

NORTH PROVIDENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION POLICY	Approved: 2/18/2019 Updated: 3/27/2024 Effective: 8/27/2024

Purpose

The primary concern of North Providence Public Schools [hereafter the “District”] is the safety of all students, including while riding the bus. The District shall ensure the safety of students being transported to and from school to the best of its ability

The purpose of a transportation policy will ensure that the District offers student transportation services that complies with the State of Rhode Island General Laws and Regulations of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and Registry of Motor Vehicles pertinent to transportation of students, as well as govern any areas not covered by specific declaration of policy.

Administration of Program

The School Committee shall, from time to time, enter into transportation contracts with transportation contractors to provide for the transportation of North Providence resident students in accordance with this policy.

The Superintendent of Schools, the Director of Facilities and Transportation, and the Director of Student Services are responsible for execution of transportation policy and regulations adopted to implement the policy.

Transportation contractors must submit a list of bus drivers and substitute drivers to the Director of Facilities and Transportation.

Bus contractors are subject to all statutes of Rhode Island governing buses, drivers, inspections, and licensing.

Eligibility, Riding limits, Routes and Bus Stops

- Elementary school students who live .75 walking miles and middle/high school students who live one (1) walking mile or more from their home school are eligible for transportation.

- Bus stops will be established and reviewed in conjunction with the Director of Facilities and Transportation, the bus company, and the North Providence Police Department with primary consideration given to safety and efficiency.
- Bus routes/bus stop designations are communicated to families in late August. Once the school year begins, bus information is communicated to families by the school.
- All students will be picked up and dropped off only at the assigned bus stop in their neighborhood, unless special services are approved by the Superintendent of Schools or the Director of Transportation and Facilities, the transportation company and the Director of Student Services if applicable.
- Students will not be picked up or dropped off at private businesses, or any location other than the child's assigned bus stop.
- Students who are granted Special Permission by the Superintendent to attend a school other than their home school are not eligible for transportation.
- Transfer students placed at a school other than their home school due to over enrollment are eligible for transportation. However, if space becomes available at the child's home school during the school year or after, parents/guardians will be contacted and given the option of the student(s) remaining at the current school with no bus transportation, or transferring to the home school with transportation if the child qualifies.
- Bus monitors shall be provided on any bus transporting children enrolled in grades kindergarten through fifth (5th) grade, unless granted a variance by the Commissioner of Education.

Supervision

Parents/Guardians are responsible for their children prior to boarding the bus, the North Providence School Department is not responsible for the children until they board the bus for transportation to their school.

- Parents/Guardians are responsible for their children as they disembark the bus. All elementary students will be returned to the after-school program at one of the elementary schools if an adult is not present to meet the bus. Students may be suspended from receiving bus transportation if they are returned to the after-school program more than three times within a school year. In addition, DCYF may be contacted after three times within a school year.
- Students shall be expected to adhere to the North Providence School Department School Bus Conduct Code, Discipline Code, and transportation company policy, and may have bus privileges suspended or revoked.
- Surveillance cameras may be placed on all buses in the District to aid in monitoring bus discipline.
- Appeals of transportation determinations shall be directed to the Superintendent of Schools/designee.

Transportation of Students with Disabilities

- The North Providence School Department shall provide special transportation for those students for whom it is determined, by evaluation, and described in their Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- All appropriate devices that accommodate the specific needs of the child shall be provided.
- A minimum of one (1) monitor shall be assigned to each bus used for the transportation of students with disabilities as required by law.
- Scheduling of transportation vehicles shall be planned whenever possible to provide for the least amount of travel time necessary to transport children with disabilities from home to school and school to home.
- Appeals of transportation issues for students with disabilities shall be directed to the Director of Student Services.

Rules for Bus Drivers

Any violations of the rules and regulations for student behavior on school buses must be reported at the end of each trip to the staff member in charge, who must obtain all pertinent information and report in writing to the school principal. The report should be forwarded to the school principal no later than the following day of the occurrence of the incident. The report will be returned to the staff member showing the action taken by the principal who in turn will show the bus driver what action has been taken.

Drivers may not remove any child from a bus as a disciplinary measure.

Bus drivers have no authority to appoint students as bus monitors and must not do so. If repeated misbehavior problems arise, they should report each incident to the designated authority in writing.

Suspension of a student from riding the bus must be administered by the proper authority, usually the school principal.

1. Do not allow students to enter or leave the bus while the bus is in motion.
2. Drivers are held responsible for reasonable behavior of students in transit
3. Drivers must not allow children to thrust their heads, arms, or any other parts of their bodies out of open windows.
4. Gas tanks must not be filled while students are in the buses.

5. In cases where it is necessary for students to cross a street or main thoroughfare in order to board a bus or after leaving a bus, such students shall await a signal from the driver before crossing. It shall be the responsibility of the driver to ascertain that the street is clear before signaling the students to cross.
6. Do not allow the children to smoke, vape, or eat while on the bus.
7. Do not allow students to throw anything in the bus or out the windows.
8. The driver shall give ample warning before stopping by the timely application of the service brakes which actuate two amber flashing lights over the windshield in front and two red flashing lights at the beltline in the rear.
9. The driver shall not open the door of the school bus until they observe that the road is clear and that no danger exists. The driver, however, may “crack” the door sufficiently to actuate the flashing red signal lights.
10. The driver shall see that each student who must cross the street does not do so until the driver has given the signal. The driver should take particular care to ensure that pupils are not stranded on “islands” in the case of divided streets.
11. Students crossing the street shall pass **in front of the school bus** and at least ten to twelve feet ahead of the bus. Care must be taken to make sure that these students do not step out on the street beyond a point protected by the bus until the school bus driver gives the signal for them to cross the highway or street.
12. The bus driver shall carefully observe the number of students getting off the bus and account for the safety of all these students before proceeding with the bus.

BUS PROCEDURES AND CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS

The major concern with bus transportation is for the safety and welfare of all students. It is of paramount importance that we take precautions. Bus stop behavior is also a concern. Parents/Guardians are requested to report to the bus driver or school principal any dangerous or hazardous situations which they may observe at the bus stop. Riding a bus is a privilege which may be withdrawn in cases of persistent misbehavior.

**REGULATIONS FOR TRANSPORTING SCHOOL CHILDREN
BY THE REGISTRY OF MOTOR VEHICLES**

1. The driver/monitor is in full charge of the bus and students. Students must obey the driver/monitor promptly and willingly.
2. Students shall ride their regularly assigned bus at all times unless permission has been granted by the school administrators. School administrators should verify with the transportation company the availability of extra seating space, and should not allow non-riders on the bus.
3. Unless granted by written permission of school administrators, no student shall be permitted to leave the bus except at his or her regular stop.
4. Students must enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner and must obey the orders of the school bus driver/monitor. Students must not cross the street until given consent by the school bus driver/monitor. When boarding or leaving the bus, students should be in view of the driver/monitor at all times.
5. Students who have to walk some distance along the street to the bus loading zone, where practicable, should walk on the left-hand side facing the oncoming traffic. This will also apply to students leaving the bus loading zone in the afternoon.
6. Students must cross the street at least 10 feet in front of the school bus and never behind the bus.

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