

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

3541

Procedure No.

July 1, 2013

Date

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- I. **PURPOSE:** To provide guidelines for the transportation of students on Prince George's County public school buses.
 - II. **POLICY:** Safe and efficient transportation services are essential to meet the educational objectives of the Prince George's County public school system. (Board Policy 3541)
 - III. **PROCEDURES:**
 - A. Students Eligible for Transportation
 1. Regular Students:
 - a. Middle school and high school students residing two (2) miles or more from their assigned school.
 - b. Elementary school students residing one and one-half miles (1½) or more from their assigned school.
 - c. Students who may be required to walk to a bus stop a distance equal to the walking distance of students in the non-transported area.
 - d. The adoption of new bell schedules and other policy changes may necessitate using comprehensive bus stop locations that are central to a population for a particular school in a particular area. Those students in FOCUS (CLE), vocational, technical or any other specialized programs may be asked to walk to those locations.
 - e. Students for whom unsafe walking conditions exist, as determined by the Director of Transportation or their designee, and the Prince George's County Police Department, Special Operations Division.
 - f. Students staying with a babysitter or at a day care center must meet the criteria of all other eligible riders. If the address of a babysitter or day care center is not within the student's residence attendance area, the student must then meet transfer policy requirements. Bus stops will only be placed at the door of commercial day care centers when

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possible. Students at private babysitters will be assigned to the closest stop.

- g. Each school shall have a non-transported area which shall be determined by measuring the appropriate walking distance from the student's driveway, private lane, or sidewalk where it meets the public walkway or roadway to the nearest entrance of the school building. The distance shall be measured by the most direct traveled route and may be along public roads or walkways.
- h. FOCUS (CLE) bus routes may exceed one (1) hour riding time (one-way) due to large service areas.

2. Students with Disabilities

A student with a disability is one who has been identified by the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) as disabled under the IDEA, or by the Section 504 Team as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. A student with a disability may require specialized transportation as a related service to a public school, a non-public day school, or a residential school.

- a. Public Students
 - (1) Daily transportation will be provided from one a.m. pick-up to one p.m. drop-off location. The location must be a residence or day care center. Students may not be dropped off at parking lots, shopping centers, or other commercial establishments.
 - (2) An MDT or Section 504 meeting shall be convened if the student requires special transportation or specialized arrangements, such as the need to transport medical or other equipment. A representative from the Department of Transportation shall attend the MDT or Section 504 meeting to discuss the transportation needs.
 - (3) Students will be dropped off or picked-up at day care centers or babysitters only within the assigned school boundary based on the student's address. A transfer must be requested if the day care provider is outside of the school boundary area. Students will only be

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provided with transportation if there is an existing bus. (See item 3 "Transfer Students")

- (4) One or more bus attendants may be provided by the Department of Transportation to the bus if the Director of Transportation deems it necessary, or if determined necessary by the MDT.

b. Non-Public Students

Daily transportation shall be provided for non- public day school students. Prince George's County Public Schools does not provide transportation to students privately placed at separate day schools. Only students placed at private, separate day schools through the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) process are entitled to transportation.

c. Residential Students

- (1) Students enrolled in a five (5) day per week residential program shall be eligible for transportation to and/or from their home on weekends.
- (2) The parents/guardians of students placed in a seven (7) day per week residential program by Prince George's County Public Schools may be reimbursed the transportation expenses for up to four (4) round trips during each calendar year from the parent/guardian's Prince George's County residence to the residential school. Reimbursement shall be limited to the cost of the least expensive, appropriate mode of transportation available.

3. Transfer Students

A student who attends a school other than their boundary school as a result of a transfer is not entitled to transportation. A student who attends a school as a result of a transfer may ride an existing bus so long as space is available and the student demonstrates appropriate behavior on the bus. The student must board and disembark at the existing stop.

4. Other Students

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Technical Academy students will be provided transportation to their approved assigned schools. Students may be required to embark and disembark at central locations in the interest of time and route efficiency.

5. Other Transportation

Transportation may be provided educational programs such as:

- a. Fields trips.
- b. Curriculum related swimming programs.
- c. Tutoring programs.
- d. Science Center programs.
- e. Overnight outdoor education programs.
- f. Work-study programs.
- g. Athletic teams.
- h. Summer School (disabled programs).
- i. Federal programs where federal funds provide transportation reimbursement.
- j. Summer programs approved by the Chief Executive Officer.
- k. Other programs as requested and approved.
- l. Students with disabilities may not be prevented from attending field trips because of the need for specialized transportation.

