

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 719  
PRIOR LAKE - SAVAGE AREA SCHOOLS

## 707 TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide for the transportation of students consistent with the requirements of law.

### II. DEFINITION

- A. "Disabled student" includes every child who has a hearing impairment, visual disability, speech or language impairment, physical handicap, other health impairment, mental handicap, emotional/behavioral disorder, specific learning disability, autism, traumatic brain injury, multiple disabilities, or deaf/blind disability and needs special instruction and services, as determined by the standards of the Department of Education. In addition, every child under age three, and at the school district's discretion from age three to seven, who needs special instruction and services, as determined by the standards of the Department of Education, because the child has a substantial delay or has an identifiable physical or mental condition known to hinder normal development is a child with a disability.
- B. "Home" is the legal residence of the child. In the discretion of the school district, "home" also may be defined as a licensed day care facility, a respite care facility, the residence of a relative, or the residence of a person chosen by the student's parent or guardian as the home of a student for part or all of the day, if requested by the student's parent or guardian, if the facility or residence is within the attendance area of the school the student attends.
- C. "Nonpublic school" means any school, church, or religious organization, or home school wherein a resident of Minnesota may legally fulfill the compulsory instruction requirements.
- D. "Nonresident student" is a student who attends school in the school district and resides in another district, defined as the "nonresident district." In those instances when the divorced parents share joint physical custody of a student and the divorced parents reside in different school districts, the student shall be a resident of the school district designated by the student's parents. When parental rights have been terminated by court order, the legal residence of a student placed in a residential or foster facility for care and treatment is the district in which the student resides.
- E. "Pupil support services" are health, counseling and guidance services provided by the public school in the same district where the nonpublic school is located.
- F. "Shared time basis" is a program where students attend public school for part of the regular school day and who otherwise fulfill the requirements of attendance at a nonpublic school.
- G. "Student" means any student or child attending or required to attend any school as provided in Minnesota law and who is a resident or child of a resident of Minnesota.

### III. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is the policy for the school district to provide for the transportation of students in a manner which will protect their health, welfare and safety.

The school district recognizes that transportation is an essential part of the school district services to students and parents but further recognized that transportation by school bus is a privilege and not a right for an eligible student.

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designate is given the responsibility of administering school bus transportation and shall exercise judgment and discretion using the following principles and guidelines:

1. The school district may provide transportation to pupils to and from school.
2. Transportation services shall be provided for students whenever necessary to make available the appropriate educational opportunities needed by the individual student.
3. The prime consideration in transportation services provided by the district shall be safety. The administration is directed to have procedures in place to guide the necessary response to emergencies that may arise.

4. The maximum walking distance for a student shall be as follows:

K-5	1 mile
6-8	1.5 miles
9-12	1.5 miles

The walking distance for each bus stop shall be measured from the nearest, district assigned bus stop to the closest end of the student's driveway or sidewalk.

5. In response to the need to ensure that students who ride the approved school district buses are released only to duly authorized persons, the following procedure will take place:

A parent/guardian who wishes to pick up a student prior to the time of the student boarding the bus for delivery to his/her home address or day care address, must do so at the student's school of attendance. Permission is granted by providing the attendance school with a permission slip.

6. The Board of Education authorizes the use of video cameras on school district buses.

#### A. SCHOOL DISTRICT BUS ROUTES

Prior Lake - Savage Area School District's bus routes will be planned and established annually by Director of Operations, working in conjunction with the bus contractors. The routes will be planned with major emphasis to accommodate the safety of the children being bused. Bus route lengths should be reasonable and allow adequate time to safely accommodate their arrival at schools in time for the daily programs. Routes should also be planned and maintained to ensure efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Established district routes may be different for public, private, elementary, secondary and kindergarten students depending upon the location of the students requiring transportation. The district makes special efforts to accommodate the needs of kindergarten students. It is quite likely that the kindergarten stops will change from year to year to recognize changing needs. Prior year kindergarten stops should not be viewed as permanent changes to school bus routes.

## **B. UNAUTHORIZED PASSENGERS**

Individuals who are not authorized or assigned to privileges of transportation shall not be allowed to board a school bus either on regular routes or activity/field trip excursions, unless prior approval is obtained from the dispatcher representing the bus contractors or the Transportation Department.

Students assigned to a school district bus route will be considered an unauthorized passenger on any bus other than the one to which they are assigned, unless prior approval is obtained from the dispatcher representing the bus contractors or the Transportation Department.

Note: In the event of emergency situations encountered during the operation of buses, the restrictive conditions of the policy may be waived at the discretion of the bus driver based upon the judgment of the driver.

