public school.

### **Transportation To/From Before/After School Child Care Facilities:**

The utilization of before and after school child care services is becoming widely used by parents in most school districts in New York State. This situation has posed a number of transportation problems that have been addressed by the New York State Legislature in the last few years, and will continue to be addressed in the future. Because of the ever changing nature of laws regarding this topic, it is difficult to outline the parameters of this type of transportation. Therefore, if you have any questions regarding this type of transportation, contact the Transportation Department.

### **Transportation Via Privately Owned Vehicle/Student Parking:**

The District allows students to utilize their private vehicles for transportation to and from school each day and also provides a parking lot for the students to use so that they can park these vehicles. Students and parents must remember that this is a privilege given to the students. Therefore, students who utilize the "student parking area(s)" must follow the rules and regulations for parking on school property. Any student found to be in non-compliance with the rules and regulations pertaining to the student parking area(s) will lose the privilege to drive to school and park on school property. For more in depth information, refer to current student parking lot guidelines which outline expectations for students and the rules of the parking area.

### **Transportation Education Program**

The District transportation department will provide bus safety instruction to students in the District as part of their State Education Department mandated emergency evacuation drills and requested visits to the classroom setting. Instruction will occur in the areas of general bus safety procedures while riding the bus, emergency evacuation procedures while the bus is in route and proper use of seat belts on school buses.