

POLICY

MORRIS BOARD OF EDUCATION

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The Board of Education directs the Superintendent or his/her designee to supervise development of bus routes to provide safe, economical, and reasonably expeditious transportation for all eligible pupils.

Responsibility

The Manager of Operations/Assistant Board Secretary shall be responsible for the operation of the pupil transportation system. Together with the Supervisor of Transportation they shall provide safe, economical, and reasonably expeditious transportation for the Morris School District's eligible pupils. In doing so, they shall:

- Determine pupil eligibility.
- Establish routes and changes in routes in the safest, most economical and efficient manner possible.
- Supervise and direct the maintenance of equipment.
- Arrange for vehicle inspection.
- Determine driver qualifications and supervise all drivers.
- Make recommendations regarding chartered bus services.

The Board may charge parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for transporting pupils who live within statutory limits. The charge shall include, but not be limited to the cost of fuel, driver salaries and insurance.

The Morris School District Board of Education shall approve and amend, at such intervals as it deems appropriate, the criteria used to implement this policy, and as of this date, directs that all of the following be given consideration:

1. Eligibility - Transportation shall be provided to pupils:



- a. In grades nine through twelve who live more than 2.5 miles from school.
 - b. In grades Kindergarten through eight who live more than 2.0 miles from school.
 - c. Who live remote from their school as defined by New Jersey law,
 - d. Who are educationally handicapped and/or classified and whose IEPs (Individual Educational Plans) require transportation.
 - e. Who participate in Board of Education approved extracurricular activities or field trips.
 - f. Whose route to the school is deemed hazardous by the Board of Education.
 - g. Who may be eligible for other reasons established by law.
2. Courtesy Transportation along Hazardous Routes. The Board of Education is concerned with the safety of pupils who walk to and from school along roadways determined to be hazardous. The Manager of Operations/Assistant Board Secretary shall work in conjunction with municipal officials to determine the criteria necessary for the classification of a hazardous route and shall maintain a list of all hazardous routes in the district. They develop rules and regulations to supply courtesy transportation for pupils who must walk to and from school along such routes. The criteria used to determine hazardous routes may include but shall not be limited to the following:
- a. Population density;
 - b. Traffic;
 - c. Average vehicle velocity;
 - d. Existence or absence of sufficient sidewalk space;
 - e. Roads and highways that are winding or have blind curves;



- f. Roads or highways with steep inclines and declines;
- g. Drop-offs that are close proximity to a sidewalk;
- h. Bridges or overpasses that must be crossed to reach the school;
- i. Train tracks or trestles that must be crossed to reach the school;
- j. Busy roads and highways that must be crossed to reach the school.

Pupils who would otherwise be required to walk to and from school along routes designated as hazardous shall be included in the calculation of the district's regular vehicle capacity utilization.

- 3. Appeal Procedures. When a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) desires to appeal a decision of the Supervisor of Transportation that his/her child is ineligible for transportation, the appeal shall be resolved in accordance with the following procedures:
 - a. The applicant shall submit the claim in writing to the Supervisor of Transportation with a statement of reasons supporting the claim.
 - b. The Supervisor of Transportation shall review and investigate the applicant's claim and the together with the Superintendent and the Manager of Operations/Assistant Board Secretary, shall evaluate the applicants claim in light of the Board of Education's criteria for hazardous conditions (See previous). The Supervisor of Transportation shall notify the applicant in writing of the decision reached by the school officials.
 - c. An applicant who disagrees with the decision rendered in accordance with paragraph "b" above, may appeal, in writing, to the appropriate Board of Education committee.
 - d. Upon receipt of the written request, the appropriate Board of Education committee will review the decision made by the Supervisor of Transportation and the Manager of Operations/Assistant Board Secretary. If not already undertaken, the Board of Education committee will ask the local Police Traffic Safety officials for their opinion. After this thorough investigation



the appropriate Board of Education committee will make its decision. If the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) wishes to appeal, he/she may appeal to the entire Board of Education.

- e. The Board of Education will review the decision and the Manager of Operations/Assistant Board Secretary will communicate the Board of Education's decision to the applicant in writing.
- f. No change will be made in the pupil's transportation pending the Board of Education's final decision of the applicant's claim. Temporary transportation will not be allowed.

No transportation previously approved for "hazardous conditions" will be rescinded without investigation and formal approval by the Board of Education.