B. Unauthorized Riders

Unauthorized riders are not permitted on a school bus. Any person not a bona fide student of the school to which a bus is proceeding or from which a bus is departing is an unauthorized rider.

1. Parents are authorized to ride only if they:

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- a. are in the parent-infant program,
 - b. are on a field trip bus acting as a chaperone,
 - c. are in the Head Start Program, or
 - d. have been authorized by the Director of Transportation or their designee to ride on the bus to assist with discipline problems.
2. Employees of the Prince George's County public school system shall not utilize a public school bus as a means of transportation either to or from work or for any other purpose whatsoever unless such employee is specifically authorized to ride such a public school bus in their capacity as a bus aide or chaperone.
- C. Other Related Procedures
1. Associate Superintendents, Instructional Directors, and Principals should refer to Administrative Procedure 5131.1, School Bus Conduct and Administrative Procedure 10101, Code of Student Conduct, for proper procedures related to disruptive students.
 2. Annually, each Principal shall discuss with all students the necessity for orderly conduct on school buses.
 3. After-school activity transportation may be provided for secondary students only. A request must be made by the Associate Superintendent, Instructional Director, or Principal for weekly hours, staying within budgetary guidelines.
 - a. An administrator or designee must be on duty at the bus loading area when the afternoon activity buses arrive.
 - b. Only students who remained after school with school personnel permission may be permitted to ride an after-school activity bus.
 - c. After-school activity buses may be required to make "centralized stops" because of time constraints and are to be covered.

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4. Annually, each Principal shall ensure students are aware of safe bus loading and unloading procedures at bus stops. The procedures are as follows:
 - a. Elementary Students
 - (1) To the extent feasible, a safety patrol may be assigned to those bus stops where there are a considerable number of students waiting for the bus. Safety patrols should be encouraged to maintain order and to keep students on the pavement or the side of the roadway until the bus arrives.
 - (2) After the driver activates the lights, comes to a complete stop, and all traffic stops, the driver will then motion to the safety patrol to bring the children across the road.
 - (3) If no safety patrol is at the stop, the students should follow the same procedure and wait for their driver to motion them across.
 - b. Secondary Students

The proper procedure for middle schools and high schools will be the same as the elementary students without safety patrols.
 - c. Afternoon Drop-off
 - (1) The driver will activate lights and come to a complete stop.
 - (2) The driver will open the door, only after all traffic has stopped.
 - (3) The driver will motion the safety patrols and/or students to cross only after it is safe to cross.
 - (4) All students should cross at least ten paces in front of the bus.
5. Administrative Procedure 6153, Student Trips and bulletins referring to field trips will be distributed. Those procedures shall be followed by each school.
6. Associate Superintendents, Instructional Directors, and Principals shall refer to Administrative Procedure 3541.35, Evacuation of

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School Buses, for proper procedures concerning annual evacuation drills.

7. Annual written requests should be submitted to the Director of Transportation for transportation for all programs other than to and from school and programs requiring field trip procedures. (Example: work-study buses, tutoring programs, Federal programs, etc.)
8. Prince George's County school buses shall be used for only those trips and programs for which they have been authorized. (Example: work-study buses are to be used for work-study programs, and work-study students only; Head Start trips should transport only Head Start students, etc.)

IV. **RELATED PROCEDURES:** Administrative Procedure 3541.35, Evacuation of School Buses; Administrative Procedure 5131.1, School Bus Conduct; Administrative Procedure 5146, Procedural Guidelines for Students Disabled Under Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Administrative Procedure 6153, Student Trips; Administrative Procedure 10101, Code of Student Conduct; and Bulletin S-49-03, Section 504 Medical Transportation Process.

V. **LEGAL REFERENCE:** Code of Maryland Regulations, 13A.06.07.

VI. **MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THESE PROCEDURES:** This Administration Procedure originates with the Department of Transportation and will be updated as necessary.

VII. **CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDURES:** This Administrative Procedure cancels and supersedes Administrative Procedure 3541, dated September 1, 2004.

VIII. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 1, 2013.

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