

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School
Policy S16: Transportation Policy
Adopted: September 17, 2020
Amended: October 21, 2021

I. Car Riders

- a. Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School's primary transportation method shall be parent or guardian drop off or pick up of students to and from school daily.
- b. To ensure the safety of all students, staff, and visitors, the school leader shall establish procedures including, but not limited to: authorization processes for dismissal and pickup, drop off and pick up times, routes, supervision, and load/unload processes. These procedures shall be published annually and updated periodically as needed for efficiency and safety.
- c. Parents, guardians, day-care buses/vans, and other authorized individuals dropping off or picking up students shall comply with all procedures set forth by the school leader. The school leader is authorized to take measures (including banishment from access to the property) to address habitual non-compliance with the school's transportation policy and procedures which infringe upon the safety of students, staff and visitors or which impedes the efficiency of arrival and dismissal processes.
- d. Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School will accept or release students from the car rider area only to the care of a parent or guardian or other individual previously approved in writing by the parent or guardian.

II. Busing/School Provided Transportation

- a.** Transportation provided by the Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School is based on registration and availability. All families who are in need of transportation are required to submit a new registration each school year. Approval of the bus registration form is based on a first-come, first-served basis. When each bus has reached capacity, remaining registrations will be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list will be filled as seats become available.
- b.** Students who receive a seat will be transported to and from Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School at access points established by the board of directors.
- c.** All students riding the bus must submit a new application. Under no circumstances will pick up or drop off of students happen at locations other than approved stops.
- d.** When available, students may be transported to and from school in vehicles owned by Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School or other approved vehicles, including charter buses or vans, which are compliant with applicable laws and state regulations related to transporting public school students (including obtaining a copy of the driver's proof of legally required minimum insurance and the appropriate certifications). Records confirming that any school bus driver

employed by Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School or third party contractor has completed all necessary training and other requirements of the Georgia Department of Education will be kept at Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School's Board office.

- e. The school does not transport students in vehicles that seat fewer than 14 students.

III. School Sponsored Events

- a. For field trips and other off-site events where transportation is provided, Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School shall procure the permission and medical release for students by parents or guardians and shall maintain records in accordance with the approved records retention schedule.
- b. For school sponsored events, such as field trips, priority of transportation to be used should be in the following order:
 - i. System or school owned buses
 - ii. Alternate transportation
 - iii. Parent's private vehicles
- c. Students shall be required to follow all safety regulations required of passengers riding on school vehicles.
- d. Students or children who are not enrolled at Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School or any parents/guardians of students not employed by the school shall not be permitted to ride in vehicles provided by Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School.
- e. Discipline related to bus transportation shall be progressive, but ultimately these decisions rest with the school leader:
 - i. First Bus Referral - Warning and call to parents (school leader has the right to exercise judgement if further discipline is needed based on the action)
 - ii. Second Bus Referral - Student is suspended off the bus for 1 week (School leader has the right to exercise judgement if further discipline is needed based on the action)
 - iii. Third Bus Referral - Student is suspended off the bus for 1 month (School leader has the right to exercise judgement if further discipline is needed based on the action)
Fourth Bus Referral - Student is suspended off the bus indefinitely until the next school year (school leader has the right to exercise judgement if further discipline is needed based on the action)
 - iv. As with any incident of student behavior, school administrators must exercise informed judgment as to whether a student's actions constitute a violation that yields a consequence that does not follow the discipline progression that is mentioned above.

IV. Walking and Biking

- a.** Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School recognizes the benefits of exercise, including walking and biking. However, to ensure the safety of all students,

Southwest Georgia STEM Charter School prohibits unaccompanied minors under the age of 18 from walking or biking to and from school where established cross walks, crossing guards, or signage on streets within 1 mile of the school are not present.

- b.** Those that are walking or biking to or from the school on an as-needed basis must have a note from their parent/guardian stating that their child is able to walk or bike to and/or from school and the address that they are traveling to upon leaving the school.