- 4. Criteria for All Routes other than Early and Late Buses and Special Education Bus Routes and Bus Stops
 - a. Buses are to travel on main roads wherever possible, using side roads as connections only for circuiting or for safety.
 - b. Travel through business areas involving heavy traffic, traffic lights, etc., is to be avoided wherever possible.
 - c. Buses are not to go into dead-end streets.
 - d. Routes over hazardous roads, bad hills, etc., are to be avoided.
 - e. Turning around on, or backing into, any public roadway is not permitted.
 - f. Buses are not to enter cul-de-sacs to pick up children unless the designated stops outside the cul-de-sacs have been deemed hazardous as evaluated by and in consultation with the local police traffic safety official.
 - g. Distance requirements will be determined by measuring the shortest route along public roadways or walkways from the



entrance of the pupil's residence nearest such public roadway or walkway to the nearest public entrance of the assigned school.

- h. Bus stops will be determined using State guidelines for distance and safety in determining whether or not an unsafe condition exists for a bus stop, the following factors shall be taken into consideration:

- (1) Heavily traveled roadway,
- (2) Steep grade,
- (3) Curve,
- (4) Sight distance of 300 feet or less for approaching vehicles,

5. Pupils

- a. The Supervisor of Transportation shall be responsible for assigning those pupils eligible for transportation to a school bus route.
- b. Pupils are not permitted to change their routes or have guest riders.
- c. Elementary school pupils should not be dropped off at school without supervision earlier than fifteen minutes prior to opening time.
- d. No passengers except public school pupils, non-public school pupils or school personnel assigned to ride on scheduled routes will be permitted to board or to ride on buses designated to transport pupils to and from school, with the exception of the parent volunteers during the first week of school.
- e. The Superintendent or his/her designee may permit a pupil to be transported to and or from a site other than the place of residence when the welfare of the pupil is involved, provided that:
 - (1) Seating is available on the bus.
 - (2) An additional stop is not necessary.



- (3) A new route does not need to be established.
- (4) The schedule is followed each week for an extended period of time, usually an entire year, as if the transportation were being provided from or to the pupil's home.
- (5) Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) submit a request in writing to the Principal.
- (6) Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) requiring baby sitting services may request alternate pick-up or drop-off assignments, the Supervisor of Transportation may consider such written requests, providing the provisions outlined above exist.

6. Principals

The Principal, in coordination with their staff, is responsible of the proper loading and unloading of bus pupils as well as their general safety and welfare.

7. Handicapped Children

Children residing in the district whose attendance at schools of this district is made difficult because of a temporary physical handicap will be required to provide a physician's statement explaining the need for special transportation. The Board of Education reserves the right have a school physician verify the need for the special transportation. Such transportation will be limited to travel only at the beginning and end of each school day.

Transportation to and from school will be provided by the district for every child resident in the district who is identified as handicapped and whose Individual Education Plan (IEP) requires such transportation, whether or not the handicapped child is attending a school of the district or a public school anywhere in the state, or a nonpublic school as authorized under provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:46-19.1 through 19.9 and subject to approval by the office of the County Superintendent. In general, transportation to an out-of-State facility for district handicapped pupils



will be accomplished by the most economical and expeditious mode consistent with the pupil's special needs and will be limited to travel at the beginning and ending of the school year and holidays when residential housing is closed.

8. Late Runs and Activity Buses

Buses are to travel on main and secondary roads only. The transportation is not to be as extensive as the regular to and from program. Transportation into residential neighborhoods will take place only when the safety of the pupil is involved.

9. Timing

Routes and operation schedules are to be coordinated with the overall school program of the Morris School District schools, especially with regard to opening and dismissal times at the various schools.

10. Disciplinary Action

The driver is in full charge of the school bus at all times and shall be responsible for order. He/She may never exclude a pupil from the bus; however, if he/she is unable to manage any pupil, the driver is to report the unmanageable pupil to the Principal of the school which the pupil attends.

A pupil may be excluded from the bus for disciplinary reasons by the Principal. The pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must then provide for the pupil's transportation during the period of such exclusion. Any unusual event occurring during any bus "run" is to be reported by the bus driver to his/her immediate Morris School District supervisor by the telephone or radio at the first safe moment.

