

PUPIL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Transportation, once daily to and from school, is a privilege for all pupils who qualify according to the policies as herein defined. These qualifications are set in accordance and consideration of the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and local conditions in the Mansfield area. They are intended as a guide to parents/guardians, students and school officials.

The purpose of school bus transportation is to provide safe, comfortable and economical transportation for those students living beyond the required distance from school. Transportation services shall be provided only to those students who satisfy the eligibility requirements. It is not a taxi service for children, parents/guardians or unauthorized persons. State law requires that transportation be provided to students in Grades K through 6 who reside two (2) or more miles from their assigned school.

The School Committee shall establish, adopt, and revise bus routes and bus stops in accordance with the guidelines and policies herein established.

Special Education: Students shall be transported on Special Ed vehicles in accordance with the specifications of their educational plan in conformance to applicable State requirements. Special Ed students may be placed on regular school buses provided the existing routing is not disrupted and adequate seating is available.

Kindergarten to Grade 6: In accordance with State Law, Chapter 71, Section 68, as most recently amended, only students in Grades K through 6 residing two or more miles from their assigned school are eligible for free transportation services.

Kindergarten students will be picked up at the bus stop with other students on the regular AM and PM routes.

Mid-day kindergarten runs: In defining services provided under this policy, kindergarten students shall be identified as a separate category when transported on the "noon-time" kindergarten only runs. Bus stops and routing will be established to provide as close to "door-to-door" service as is possible.

Grades 7 through 12 and All Others in Excess of 2 Miles: Whenever seats are declared available on a Regular (not Special Education) School Bus(es), and when the route timing will not be adversely affected, the School Department may make said seats available to non-eligible students (those in grades K-6 residing less than 2 miles or less from school and all students in Grade 7 through 12) on a PAY-N-RIDE basis as follow:

The School Committee shall establish fees for transportation of non-eligible students and may review them from time to time as conditions warrant.

The full fee shall be paid to the School Department **prior to transporting** of any student under this policy. The fee is **non-refundable** and shall cover to the end of the then current school year. Seats that become available during the school year shall revert back to the discretion of the School Department the Superintendent, or his/her designee, has sole discretion as to the availability of seats.

After **February 1st** of each school year, the fee shall be one-half the annual fee.

Student disciplinary procedures are cited in all school handbooks.

Transportation services shall be offered only on roads meeting the standards of Public Ways and maintained by the Town for public use on a year round basis.

The Committee will consult with the Mansfield Police Department Safety Officer regarding safety concerns. On roads formally designated by the Committee as hazardous because of speed, volume of traffic, or other physical conditions, eligible students shall travel no further than is necessary to and from the designated bus stop. The Committee shall cooperate with the Town to remedy the condition, if possible.

The parent/guardian is responsible for the behavior of the student between the residence and the designated bus stop and at the designated bus stop. The Committee will make every attempt to designate locations for bus stops, which are:

- As safe as possible under local conditions and in compliance with Chapter 71, Section 68.
- As considerate as possible of the continuous and smooth flow of commuter traffic.

Students shall be picked up and discharged only at their designated stops or the Chapter 71, Section 7A.b eligible address, shall be used to establish designated bus stops, except as herein provided:

Transportation may be requested, in writing, to and from a location other than the student's legal residence, provided that all of the following conditions are met:

1. The student is eligible for transportation services.
2. The alternate location is on an existing bus route.
3. There is space on the bus.
4. The service is to and from said alternate location in the AM and/or PM, each and every school day.

The Building Principal may occasionally approve a written request from the student's parent/guardian for a one-day route or bus stop change. Such request should be made at least one day in advance.

In route planning and seat assignment, the stated legal capacity shall be used as a guide at the elementary level; however, recognition shall be given to the need for "adult seating" on secondary and middle school runs.

Transportation of the student between the designated bus stop and their assigned school shall be as prompt, continuous and orderly as possible.

Vocational day students attending classes at a vocational school outside of Bristol County may be transported to the nearest available bus stop to the school they will be attending.