

Chelsea Public Schools
Pupil Personnel / Special Education

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www.chelseaschools.com



Door to Door
Transportation Manual
Parent/Guardian Edition

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Business Office is responsible for organizing and directing the day-to-day operations of pupil transportation for the Chelsea Public Schools. The School Department Business Office provides information for the parent/guardian, school personnel and transportation companies.

The information provided will give you a better understanding of what you as the parent/guardian can do to help your child enjoy a safe bus ride to and from school. Information is also available in the Chelsea Public Schools website www.chelseaschools.com. For your child's safety, please discuss this material with him/her.

If you have questions regarding pupil transportation, or need to contact the **School Department Business Office**, please contact:

<p>Mary Arrieta Phone: 617-466-4465 Fax: 617-889-8328 Email: marrieta@chelseama.gov Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00-4:00</p>
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II. TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

Door to Door Transportation:

The Chelsea Public Schools provides transportation services for students with disabilities in accordance with their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or their 504 Individual Accommodation Plan. The Child's Special Education TEAM or the 504 Coordinator shall determine whether the student requires transportation because of his or her disability in order to benefit from special education.

Transportation services provided through a 504 plan do not renew automatically from year to year. They are reviewed annually by the school that the student attends. At the beginning of each school year, the principal/designee, 504 coordinator or the program director will submit a transportation request, a copy of the current 504 plan along with supporting documentation from a treating physician.

After a transportation decision has been made, a parent/guardian may choose to provide transportation and may be eligible for reimbursement under certain circumstances. Any parent/guardian who plans to transport their child to school should notify the Special Education office and the School Department Business Office.

- Riders will be picked up at the address on file at the Parent Information Center and dropped off at that same address at the end of the school day. Any special arrangements and/or requests must be submitted to the School Department Business Office in writing and will be taken into consideration on an individual basis. Special arrangements are not to be made directly with the bus driver and/or monitor. Special arrangements to drop off a student at the end of the school day at an address outside of the City of Chelsea will not be granted. Special arrangements will not renew from year to year, from the regular school year to any summer program or from a summer program to the regular school year.
- The student should be ready 10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time and should be waiting at the door or outside with a responsible adult. The school bus will wait only 3 minutes after arrival before continuing on with the route.
- The transportation company will give you an approximate time they will pick up your child. If you are waiting more than 10 minutes from the scheduled pick up time and the bus has not arrived, contact the School Department Business Office.

- Changes in pick up and drop off times happen during the school year due to unforeseen situations. The transportation company will inform you of any schedule changes.
- The parent/guardian, or approved designee, will be available to walk the child to the bus in the morning and will be available to receive the child at the end of the school day. The parent/guardian, or approved designee should be home at least half hour before the child is due to arrive in the afternoon. The school bus will only wait three minutes before continuing on with the route.
- The bus monitor or driver will assist the student on and off the bus, if necessary.
- If you bring your child to school, please contact the transportation company or the School Department Business Office as much in advance as possible so arrangements can be made to transport the child back home in the afternoon.
- If you dismiss your child from school early, please contact the transportation company or the School Department Business Office to inform them that your child will not need a ride home in the afternoon.
- In the event that a student is having a difficult time at school at the end of the day, the student might not be able to ride the school bus home for safety reasons. The school will contact the parent/guardian so arrangements can be made for the child to be picked-up at the school.
- If your child's bus is often late, or fails to show, contact the School Department Business Office.

Student Information:

A student profile sheet will be mailed home for each student with the transportation assignment letter. The parent/guardian will need to confirm or update information and return the student profile sheet to the Parent Information Center.

Emergency Contact Information:

Please be sure this information is accurate and up-to-date. Notify the Parent Information Center of any changes.

Address Changes:

When changing an address, you must provide two proofs of new address to the Parent Information Center. For a list of acceptable documentation, please contact the Parent Information Center.

Transportation changes will only be made after the required documentation is provided to the Parent Information Center. Changes can take up to three business days to go into effect, please plan accordingly.

