

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: **3000**
CATEGORY: **Business & Non-Instructional
Operations**
POLICY CODE: **3541/Transportation**

TRANSPORTATION

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Trumbull Board of Education to operate school buses in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes and the Regulations for the Operation of School Buses.

The decision to create a walk route, bus stop, or bus route rests with the Transportation Manager and shall be based on a student's place of residence and, in part, on special conditions as defined within the Regulations of this policy.

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to develop alternate plans for unexpected emergencies when they are not able to meet their child at the bus stop when returning home from school. These plans, developed by the parents/guardians, should be reviewed with the child, including acquainting the child with designated adults the parents/guardians might select as well as houses to which the child should go in an emergency.

Elementary school principals will send letters/forms to parents/guardians regarding weather-related early dismissal procedures, which will be kept on file at the student's school.

Parents/guardians should be familiar with bus rules intended to support the safe transportation of students. Parents/guardians are encouraged to review these rules with their children and reinforce that they should act accordingly. This includes AM and PM travel to and from home to school, and conduct at the bus stop, and time spent on the bus.

Adopted: 3/28/1978
Revised: 9/19/1995, 1/10/1996,
9/1996, 9/8/1998, 8/19/2003,
11/13/2012, 7/9/2019

References

- Connecticut General Statutes §§ 4-176e, 4-177, 4-180a, 4-181a, 10-76d, 10-97, 10-186, 10-220, 10-220c

Regulations

I. Walking Distance and Duration

“Walking distance and duration” is defined as the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the student’s residence and his/her school from a point at the curb or edge of a public road or highway nearest the residence to a point at the entrance to the school grounds located within one hundred feet of a school building entrance; or the route from the point on the public thoroughfare nearest the residence to the school bus stop established by the Board of Education.

The maximum student walking distance and duration, either to school or to a bus stop, is as follows:

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Elementary Schools | All students are transported by bus |
| B. Middle Schools | Not to exceed one and one-quarter miles |
| C. High School | Not to exceed one and one-half miles |
| D. Reasonable transportation or prescribed walking routes or the sum of both shall not exceed one hour each way from home to school or returning. | |

Any parent/guardian who wishes to refuse bus transportation and wishes his/her child to walk to school must document that in writing to the school Principal, who will confirm individually with the parent/guardian.

II. Students Exempt from Walking Distance Regulations

Bus transportation to school shall be provided to any student so designated by a special education Planning and Placement Team, by a Section 504 Team, or via an Individualized Health Care Plan.

III. Secondary Students Living within Designated Walking Distance

Secondary students who live within the designated walking distance but whose route meets the Special Conditions listed within this Section shall be provided school accommodations, school accommodations including, but not limited to, bus transportation, crossing guards, traffic lights or signs, raised walk areas, or any combination thereof, as the Board shall designate in accordance with this Transportation Policy.

Special Conditions

Any street, roadway, or highway that does not have a sidewalk or raised walk area (defined as a portion of the right of way at least three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes, which may be paved or unpaved, distinguished from some elevation above the street pavement level, and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area, and fencing, apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement), and upon which a student walks to and from school or to or from a designated bus stop, shall be considered to have a Special Condition if any of the following conditions exists:

- A. The absence of a traffic light or stop signs or crossing guards where streets intersect and have a traffic count which exceeds 240 vehicles per hour during the time that the children are walking to and from school.
- B. The presence of a visual obstruction caused by hill, curve, structure, outcropping, land form, planting, or some other obscuring object or structure which may be safely negotiated by vehicles only at speeds under fifteen miles per hour.
- C. A roadway available to vehicles, when plowed free of snow accumulation, with a minimum width of less than twenty feet.
- D. The necessity of walking to and from school at any time prior to one-half hour before sunrise or after one-half hour after sunset as the result of the opening and closing of the regular school day.

IV. Provisions of School Accommodations Relative to Student Residence

No school accommodations, school accommodations including, but not limited to, bus transportation, crossing guards, traffic lights or signs, raised walk areas, or any combination thereof, as the Board shall designate in accordance with this Transportation Policy, will be provided to any location other than a student's residence, unless the Transportation Manager determines that such accommodations will not interfere with the timely and efficient operation of the existing routes. Requests by parents/guardians for consideration of such requests shall be made in writing using the form available in each school's main office and in the Transportation Office.

V. Out-of-Town Transportation

- A. Any resident under twenty-one years of age who is not a graduate of a high school or technical education and career school and who is attending a State or State-approved technical education and career school shall be eligible for the reasonable and necessary transportation to such school.
- B. A student who is placed by a Planning and Placement Team for special education reasons in either a public or private educational institution out of town shall be provided the necessary transportation.

