

## PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

### I. ELIGIBILITY

*A. Regular.* Pupil transportation shall be provided for eligible Washington County Public School pupils from established school vehicle stops to the appropriate public school and return from school to the established school vehicle stops. Each school facility shall have an exclusively designated attendance area.

- (1) Middle and high school pupils who live 1 1/2 miles or more from school, and elementary, including kindergarten pupils, who live 1 mile or more from school, are eligible for transportation. Pre-kindergarten pupils living more than 1/2 mile from school may be transported at mid-day. Each school shall have a non-transported area, as described in the administrative regulation, which shall be determined by measuring the appropriate walking distance from the pupil's private lane, driveway, or walking entrance where it meets the public roadway, to the nearest authorized entrance of the school building as designated by the Supervisor of Transportation or his/her designee. The distance shall be measured by the most direct, traveled route and may be along public roads or walkways.
- (2) Request for transportation due to unsafe walking conditions will be reviewed by the Assistant Supervisor responsible for the area of concern.
- (3) When an emergency occurs causing exceptional conditions as determined by the Supervisor of Transportation or designee Transportation Department may authorize temporary emergency transportation service.
- (4) Appeal Process.

If a request is denied, an appeal can be made to the following positions or entity in the following order:

- A. Supervisor of Transportation;
- B. The Review Committee comprised of the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent and two (2) Assistant Superintendents.  
Any two members of the Review Committee have the authority to issue a ruling.
- C. Board of Education

### *B. Students with Disabilities (SWD)*

- (1) For purposes of pupil transportation, a student with disabilities is one who needs special transportation arrangements to a facility which is the approved appropriate educational placement. Pupil transportation shall be provided for eligible students with disabilities from established school vehicle stops to appropriate school and return from the school to the established school vehicle stops. The need for transportation shall be determined by the Individual Education Program in charge of special education placement and the Supervisor of Transportation or designee. Appropriate facilities are:
  - (a) Maryland public schools.
  - (b) State Department of Education approved nonpublic schools.
  - (c) State institutions.
  - (d) State schools.

- (2) Students with disabilities who are residents of Washington County, who are placed at residential facilities for the school year, shall be eligible for two round trips each school year as determined by the Individual Education Program and the Supervisor of Transportation or designee.
- (3) Students with disabilities who are residents of Washington County, who attend a weekly residential program at Maryland State Department of Education approved public or nonpublic school may have transportation available to and from specified locations on weekends, as determined by the Transportation Department.
- (4) A bus assistant may be employed to serve on each vehicle that transports students with disabilities as needed.

*C. Non-approved Transportation.* The following transportation is to be disallowed:

- (1) Privately operated summer programs and day camps.
- (2) Nonpublic school pupils (except students with disabilities as defined in Section I.B).
- (3) Transportation of adults except persons between 18 and 20 years old who are enrolled in approved regular or special education daytime school programs and parents who are participating in special education parent/infant programs. (Does not exclude adults who participate as chaperones on field trips on a space available basis.)
- (4) Transportation of pupils to after school job sites, clubs or private lessons.
- (5) Transportation of public school pupils whose request is based on the inability of the parent, guardian or caregiver.

*D. Transportation of Students with Special Permission Approval*

- (1) A student who has been granted special permission to attend a school outside of his/her assigned attendance area may, subject to the submission of required information and the approval of the Department of Transportation, access an existing bus stop inside the attendance area of the approved school zone, to get to and from school.
- (2) A parent or guardian who is requesting transportation services must submit a Transportation Location Change Request Form to the Department of Transportation.
- (3) The Transportation Location Change Request Form is subject to the approval of the Transportation Department. Available seating on the bus is one of the considerations in the approval process.
- (4) Students, for whom transportation is approved, will be dropped-off at a pre-designated location which, in most cases, will not be in proximity to the student's home. It is the obligation of the parent or guardian to be present at the designated drop-off location at the designated drop-off time at all times. It is also the obligation of the parent or guardian to designate, in writing, an alternate adult and a dwelling in the immediate area of the designated bus drop-off location in the event the parent or guardian is unable to meet the student at the designated stop at the designated time. Failure of the parent or guardian to adhere to these obligations will result in the immediate termination of special permission bus services.

[SEE ALSO POLICY JC AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION JC-R – “*PERMISSION TO ATTEND SCHOOL OUT OF HOME SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREA*”]

## II. OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

The transportation program shall be operated and administered in accordance with the State Regulations (COMAR 13A.06.07), which govern student transportation services.

## III. AUDIO AND VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERA

The Washington County Board of Education believes that the safety and security of students are top priorities. The Board authorizes the installation and use of audio and video surveillance cameras on school buses operating in Washington County.

Staff and students will be informed of the presence of audio and video surveillance cameras on the school bus in the annual WCPS Handbook and Guide.  
See also Policy EFGH.

## IV. SCHOOL VEHICLE SPECIFICATIONS

School vehicles used to transport any Washington County public school pupils shall meet all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, all Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration specifications, and minimum specifications as set forth in COMAR Regulations 13A.06.07.

## V. EXCEPTIONS TO POLICY

The Superintendent of Schools or designee may make exceptions to this policy and accompanying regulations under emergency conditions when:

- A. Compliance with this policy may endanger the life and physical well being of pupils, or when
- B. Compliance with this policy may make the operation of pupil transportation impossible or unsafe due to an Act of God, strike, rebellion, or other unforeseen disturbance.

These exceptions shall remain in effect only until the next regular meeting of the Washington County Board of Education.

- C. If possible, the Superintendent will notify the Board of Education of action taken pursuant to this section. The notification should include information on the expected duration of the action and whether action by the Board of Education is required.

## VI. ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

Specific limits, allowances, guidelines, and procedures not stated in this policy but related to the administration and funding of pupil transportation shall be found in the regulations which accompany this policy.

### Related Policies and Administrative Regulations

See also Policy EEBA and Administrative Regulation EEBA-R – “Use of School Owned Vehicles (Other than School Buses)” and Policy JC – and Administrative Regulation JC-R - “Permission to Attend School Out of Home School Attendance Area”

Policy adopted: July 21, 1981 Revised: May 20, 2008 Revised: November 18, 2008. Amended: June 2, 2009.

Board of Education of Washington County