Absence of a Responsible Adult:

If a designated adult is not home, the child will be transported to the Parent Information Center. The designated adult is required to show a photo identification card when picking up the child. If the child is brought to the Parent Information Center three times within the same month, bus privileges may be suspended. A parent/guardian may submit a prior written request to the School Department Business Office authorizing the child be dropped off at home without a designated adult present.

A parent/guardian can designate an alternate adult to receive their child from the bus. For safety reasons, the parent/guardian must introduce the alternate adult to the bus driver/monitor in advance. The child's emergency contact information should be updated with the Parent Information Center.

Attendance:

If your child is going to be absent from school due to illness, contact the transportation company directly between 6:00 and 7:00 AM or one hour in advance of the scheduled pick up time. If you know in advance that your child will not need transportation on any given day, a one-day advance notification must be given to the transportation company. In the event of an extended absence period, please contact the School Department Business Office.

If a student does not ride the bus for two days in a row, the service will stop due to non-use. The parent or guardian must contact the School Department Business Office to resume transportation.

Medical:

If your child has a special need (e.g., comfort item) which would apply to the bus ride, please communicate this information to the transportation company and the School Department Business Office.

If your child is under medical care and has medical issues (e.g., allergies, Epi-pen, seizures) which would apply to the bus ride, a release of information must be signed and submitted to the School Department Business Office in order for this information to be shared with the transportation company.

Personal Belongings:

Personal belongings, sports equipment and electronic devices must be kept inside a backpack. Backpacks must be placed on the students lap. Use of cellular phones is prohibited. Cell phones must be out of view and in the OFF position during the bus ride.

Students with a specific special need: Exceptions can be made for students with a specific need due to their disability. Requests will be taken into consideration on an individual basis. Parental requests must be submitted to the School Department Business Office in writing. The School Department Business Office will collaborate with the school to determine a final decision.

Lost and Found:

Personal belongings left on the bus will be kept up front until it is claimed the following day. If it is not claimed after a few days, the item will be given to school personnel.

Inclement Weather:

Traffic delays are to be expected on days with inclement weather. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately.

In the event of inclement weather, the Chelsea Public Schools may cancel classes; therefore, if your child attends a school outside of Chelsea, transportation will not be available. If the outside placement school is still in session, the parent/guardian can choose to send the child to school but the parent/guardian would be responsible for transportation to and from school.

If at any time a street is considered unsafe, the parent/guardian will be contacted by the School Department Business Office and asked to meet the bus at a different location, but keeping the safety of all students in mind.

Inquiries, Incidents, and Complaints:

The School Department Business Office confers with the parent/guardian, principals and district administrators regarding problems concerning pupil transportation or discipline. The School Department Business Office receives and responds to inquiries concerning routes as well as incidents and complaints and other transportation questions.

Behavior Problems on Bus: If you feel your child's safety is being jeopardized by the behavior of other riders, you should contact your child's school and the School Department Business Office.

Inappropriate Driver/Monitor Behavior: If you suspect your child's bus driver/monitor is engaging in inappropriate behavior, you should contact the School Department Business Office.

For safety and on-time operations, no person is to board a school bus unless assigned or authorized.

If you notice a bus speeding, traveling in an unsafe manner, or the driver is talking on a cell phone, contact the School Department Business Office. Please note the name of the bus company, the bus number, and the time and location of the bus.

Extended School Year – Summer Program:

If your child requires an extended school year, transportation services will be provided in accordance with his/her IEP or 504 plan. Transportation information will be mailed to the address on file at the Parent Information Center. In the event that your child is not going to attend the summer program, please report it to the School Department Business Office.

Special arrangements and/or requests: They will not renew from the regular school year to any summer program. Requests will be taken into consideration on an individual basis. Parental requests must be submitted to the School Department Business Office in writing.

