

## Business/Non-Instructional Operations

### Transportation

*Temporary amendments to this policy related to the COVID-19 pandemic have been made. All temporary revisions appear in highlighted bold italics or strikethrough text.*

#### Statement of Policy

The Board of Education will provide transportation, under provisions of state law and regulation, under contract, for all students who qualify for such service, except in those instances wherein the services may be provided more economically by other means.

#### Definitions

1. **School transportation** means the procedure, program, or fully effective and implemented plan by which a student is conveyed to and/or from school from an assigned bus stop or student residence at public expense, whether by use of publicly owned equipment or by contract. Such transportation shall be over public roads approved and maintained by the municipality or State of Connecticut, or private roads approved pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-220c.
2. **Walking distance** means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the student's residence and his/her school from a point at the curb or edge of a public or private road nearest the student's residence to the closest edge of the entrance of the school or a safe entrance to the school grounds located within one hundred feet of the school building entrance or the bus pick-up area, or the route from the point on the public thoroughfare nearest the residence of the school bus or vehicle embarkation point established by the South Windsor Board of Education.
3. **One mile walking distance** means a reasonable measurement of a route to be traversed extending from the point of measurement at least 5,280 feet.
4. **Grade K** means kindergarten.
5. **Hazard** means a thing or condition, as prescribed in this policy under "Hazardous Conditions - Guidelines" that affects the safety of students walking to and from school and/or designated bus pick-up area.
6. **Sidewalk** means a portion of the landscape right of way approximately three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes which may be paved or unpaved, and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area or fencing; apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement.
7. **Raised walk area** means a portion of the landscape right of way approximately three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes which may be paved or unpaved, distinguished by some elevation above the street pavement level and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area or fencing; apart from and independent of any painted safety markings along the street pavement.
8. **Student** means any individual of school age enrolled in a public or nonprofit private school located within the school district or contiguous school district as the case may be.
9. **Walking Route** means the route that the student is expected to travel between his/her residence to and from school and/or an assigned bus stop.
10. **Bus stop** shall be defined as a geographical location designated by the Board of Education, school administration or their designee where students can safely wait for purposes of embarking or disembarking a school bus.

#### Provision of Transportation

Transportation by private carrier may be provided whenever such practice is more economical than using school district-owned/leased facilities. *If parents volunteer, and the administration permits, parents may be reimbursed for transportation of eligible students whenever such practice is more economical or convenient. The Board will request that parents volunteer to transport eligible students, without reimbursement, in order to reduce the number of students transported on buses to protect the health and safety of students and staff.*

Resident public school students will walk to either the school or bus stop per the following stated limits: grades K-5 will walk up to 3/10 of a mile, students in grades 6-8 will walk up to 1/2 of a mile, and students in grades 9-12 will walk up to 1 mile.

Kindergarten students will only be released from a bus if there is adult supervision or parent designee present. This would apply to all routes and buses. If adult supervision is not present, the student will be returned to the school. For grade 1 and grade 2 students, parents can opt to require a parent or designee be present when releasing students from the bus. To implement such a requirement, parents must complete a *Bus Stop Supervision Form*. This would apply to all routes and all buses. If adult supervision is not present when the Opt-In Form has been completed, the student will be returned to the school.

In order to provide reasonable and cost efficient transportation, ride times at all levels for students who receive transportation should be a maximum riding time of 50 minutes.

Parents and/or guardians are responsible for ensuring the safety of their children up until the point when students board the school bus or other school provided transportation, and after students get off the bus after school. This responsibility includes the selection of walking routes to/from any bus stop and/or the school building, **compliance with COVID-19 related safety precautions at the bus stop and along walking routes**, and the provision of supervision that is appropriate to the student's age, maturity and conditions along the walking route and/or at the bus stop at all times.

In addition, the district does not provide transportation services to daycare facilities that are outside of a student's designated elementary school district.

