

## ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOL BUS ROUTES

*Category: R*

*See Also: Policies: EEA, EEAA & JICC*

*Appendix: EEAE-R & JICC-R*

### **A. General Policy.**

The Transportation Coordinator designated by the Superintendent pursuant to Board policy EEA, in consultation with the Principal(s) and transportation provider shall establish bus routes, schedules and stops for all students eligible for transportation pursuant to Board policy EEA. Routes will be over the most direct roads practicable for bus travel. Where an alternate route may be selected without sacrifice to efficiency or economy, preference will be given to that route serving the larger number of students more directly. Routes will be designed to employ as nearly as practicable the full carrying capacity of each bus trip. New routes will be established only when full capacity of the trips on existing routes has been reached or is imminent.

The purpose of bus scheduling shall be to achieve maximum service with a minimum fleet of buses consistent with rendering equitable service to all eligible students. The measure of service rendered shall be the total time between leaving a bus stop in the morning and returning thereto in the afternoon on a regular bus trip. To the greatest extent possible, routes, schedules and stops will minimize and balance the time students spend on buses. However, priority in distance to stops will be given to younger children.

Authorized bus stops shall be located at convenient intervals in places where students can be loaded or unloaded, cross highways and await arrival of buses with the utmost safety permitted based upon highway conditions, terrain, and visibility. Bus stops will be situated so that no student is required to walk more than 1 mile to reach a stop. Per RSA 189:8, the maximum distance to stops can be extended to 1 ½ miles for students residing in areas which are inaccessible by the District's established mode of transportation, provided that the vehicle, route and schedule have been approved by the commissioner of education. The number of bus stops on each trip shall be limited, consistent with the policy, so as to enable buses to maintain a reasonable timetable and schedule.

### **B. Process for Establishing Bus Routes and Stops.**

1. Transportation coordinator obtains student enrollment list in early July.
2. Transportation Coordinator and building Principal(s), evaluate past year's routes and stops, find houses of new students, and draft a route/stop proposal.
3. Proposed route and stop schedule is reviewed with Superintendent and/or designee.
4. In August Superintendent approves final route and stop schedule.
5. Late enrollments and other factors may necessitate alteration of approved and publicized routes and stops.

### **C. Parent/Guardian Requests for Changes and Appeals.**

1. **Change Requests.** Students entitled to transportation service will be assigned to a school bus and stop and will be expected to adhere to the assignment. Parent requests for changes in a child's regular bus assignment should be sent to the Transportation Coordinator. Bus assignment changes will be made based on the following criteria:
  - a. Request must be written by parent or guardian.
  - b. Space must be available.
  - c. Change in a student's regular bus assignment may be approved for the year, the half year, or the quarter. Changes for shorter periods will not be honored by the coordinator.
  - d. Emergency situations or one-day changes may be authorized on a case-by-case basis by the Principal or his/her designee. Any such one-time change must be requested in writing and in advance by the parent/guardian. The Principal/designee will coordinate the change directly.
  
2. **Appeals of Change Requests.**
  - a. Appeals under C.1 must be presented in writing to the Superintendent within 10 calendar days of the Transportation Coordinator's decision.
  - b. The Superintendent will review relevant information and consult with the parent/guardian, Principal and transportation contractor or driver if employed by the district.
  - c. If the Superintendent perceives a safety concern or if there is agreement that a change or addition to the route/stop is justified, the Superintendent will immediately make the change (if routes require board approval, then add on a temporary basis); changes will be brought to the Board for confirmation at its next scheduled meeting.
  - d. If the Superintendent does not approve the request, the parent/guardian may request a review by the School Board. To initiate the review/appeal the parent/guardian must request review/appeal in writing to the Superintendent within 10 calendar days from the date of the Superintendent's decision.
  - e. The Board will hear the appeal as part of its next available agenda subject to the availability of the parent/guardian.
  - f. The Board will make its decision after hearing all appropriate information.

#### **Legal References:**

- 189:6, Transportation of Students
- 189:8, Limitations and Additions
- 189:9, Pupils in Private Schools