VI. Bus Stops

- A. Bus stops shall be established by the Transportation Manager in accordance with walking distances or durations, safe walking routes to bus stops, and other safety concerns.
- B. Kindergarten children's bus stops are to be designated within sight of parents' properties unless they are assigned to a bus stop with student(s) in any of grades one through five in which event the provisions of Section VI.A above shall apply. Each Kindergarten student will be dropped off at his/her assigned bus stops and must be met by his/her parent/guardian/caregiver or will be returned to his/her home school. The caregiver cannot be another elementary school student, even a sibling. In the event a Kindergarten student is returned to school more than three times due to his/her parent/guardian/caregiver not being available to meet him/her at the bus stop, the Principal will address the issue with the student's parent/guardian. The Principal will explain that the school may file a neglect report with the State of Connecticut Department of Children and Family Services (DCF) if the parent/guardian continues to demonstrate

inability to meet the Kindergarten student at the bus stop or to arrange for a caregiver in accordance with the established procedures.

- C. AM pick-up times are expected to be within +/-5 minutes of the established schedules, except for the first stop of the day, which will begin at the designated time. Within this window, bus drivers are not required to wait for students at the assigned stop.
- D. Door-to-door transportation shall be provided to special education students, including special education preschool students, so designated by the students' Planning and Placement Teams (PPTs).
- E. Bus stops will not be designated in dead-end or cul-de-sac streets unless the walking route along said street is determined to meet the Special Conditions outlined in Section III above or to exceed the walking distances outlined in Section I above.
- F. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section, no bus stops shall be designated in a dead-end or cul-de-sac street if the following conditions exist:
 - 1. The circumference of an existing cul-de-sac does not permit the assigned bus to turn around without backing up; and
 - 2. The location of a side street is such that it does not permit the assigned bus to back up in a straight line for the purpose of turning around, regardless of whether the conditions set forth in Section VI.B above are satisfied.

VII. Emergencies

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to develop alternate plans for unexpected personal emergencies when they are not able to meet their child at the bus stop at regular dismissal times. These plans, developed by the parents/guardians, should be reviewed with the child, including acquainting the child with designated adults the parents/guardians might select as well as houses to which the child should go in these types of emergencies. Elementary principals will send parents/guardians a letter reiterating the need for parents to have alternate plans if they are not able to meet their child at the bus stop at regular dismissal times (Appendix C).

In order to reduce confusion in the event of inclement weather or an emergency situation, parents/guardians should develop an emergency plan that will be submitted to and kept on file at their child's school (Appendix D-1, D-2).

VIII. TLC Students

The Board of Education may provide transportation service for TLC students. When this service is provided, it will be on a non-interference basis with the school district's bus routes and schedules.

IX. Changes/Concerns

To submit a request for a bus stop change or to report incidents/concerns with bus transportation, a Transportation Action Report (Appendix A) must be completed and returned to the Transportation Office by hand or by e-mail.

Acknowledgment of the request will be made within 48 hours, the final resolution of which depends on the nature of the problem.

X. Appeals

- A. Parents, guardians, students at majority, and any agent or officer whose duty it is to compel the observance of the laws concerning attendance at school may appeal any administrative decision related to school transportation.
- B. Appeal Procedure:
 1. The person(s) making the request shall notify the Transportation Manager by completing and submitting the Transportation Appeals Form (Appendix B) requesting an appeal hearing.
 2. Within ten (10) days after receipt of the Transportation Appeals Form (Appendix B), the Transportation Manager will notify the person(s) requesting the appeal of the appeal hearing date.
- C. Transportation Appeals Board
 1. Charter: to hear, review, and arbitrate transportation problems described in the Transportation policy and regulations not resolved by the Transportation Office.
 2. Membership: A local impartial hearing board of a parent representative of the PTA Council or the Policy Committee, a representative of the Trumbull Police Department, and up to three (3) members at large from the community; no member may be a member of the Board of Education.
 3. Hearings: As required (convened by the Transportation Manager).
 4. The Appeals Board representing the Board of Education shall hold a hearing within ten (10) days following receipt of a written request. The granting of such hearing shall not constitute an admission by the Board of Education that it has failed to furnish proper school accommodations.
 5. A tape recording shall be made of such hearing.
 6. The decision of the Transportation Appeals Board will be provided by the Transportation Manager within ten (10) days after the hearing.
 7. Such hearing shall be conducted in accordance with provisions of Sections 4-176e and 4-180a, inclusive, and Section 4-181a, of the Connecticut General Statutes.