#### Bus Routes and Stops

In order to facilitate efficient and safe bus transportation, students should be at their bus stop at least five minutes prior to the designated arrival time. **Bus pick up/drop off times and routes may change during the school year in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic and changing public health conditions. The Board will notify all parents and guardians in advance of such changes.**

Stops are to be designated at corners or, in the absence of sidewalks or suitable places to stand, the driveway nearest the corner or intersecting street.

Stops designated at residences on streets within developments are to be designed to reduce the number of students congregating at any particular stop. The number of children congregating at any one bus stop will not exceed seventeen (17).

Bus stop locations are subject to change each year.

Cul-de-sacs will only be entered when the street length exceeds the maximum walking distances set forth in this policy. Cul-de-sacs will not be entered unless it has been determined during routing development that the radius is sufficient to allow the bus to maneuver the turn.

Certain dead-end streets within the town have been designated as impassible because of factors including the lack of necessary space to turn around, topography and industrial activity that make access unsafe, even with a mini-bus or Type II vehicle. These streets will not be entered.

#### Hazardous Conditions

The administration shall utilize the following guidelines to define hazardous conditions when making decisions regarding the transportation of children:

1. Except as provided in Paragraph 7 of this Section, a street or road along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area, having an adjacent or parallel sidewalk or raised walk area shall be deemed hazardous when any one of the following conditions exists:
  - a. For students under age ten, or enrolled in grades K through 5:
    - i. the absence of pedestrian crossing light or crossing guard where three or more streets intersect, and at street crossings where there are no stop signs or crossing guards and the

traffic count during the time that students are walking to or from school exceeds sixty vehicles per hour at the intersection.

- b. For students over age ten, or enrolled in grades 6 through 12:
    - i. the absence of a traffic light or stop signs or crossing guard at an intersection where three or more streets intersect which has a traffic count which exceeds ninety vehicles per hour during the time that students are walking to or from school;
  - c. For all students:
    - i. any street, road, or highway with speed limits in excess of forty miles per hour which does not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where students must cross when going to or from school or the bus stop;
    - ii. for all students, the usual or frequent presence of any nuisance such as open man-holes, loading zones where delivery trucks are permitted to park on walkways, commercial entrances and exits where cars are crossing walking areas at speeds in excess of five miles per hour.
2. Any street road, or highway along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area that has no sidewalks or raised walk areas shall be deemed hazardous if any one of the following conditions exists:
- a. For students under age ten, or enrolled in grade K through 5:
    - i. any street, road, or highway possessing a traffic count of sixty or more vehicles per hour at the time that students are walking to or from schools in conjunction with;
    - ii. any street, road, or highway possessing a speed limit in excess of thirty miles per hour.
  - b. For all students:
    - i. the presence of man-made hazards including attractive nuisances, as stated in 1(c)(ii) above;
    - ii. any roadway available to vehicles that does not have a minimum width of approximately twenty-two feet;
    - iii. any roadway available to vehicles that, when plowed free of snow accumulations, does not have a minimum width of approximately twenty feet;
    - iv. any street, road, or highway where the line-of-sight visibility together with posted speed limits do not permit vehicular braking/stopping in accordance with the Connecticut Drivers Manual or Department of Transportation, Division of Design Standard, or other reasonable standard.
3. Any walkway, path, or bridge along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area, in an area adjacent or parallel to railroad tracks shall be considered hazardous unless a suitable physical barrier along the entire pedestrian route is present and fixed between students and the track; and any crossing of railroad tracks that carry moving trains during hours that students are walking to or from school or to and from a designated bus pick-up area shall be deemed hazardous unless:
- a. a crossing guard is present; or
  - b. for students under age ten, an automatic control bar is present at crossings; or,
  - c. for students over age ten, a bar or red flashing signal light is operational.
4. For students in grades K through 5 the following conditions shall be deemed hazardous:
- a. a lake, pond, stream, culvert, water-way, or bridge shall be deemed a hazard in the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier fixed between the student and the water.

