

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Bus Transportation Between Home and School Within the District

School buses shall be purchased, operated and maintained by RSU 9 for the transportation of eligible resident children located within the District. Smaller vehicles may be substituted for buses for reasons of economy or more efficient operation. These buses shall all be operated within the limits of the laws of the State of Maine.

Eligible riders, as defined by the Board of Directors, are children attending public schools and residing within the boundaries of RSU 9.

Transportation privileges may be allowed on the following criteria:

- A. (Pre-K-5 Elementary students) are entitled to transportation between home and school within the District if they live over 1/2 mile from the school to which they are assigned. However, these same students may be required to walk up to 1/2 mile to a regularly established school bus route or predesignated bus pick-up before boarding the bus.
- B. Middle School students (6-8) and Secondary students (9-12) are entitled to transportation between home and school within the District if they live over one mile from the school to which they are assigned. However, these same students may be required to walk up to one mile to a regularly established school bus route or pre-designated bus pick-up before boarding the bus.

The above walking limits do not apply within housing parks and developments. RSU 9 will service housing parks and developments at the entrance only, regardless of the mileage walked from within to the entrance. The entrance is the measure point in regards to the walking policy of the District.

It is recognized that in isolated cases it may be necessary for a student to walk beyond the established distances because of road conditions that will not permit a bus to service the student within the established distances.

Exceptions to the above distances shall be made for the following reasons only:

- A. Health- At the request of a medical or osteopathic physician. Exceptions to the established walking distances may be made only in the case of a child with a temporary or permanent physical handicapping condition.
- B. Hazardous Walking Conditions- Hazardous walking conditions shall be defined as those, which would place a child of a given age in a situation of more than normal or average danger. Age shall be considered in making this determination. In general, hazardous conditions would involve walking on heavily traveled or high speed roads or streets where no sidewalks are available or crossing heavily traveled or high speed streets or roads where no crossing guides or crossing lights are available or other unique circumstances.

Subject to the prior claim of resident pupils to transportation service, a pupil not a legal resident or not residing within the District, but attending a District school, may be transported by District buses over regularly established bus routes by obtaining permission from the Superintendent of Schools. Such permission will be granted only if the student, either by walking or by other modes of transportation, can be located for pick-up within the boundaries of the District. Such permission may also be terminated at will in the event that such permission of bus privileges to non-resident pupils causes overloading of a bus.

Students Who Are Serviced at Child Care Locations

Each bus student will be assigned to an authorized bus stop. The District will establish the stop near the residence of the child or near the child care location, whichever is requested by the parent. The stop will be within the walking distance as defined in this policy and will be limited to authorized stops. Only one (1) stop shall be authorized for each student and that stop shall be considered as permanent until changed by the Director of Transportation.

- A. A parent shall work with the Director of Transportation when a change in the authorized stop location is necessary. When a child care need exists, the School Department may consider no more than two authorized stops for a child; however, the A.M. stop and the P.M. stop must remain constant.
- B. The District will accept requests to change the assigned authorized stop only under the following conditions:
 1. Change in legal residence and/or,
 2. Change in childcare location.

Bus drivers shall pick up only at scheduled stops; they shall not admit students not assigned to that particular bus. Drivers are required not to exceed the legal bus capacity.

Students shall ride only on assigned buses. At the close of school they shall be permitted to disembark at other points or to ride other buses only after presenting the bus driver with a note written by the parent and approved by the building principal.

Notes will only be accepted to meet special needs of students. They will be honored only when bus seating is available. A note must be written by the parent and approved by the principal for each occurrence. Notes written to cover extended periods of time will not be considered.

Supervision of riders on buses will be the prime responsibility of the bus driver. Discipline problems shall be directly reported to the Director of Transportation and the principal of the school the child attends. The principal and the Director of Transportation, on the basis of the bus driver's report and after investigation, will then administer what in their opinion is the measure of disciplinary action necessary. The Director of Transportation may deny bus privileges to a bus student after informing the student's parents, the principal, and the bus driver of his proposed action. Warning notices will be sent to parents by the Director of Transportation to inform them that continued irregular behavior on school buses by their children will result in the termination of their privilege to ride the District buses.

If in the best judgment of the driver and the Director of Transportation, immediate action should be taken to protect the health and safety of the passengers, they shall be authorized to do so.

Legal Reference: TITLE 20A MRSA Sec. 5401

Adopted: Prior to 1988

Revised: January 10, 1995, July 8, 2014

Previously Reviewed: January 22, 2002, March 31, 2009

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