

**Chelsea Public Schools  
Parent Information Center**

99 Hawthorne Street • Chelsea, MA 02150

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[www.chelseaschools.com](http://www.chelseaschools.com)



***Yellow Bus  
Transportation Manual***

*Parent/Guardian Edition*

***Mary C. Burke Elementary Complex***

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Chelsea Public Schools considers the transportation of your child a very important assignment, but this assignment requires a high level of parental/guardian cooperation and support.

The Parent Information Center 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 parents/guardians, school personnel and the transportation company.

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. The information provided will give you a better understanding of what you as 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](http://www.chelseaschools.com). For your child's safety, please discuss this material with him/her.

If you have questions regarding **bus assignments**, or the **wait list**, please contact:

<p><b>Parent Information Center</b> <b>Phone:</b> 617-466-5500 <b>Fax:</b> 617-889-7531 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:mojicad@chelseaschools.com">mojicad@chelseaschools.com</a> <b>Hours:</b> Monday-Friday, 8:00-4:00</p> <p><u>December Recess:</u> The Parent Information Center is closed</p> <p><u>Summer Hours:</u> Monday, Wednesday, Thursday – 8:00-4:30 Tuesday – 8:00-6:00 Friday – 8:00-12:30</p>
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## II. TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

### **Yellow Bus Transportation:**

Students are assigned to a bus stop based on their home address only, subject to seat availability. The school department cannot accept responsibility for alternative assignments.

- Students who choose to take advantage of the option of bus transportation must ride their assigned bus every day in the morning and afternoon. Children participating in after-school programs may request approval to ride the bus in the morning only.
- Students enrolled in grades 1-4 will be picked up and dropped off at their assigned bus stops whether or not an adult is present. The school department strongly recommends that the parent/guardian escort their children to and from their bus stops.
- The parent/guardian should talk to their child about strangers and child safety while at the designated school bus stop. Teach the child never to go with a stranger. If the child encounters a stranger at the bus stop and the bus is still there, the child should get back on the bus and inform the driver of the situation. If the child does not feel safe staying at a bus stop because of a stranger, the child should stay on the bus and inform the driver of the situation. The driver will transport the child to the Parent Information Center.

- If a student has an appointment and needs to be picked up after school, the parent/guardian must make a written request to the school in advance. In the event of an emergency, the parent/guardian may pick up their child in person at the school office before the close of the school day. Failure to comply with these notice requirements is considered a violation of the school bus rules and regulations.

**Assigned Bus Stops:**

Riders should be at their assigned stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. The parent/guardian is responsible for their child arriving on time at the designated school bus stop in the morning. The school bus cannot wait for students not at the bus stop when the bus arrives.

A student should wait at least 10 minutes past the pickup time before returning home. The parent/guardian must ensure that alternate arrangements are in place in the event that the bus is missed, is late or does not arrive.

**Students Transported to the Parent Information Center:**

If your child is transported to the Parent Information Center, a designated adult is required to show a photo identification card when picking up the child.

If a student is brought to the Parent Information Center three times within the same month, bus privileges will be suspended for (5) school days.

**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, the parent/guardian 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 be made after the required documentation is provided to the Parent Information Center.

**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.

**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.

**Inquiries, Incidents, and Complaints:**

The School Department Business Office confers with parents/guardians, 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.

If your child's bus is often late, or fails to show, you should contact the School Department Business Office.

*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.

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.

**If you have any inquiries or concerns regarding pupil transportation or need to contact the School Department Business Office, please call:**

<p><b>Mary Arrieta</b> <b>Phone:</b> 617-466-4465 <b>Fax:</b> 617-889-8328 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:marrieta@chelseama.gov">marrieta@chelseama.gov</a> <b>Hours:</b> Monday-Friday, 8:00-4:00</p>
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### **III. SCHOOL BUS SAFETY GUIDELINES**

#### ***Parents/Guardians***

As a parent/guardian, you can help preserve the safety of all students by making sure you understand and support district rules and policies, regulations and principles of school bus safety. You should assist your child in understanding safety rules and encouraging him/her to abide by the rules.

The parent/guardian should understand that students who ride school buses must obey all rules governing student transportation. School bus riding privileges may be suspended or terminated for repeated failure to follow applicable student transportation rules. The school bus is "an extension of the classroom". We have the same standards of behavior on the school bus as we do in school.

#### ***Students***

##### **While Waiting to Board the Bus:**

- While waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic and avoid behavior that can lead to carelessness. Do not stray onto streets, alleys or private property.
- Do not damage property, such as flowers, shrubbery, windows, fences, and other items while waiting for the bus.
- Stand well away from the street as the bus approaches. Do not run alongside the bus when the bus is moving. Wait until the bus stops; then walk to the door and board the bus in an orderly manner. Do not push or shove.

##### **While on the Bus:**

- Obey the instructions of the driver and the monitor. The driver/monitor has the authority to assign seats.
- Refrain from talking to the driver except in an emergency. Loud talking or other noise can distract the bus driver while the bus is in motion.
- Always face forward in the seat. Never put head, arms or hands out of the window. Do not wave or shout to pedestrians or occupants of other vehicles, and do not throw objects from the bus window.
- Avoid using inappropriate language. Keep your hands and feet to yourself. Do not fight or scuffle on the bus or create any loud disturbances. Bullying is prohibited. A student can report another students' misbehavior on the bus to the bus monitor.