- b. any area adjacent to a roadway, sidewalk, or bridge along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area, having a drop of three or more feet per four feet of travel length on either side of the established lanes, the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier.
5. For students in grades K through 8, the following condition shall be deemed hazardous:
  - a. walking to or from school or the bus stop at any time prior to one-half hour before sunrise or any time one-half hour after sunset.
6. For all students, walking along any street, road, walkway, sidewalk, or path designated as a walking route for all school students which passes through an area which has a history of aggressive acts of molestation resulting in actual or threatened physical harm or moral degradation during the hours when students ordinarily walk to or from school shall be deemed hazardous.
7. It shall not be a “hazard” or “hazardous condition” for a pupil whose residence abuts a public street, road or highway to (1) wait for the bus on the private property where the pupil resides for the school bus, until the school bus’s flashing red lights are activated to stop traffic so that the student can enter onto or cross the public street, road or highway to get on a school bus; or (2) exit a school bus that is stopped on the public street, road or highway, when the bus’s flashing red lights are activated to stop traffic so that the pupil can enter onto or cross such street, road or highway to access the private property where the pupil resides.
8. During commercial, residential or road construction, buses will not enter areas where the equipment and activity from commercial or residential construction prevents sufficient lane passage, does not ensure maneuvering capability for exit or turn around, or diminishes the driver’s visibility of walking children. Under such circumstances, bus stops will be temporarily relocated to safe locations which may exceed the walking distance structure set forth in this policy.

#### Applicability and Exceptions

1. This policy is applicable to public roads approved and maintained by the municipality or State of Connecticut, or private roads approved pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-220c.
2. Special Education students and students eligible for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act shall be decided on an individual basis, and appropriate transportation will be provided.

#### Complaint Procedure

The Superintendent of Schools shall develop and implement a procedure for the reporting of all complaints relative to school transportation safety and shall maintain a written record of all such complaints received.

The Business Office will only conduct a site review if there are valid claims regarding hazards or matters of safety.

Annually, within thirty (30) business days of the end of the school year, the Superintendent of Schools or designee shall provide the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles (“Commissioner”) with a copy of the written record of complaints received during the previous twelve (12) month period.

The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall make a written report of the circumstances of any accident within the Board’s jurisdiction and knowledge, involving a motor vehicle and any pedestrian who is a student, which occurs at a designated school bus stop or in the immediate vicinity thereof, to the Commissioner within ten (10) business days thereafter on a form prescribed by the Commissioner.

If a complaint is not resolved, parents, guardians or an emancipated minor or a student eighteen years of age or older has the right to request a hearing of the Board of Education regarding the complaint. Such hearing, if requested, shall be held in accordance with Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as it may be amended from time to time.

Except in an emergency situation, the Board of Education shall conduct a hearing within ten calendar days from receipt of written request by parent to the Board. The hearing shall include at least three (3) Board members. The Board reserves the right to delegate the authority to conduct a transportation hearing to a hearing officer in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-186.

Modifications to bus stops and routes will automatically expire at the end of the academic year except for documented hazardous safety conditions which warrant a continuing modification or change to a bus stop or route.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-76d re transportation for special education program services.

10-97 Transportation to vocational schools.

10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education re school attendance. Hearings. Appeals to state board. Establishment of hearing board.

10-187 Appeal from finding of hearing board.

10-220 Duties of boards of education.

10-220c Transportation of children over private roads. Immunity from liability.

10-273a Reimbursement for transportation to and from elementary and secondary schools.

10-280a Transportation for students in non-profit private schools outside school district.

10-281 Transportation for students in non-profit private schools within school district.

14-275 Equipment and color of school buses

14-275a Use of standard school bus required, when.

14-275b Transportation of mobility impaired students.

14-275c Regulations re school buses and motor vehicles used to transport special education students.

14-276a (c) Town/school district may require its school bus operators to have completed a safety training course.

14-280 Display of signs and signals by school bus and student transportation vehicles.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001, P.L. 107-110, 42 U.S.C., Sections 11431-11435

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