## **C. ALTERNATE LOCATION**

The Prior Lake - Savage Area Public School District will endeavor to provide transportation for public/private students to and/or from locations other than their home residence under the following guidelines:

1. Parents/Guardians are required to complete an Alternate Bus Stop Request form for each child attending a child care center or receiving child care from a private individual. These forms are available in the school offices and at the District Services Center. The form must be completed and returned to the Transportation Office by August 1 each year to ensure transportation at the beginning of the school year. Failure to have the forms submitted by the August 1 deadline may result in the parent/guardian having to assume the responsibility of transporting the child/children to and from school until school district personnel have had an adequate time to respond to the request.
2. Changes in day care, made during the school year, must be in writing and must be returned to the Transportation Office at least five days before the change is to take place. Failure to provide the required forms in the time frames indicated above may result in the parent/guardian being required to transport the student until the change can become effective.
3. Bus stops must be on established bus routes. (See policy on School District Bus Routes)
4. Alternate location bus stops must be approved by the district's Transportation Department, based on policies as established by the School Board.
5. Service is established on a five-day-a-week basis. Students may be picked up daily at the established bus stop closest to their day care address or home address. Students may be returned to the established bus stop closest to their day care address or home address.

Whichever pickup and return address is chosen must be used each day the student is transported.

6. No student will be transported to an alternate location until an Alternate Bus Stop Location form is completed and signed by the parent/guardian and approved by the Transportation Department.
7. Emergency transportation to an alternate address may be allowed. An emergency is an unforeseeable occurrence that, by its nature, would not have allowed for adequate time to plan. Examples of common occurrences that would not be considered emergencies would be transportation to a friend's house for a birthday party or to a relative's residence for convenience purposes.
8. Transportation of students to their work sites will not normally be allowed. Exceptions could occur if there is adequate space on the bus. In no instance will a special stop be created to accommodate a work site. Students would be dropped off at the regular bus stop nearest to the work site.

#### **D. CUL-DE-SACS AND PRIVATE DRIVEWAYS**

School buses will enter cul-de-sacs only when established district walking distances would be exceeded and/or an unusually hazardous condition exists. If a parent/guardian thinks that an unusually hazardous condition exists, he/she must document the condition in writing and obtain verification to substantiate the claim. This documentation should then be forwarded to the Operations Manager for investigation. In no instance will a school bus be allowed to enter a cul-de-sac to pick up students if by so doing it would be forced to use private drives and/or private property to safely turn around. New housing developments should provide cul-de-sac diameters of at least 100 feet, if there is a future expectation of bus service in the cul-de-sac. School buses will only be allowed to travel on publicly maintained streets.

Existing cul-de-sac turnarounds will be reviewed individually. However, the ultimate goal of the district is to eliminate all cul-de-sac turnarounds.

Every effort will be made to eliminate all instances where buses are currently using private property to turn around to pick up students in the normal course of bus operations.

#### **E. SPECIAL EDUCATION/DISABLED STUDENTS**

1. Disabled students whose handicapped conditions are such that the student cannot be safely transported on the regular school bus and/or school bus route and/or when the student is transported on a special route for the purpose of attending an approved special education program shall be entitled to special transportation at the expense of the school district. The school district shall determine the type of vehicle used to transport disabled students on the basis of the handicapping condition and applicable laws. This section shall not be applicable to parents who transport their own child under a contract with the school district.
2. Any parent of a disabled student who believes that the transportation services provided for that child are not in compliance with the applicable law may utilize the alternative dispute resolution and due process procedures provided for in Minnesota Statutes.

#### **F. TRANSPORTATION FOR CARE AND TREATMENT FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**

## STUDENTS

When a disabled student or a student with a short-term or temporary disability is temporarily placed for care and treatment in a day program located in another school district and the student continues to live within the school district during the care and treatment, the school district shall provide the transportation, at the expense of the school district, to that student. The school district may establish reasonable restrictions on transportation, except if a Minnesota court or agency orders the child placed at a day care and treatment program and the school district receives a copy of the order, then the school district must provide transportation to and from the program unless the court or agency orders otherwise. Transportation shall only be provided by the school district during regular operating hours of the school district. (Minn. Stat. § 125A.15(b); Minn. Stat. § 125A.51(d))

1. Before the placement of a pupil for care and treatment, the district of residence must be notified and provided an opportunity to participate in the placement decision. (See Minn. Stat. § 125A.51(c). It is reasonable for the school district to refuse or delay transportation to a care and treatment program if school district administration have been denied the opportunity to participate in the placement decision.
2. The school district will transport a student determined to need placement in day treatment program to the therapeutic day program offered collaboratively by Carver, Dakota and/or Scott County and a cooperative of which the school district is a member district to the extent placement is deemed appropriate by school district and therapeutic program staff and an opening exists. a. Only if placement in this program is not possible will the school district transport to the next closest day treatment program as approved by the district's director of special education.

School Board Adoption: January 9, 2012

An Equal Opportunity School District