III. SCHOOL BUS SAFETY GUIDELINES

Safety

The school department and the bus company will work together to transport students to and from school safely and on time. The school department, transportation company, parent/guardian and student are responsible for working together to meet this goal. Because the time before and after school is as crucial to your child's health and safety as the time during school, a safe bus ride is a key element of your child's education. Cooperation and communication between the parent/guardian and bus personnel will insure a safe bus ride for all riders.

Safety Rules:

- ◆ Students must be properly seated in a child safety seat or wear a safety belt at all times. Only the bus driver/monitor should fasten and unfasten seat belts.
- ◆ Students will keep their hands and arms inside the bus and away from the windows and doors.
- ◆ The aisles must be kept clear at all times.
- ◆ Students are not to touch the rear (emergency) door for any reason except in an emergency and under the instruction of the driver/monitor.
- ◆ Upon arrival at school or home, students will wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before leaving their seat to exit.
- ◆ If a designated adult is not home, the student will be transported to the Parent Information Center. If the child is brought to the Parent Information Center three times within the same month, bus privileges may be suspended

Safety Hazard:

In the event of a dead-end and narrow road, if it is deemed by the School Department Business Office and the bus company that the driver should not attempt to negotiate the vehicle onto said road, the parent/guardian will have to meet the bus at the nearest corner closest to the stop. Buses are not to back down a street or execute a three-point turn while in route. Drivers will not be expected to operate over roads that are not passable or on roads where adequate turnarounds are not provided.

Behavior

The school bus is "an extension of the classroom" which means we have the same standards of behavior on the school bus as we do in school. For example, students should remain in their seats; should not hang out of windows, push or fight with other students, throw things, or try to distract the driver.

Behavior Rules:

- ◆ Students should enter and exit the vehicle in a courteous manner without pushing other students.
- ◆ Students will use appropriate language at all times.

- ◆ Students will keep hands and feet to themselves.
- ◆ Fighting and bullying are strictly prohibited.
- ◆ Students will not damage or mark up any part of the bus.
- ◆ Students will not eat or drink any food or beverage while in the bus.
- ◆ Students will follow directions of the driver/monitor at all times while on the bus. Seat assignments are at the discretion of the driver/monitor. A student may be assigned a seat in certain cases.

The vehicle driver/monitor have the obligation to evaluate conduct and maintain order on the bus. When the student's behavior on the bus is dangerous and/or consistently disrespectful, the bus driver will file a report with their supervisor and notify the school principal/designee or program director. Transportation companies will report all infractions to the School Department Business Office in writing.

Students who violate the behavior rules while on the bus may be disciplined, and/or denied transportation. Some school buses are equipped with video cameras, and the video tapes may be used as evidence in disciplining students who misbehave on the bus.

Upon receipt of an incident report, the principal/designee or program director may require the student to stay after school. In such instances, it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian, to pick-up the student from school.

To ensure the safety of all children on the bus, the following disciplinary actions will be taken by the school principal/designee or program director:

1. **For the first violation of rules**, the parent/guardian will receive a verbal warning.
2. **For the second violation of rules**, the parent/guardian will receive a written notice.
3. **For the third violation of rules**, the parent/guardian will receive a suspension notice. The student will be suspended from transportation for up to three days. Duration of a suspension will be solely at the discretion of the school principal/designee or program director. The parent/guardian will be responsible for transporting the student to and from school for the duration of the suspension.
4. **For the fourth violation of rules**, a meeting will be convened to determine other appropriate actions. The parent/guardian will be responsible for transporting the student to and from school for the duration of the suspension.

In the case of situations deemed to be severe by the school principal/designee or program director, the progressive discipline process may be waived and suspension may be automatic. A student suspended from transportation, is not necessarily suspended from school.

The Chelsea Public Schools is the only entity that can suspend a student from transportation. Incidents are reported to the School Department Business Office, the principal/designee or program director will make disciplinary decisions based on these transportation guidelines.

It is important that the parent/guardian review the school bus rules and safety guidelines with their child to ensure that he/she is aware of them and understands them.