11. Responsibilities of Staff Members on School-Related Trips

Teachers or coaches in charge of a group on a trip are required to have a written list of pupils, their addresses, and contact numbers, as well as signed parent(s) or legal guardian(s) permission slips. A copy of the list and permission slips are to be left in the Athletic Director's or Principal's office. The original list with contact numbers is to be carefully retained by the teacher or coach at all times and checked so that all pupils, teachers,



chaperones and coaches return, and return on the same bus on which they embarked, except by prior arrangement.

12. Vehicle Capacities

According to the State Department of Education Regulations, the capacity of each bus shall be printed on the ceiling of the inside of the bus and at no time shall a driver permit pupils (and others) in excess of the number to ride on the bus, nor are pupils to stand while riding any school bus.

13. Contractors

Contractors must report all accidents to the district's Supervisor of Transportation as soon as it is safe to do so and without any delay whatsoever.

a. Buses

- (1) The contractor must provide buses which meet all State, local and contract specifications, including required inspections.
- (2) All buses must be maintained in top mechanical condition at all times.
- (3) Contractors must observe good maintenance procedures and keep the interior and exterior of the buses clean.

b. Drivers

- (1) Contractors must supply competent, fully licensed school bus drivers who are in good health and not older than 70 years of age. Additional qualified substitute drivers must be available as required.
- (2) Contractors must replace any driver for just cause upon written request of the Supervisor of Transportation.



- (3) Contractors must train drivers to operate buses safely and efficiently, aid in procurement of special licenses and supervise the satisfactory operation of all routes.
- (4) Bus drivers are to remain with their riders at all times; at no time are pupils to be left unattended.
- (5) Bus drivers are to become familiar with their routes, (i.e., make practice runs), before the beginning of the school term.

14. Courtesy Busing for Non-Public School District Children

The Board of Education may provide services for nonpublic school pupils and charter school pupils if their school opening and dismissal times conform to the Morris School District's transportation schedules and if the provision of transportation is economical. This decision will be made on an annual basis.

The Morris School District may provide transportation to pupils domiciled within the Morris School District and attending nonpublic (nonprofit) or Charter schools within the Morris School District pursuant to the following conditions:

- a. Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of nonpublic school pupils are required to make an application for transportation on or before May 1 preceding the school year for which transportation is being requested. Applications shall be submitted directly to the nonpublic school, which shall be required to forward all applications to the Morris School District by May 15. In the event an application is submitted after May 1, a statement must be attached setting forth the reason for the delay. The information required shall include, but not be limited too: the pupil's name, address, school and grade assignment and the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) contact numbers (including home and work phone, fax and e-mail numbers). Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) shall be notified by the Morris School District's transportation office no later than August 1 regarding the acceptance or rejection of their application.



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- b. The nonpublic, (nonprofit) or Charter School shall be willing to adjust hours of operation and other applicable modes of operation so as to permit the provision of transportation at the lowest possible cost to the Morris School District.
- c. The transportation to be provided shall be as established annually by the Morris School District and shall be subject to such other terms and conditions as are determined appropriate at the sole discretion of the Board of Education of the Morris School District. These conditions shall be consistent with applicable law.
- d. When the per pupil costs to contract transportation services exceeds the reimbursement cost allowed by the State of New Jersey, the Morris School District shall not provide transportation. In these cases, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may be entitled to aid-in-lieu of transportation to be reimbursed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1A.

A request for payment must be filed by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) within fifteen days following the close of both the first and second semesters. Payment shall not be made unless the following has been completed.

- (1) An application form for aid filed on or before May 1.
- (2) Nonpublic school certification of enrollment/attendance for each semester for which payment is requested and,
- (3) Request for payment form filed for each semester of enrollment/attendance.

The application and request for payment forms may be made available at both the nonpublic school and the Morris School District Administrative office. Application forms shall be filed with the nonpublic school only. Requests for payment forms shall be filed with the Morris School District Administrative office only.

Request for payment may be denied in the event of failure to comply with these procedures.



15. Bus Conduct

All pupils, public and non-public alike, who endanger themselves and/or others by distracting, disruptive or otherwise unacceptable conduct while on a school bus or at a bus stop may be deprived of the privilege of transportation.

N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1 et seq.

N.J.S.A. 27:15-16

N.J.S.A. 39:3B-1 et seq.

N.J.A.C. 6A:27-1.1 et seq.; 6A:27-2.1 et seq.; 6A:27-3.1

Adopted: 12 January 2009