- Personal belongings must remain inside a backpack. Backpacks must be placed on the students lap.
- 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.

**While Exiting the Bus:**

- Upon arrival at the school, wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before getting up from the seat. Students will exit the bus by seat alternating rows.
- Upon return to the bus stop, wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before getting up from the seat.
- Children should always cross the street at a crosswalk.
- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk ahead of the bus along the side of the road, until you can turn around and see the driver.
- Make sure that the driver can see you. Wait for a signal from the driver before beginning to cross.
- Be alert for traffic. Walk across the street, keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes. Although drivers of all vehicles are required to stop for a school bus when it is stopped to load or unload passengers, children should not rely on them to do so.
- Stay away from the bus’ rear wheels at all times. Be aware of the “danger zones” – the areas to the front, sides and rear of the school bus that are not in direct eye contact to the driver.

Everyone has a role in school bus safety and in encouraging positive behavior at bus stops and on the bus.

## **IV. SCHOOL BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS**

*The following regulations are for the safety and convenience of all elementary school students who are eligible for bus transportation in Chelsea:*

All rules and regulations of conduct which are enforced in school also apply to students traveling on school buses.

- Students will be picked up and dropped off at their assigned stops.
- Students must remain seated while the bus is moving.
- Students must keep their head, arms, and hands inside the bus at all times.
- Fighting, profanity, and other forms of incivility will result in disciplinary action and can ultimately result in loss of the privilege of bus transportation. These rules apply to behavior at or near the bus stop.
- No food or drinks are permitted on the bus.

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/monitor will notify the school principal/designee. Upon receipt of an incident report, the principal/designee will conduct an investigation. Students who violate the behavior rules while on the bus may be disciplined, and/or denied transportation.

*Note:* Acts of vandalism or other similar behavior on the bus or at the bus stop will result in an immediate suspension of bus privileges and may result in the loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.

Failure to observe the rules and regulations for the bus will result in the following consequences:

1. **For the first violation of the rules**, the parent/guardian will receive a written warning.
2. **For the second violation of the rules**, the student will lose bus privileges for a minimum of 2 school days and up to 10 school days. Duration of a suspension will be solely at the discretion of the school principal/designee. The parent/guardian will be responsible for transporting the student to and from school for the duration of the suspension.

3. **For the third violation of rules**, the student may lose bus privileges for the remainder of the school year depending on the severity of the offense.

In the case of situations deemed to be severe by the school principal/designee, 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 principal/designee, a disciplinary decision will be made 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.***

## **V. SCHOOL BUS EVACUATION PROCEDURE – USE OF EMERGENCY EXITS**

The Chelsea School Department encourages parents to teach their children the importance of the rules for exiting the school bus in the event of an emergency. The goal is to train students to exit a school bus safely and in an orderly manner during regular bus trips as well as extracurricular activities. Should the bus breakdown, students will be kept inside the bus unless circumstances warrant a bus evacuation.

During an emergency situation the driver will give the command: *“Remain seated; prepare to evacuate.”*

1. Students must listen to the driver for instructions.
2. Students must remain calm, quiet and not panic.
3. Students must leave behind all personal belongings including jackets, backpacks, books, etc.
4. Students must leave the bus quickly without pushing, or shouting.
5. Students will exit their seat by alternating rows.
6. When unloading using the front door, students will unload from the front, beginning with the seat behind the driver, then the front seat across the aisle, moving back to the second, third, etc.
7. When unloading using the back door, students will unload from the last seat on the driver’s side, then the last seat across the aisle, and thus alternating up the aisle to the front of the bus.
8. When using both front and rear doors, both of the above procedures (#6, #7) will apply.
9. Students leaving the bus via the back door must sit, extend their arms to the driver and monitor and hop down.
10. If the bus is on the side, the roof hatches will be used as well as the emergency doors on the up side.
11. Students will congregate at a safe distance from the emergency scene, away from the traffic and act in a quiet orderly manner.
12. Students must remain in this fashion until further directions are given by the driver, the monitor, school department personnel, police personnel or fire department personnel.
13. After the last student leaves the bus, the driver will walk through the bus to check that all have been evacuated. He will be the last to leave and will remove the keys from the ignition. If needed, the fire extinguisher and/or first aid kit will also be removed.
14. In the event that the driver is injured, the monitor will assume authority. The monitor will turn off the key, assist passengers to remain calm; arrange for assistance for the driver. The driver should be removed by older students if he/she is assessed to be in further danger by remaining on the bus.

## **VI. AUTHORIZED ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL BUS**

For safety and on-time operations, no one is to board the bus unless assigned or authorized. No one is to enter a school bus for any reason except for a police officer or other emergency personnel, who, in the case of an emergency, presents him or herself in uniform and with proper identification. School personnel sometimes ask to enter a bus, which may seem appropriate on one hand, but on the other hand, drivers often do not know who these people are and anyone could present themselves in this manner and create an unsafe situation. The driver is fully responsible for the safety of the children on that vehicle and drivers have been instructed to not allow anyone to enter their vehicle.

The Superintendent will identify district personnel who are authorized to enter a school bus and will provide those names to the bus company at the beginning of the school year. No other person will be allowed to board a school bus.