

## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY

### TRANSPORTATION

#### **I. Statement of Policy**

The Board of Education will provide safe, adequate, efficient and economical transportation for students under provisions of state law and regulations. In determining the provision of transportation, the superintendent of schools shall take into consideration the physical and emotional wellbeing of students, encourage walking to school sites or bus stops where appropriate and reinforce desirable student behavior patterns to the greatest extent possible. The superintendent of schools shall also use the guidelines contained in this policy and shall administer the operation so as to:

- A. Provide for the safety of students.
- B. Assist disabled students appropriately.
- C. Enrich the instructional program through carefully planned field trips as recommended by the staff.

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to know the location of the student's assigned bus stop and ensure that the student is at the stop on time to meet the bus each day.

#### **II. Definitions**

- A. "School transportation" means that procedure, program, or implemented plan by which a pupil is transported to and/or from school from his/her assigned bus stop at public expense, whether by use of publicly owned equipment or by contract. Such transportation shall be over public roads approved by the municipality.
- B. "Walking distance" means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the pupil's residence and his/her school from a point at the curb or edge of a public road nearest the pupil's residence to a point at the entrance of the school, or a safe entrance to the school grounds located within one hundred feet of the school building entrance or the bus pickup area, or the route from the point on the public thoroughfare nearest the residence to the school bus stop assigned by the Shelton Board of Education.
- C. "One mile walking distance" means a reasonable measurement of a route to be traversed extending from the point of measurement at least 5,280 feet, but not more than 5,380 feet.

- D. "Grade K" means kindergarten, or a school program appropriate to a beginning pupil.
- E. "Hazard" means a thing or condition, as prescribed in this policy under "Hazardous Conditions" that affects the safety of pupils walking to and from school and/or an assigned bus stop.
- F. "Sidewalk" means a portion of the landscape right of way approximately three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes which may be paved or unpaved, and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area or fencing; apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement.
- G. "Raised walk area" means a portion of the landscape right of way approximately three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes which may be paved or unpaved, distinguished by some elevation above the street pavement level and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area or fencing; apart from and independent of any painted safety markings along the street pavement.
- H. "Pupil" means any individual of school age enrolled in a public or nonprofit private school located within the school district or contiguous school district as the case may be.
- I. "Complainant" means a parent or guardian, or an emancipated minor or a pupil eighteen years of age or older.

### **III. Provision of Transportation**

#### **A. General Provisions**

The Board of Education shares the responsibility for providing safe transportation with parents and other agencies.

The Department of Motor Vehicles establishes rules and regulations for bus drivers and the equipment they operate; they conduct testing, issue licenses and conduct annual vehicle inspections.

The City of Shelton is responsible for maintaining the public roadways and the school parking areas.

The police provide for physical security and enforcement of traffic regulations.

The transportation services provided by the Board in accordance with this policy will be provided through the use of one or more private transportation carrier(s).

In determining the provision of transportation for resident public and eligible private school students, the following guidelines regarding walking distances will be considered.

B. Walking Distances

Distance measurements will be based on the most direct route from the student's home beginning at a point at the curb or edge of a public road or highway nearest the home to the edge of the school property or assigned bus stop.

| <u>Grade</u> | <u>Limit</u> |
|--------------|--------------|
| K            | 1 mile       |
| 1-4          | 1 mile       |
| 5-8          | 1.25 miles   |
| 9-12         | 1.5 miles    |

Except as provided otherwise in Section III.A of this policy, students living within the stated distance limits will receive transportation only when, in the opinion of the Board, it is in the best interests of the district to provide transportation.

C. Hazardous Conditions

The Administration shall consider the guidelines set forth below for hazardous conditions when making decisions regarding the transportation of children. Except as provided otherwise in Section III.A of this policy, the following conditions may be deemed hazardous:

1. A street or road having an adjacent or parallel sidewalk or raised walk area, where any one of the following conditions exists:

For all pupils grades K through 8:

- a) The absence of a pedestrian crossing light or crossing guard where three or more streets intersect and where the traffic count during the time that pupils are walking to or from school exceeds one hundred and twenty vehicles per hour at the intersection.

For all pupils:

- b) Any street, road or highway with posted speed limits in excess of forty miles per hour which does not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where pupils must cross when going to or from school or the bus stop; OR

- c) The usual or frequent presence of any nuisance such as open manholes, construction or loading zones where delivery trucks are permitted to park on walkways or commercial entrances and exits where cars are crossing walking areas at speed in excess of five miles per hour.
- 2. Any street, road or highway that has no sidewalks or raised walk areas, where any one of the following conditions exist:
  - a) For pupils under age eleven, or enrolled in grade K through 4:
    - (1) Any street, road or highway possessing a traffic count of one hundred and twenty or more vehicles per hour at the time that pupils are walking to or from school; OR
    - (2) Any street, road or highway possessing a posted speed limit in excess of thirty miles per hour.
  - b) For all pupils:
    - (1) The presence of manmade hazards, as stated in 1(c)(ii) above; OR
    - (2) Any street, road or highway where the line of sight visibility, together with posted speed limits, does not permit vehicular braking/stopping in accordance with the Connecticut Drivers Manual or other reasonable standard.
- 3. Any public walkway, path or bridge in an area adjacent or parallel to railroad tracks, unless there is a suitable physical barrier along the entire pedestrian route fixed between pupils and the track; and any public crossing of railroad tracks carrying moving trains during hours that pupils are walking to or from school or to and from an assigned bus stop, unless:
  - a) A crossing guard is present; OR
  - b) For pupils under age eleven, an automatic control bar is present at crossings; OR
  - c) For pupils over age eleven, a bar or red flashing signal light is operational.
- 4. For pupils in grades K through 4:

- a) A lake, pond, stream, culvert, waterway, or bridge, in the absence of a fence, guardrail or other suitable barrier fixed between the pupil and the water; OR
  - b) Any area adjacent to a roadway, sidewalk, or bridge having a drop of three or more feet per four feet of travel length on either side of the established lanes, in the absence of a fence, guardrail or other suitable barrier.
- 5. For pupils in grades K through 6, walking to or from school or the bus stop at any time prior to sixty minutes before sunrise or any time sixty minutes after sunset.
  - 6. For all students, walking along any street, road, walkway, sidewalk or path designated as a walking route which passes through an area which has a history of aggressive acts of molestation resulting in actual or threatened physical harm or moral degradation during the hours when pupils ordinarily walk to or from school.

#### **IV. Applicability and Exceptions**

- A. Special Education pupils and pupils eligible for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act shall be judged on an individual basis and appropriate transportation will be provided.
- B. The Board of Education may grant an exception to any guideline set forth in this policy where a peculiar condition or combination of conditions renders such condition(s) a hazard based upon reasonable judgment; or where under the circumstances, other conditions exist under which the safety of students necessitates a variance with the guidelines within this policy.
- C. The Board recognizes that certain roads in Shelton are not suitable for bus transportation due to their locations, width, visibility, topography or similar factors. In consultation with the district's professional transportation contractor(s) the Administration shall determine which roads within Shelton are not suitable for bus transportation due to such factors. The Administration shall, in consultation with the district's professional transportation contractor(s), maintain a list of such roads and shall review that list periodically, in order to make such modifications as may be warranted, from time to time. In the event that a road in Shelton has been deemed unsuitable for bus transportation in accordance with the provisions in this policy, then that determination shall prevail (notwithstanding any other provision of this policy) and bus transportation over that road will not be provided.

## V. Complaint Procedure

All complaints concerning school transportation safety shall be made in writing or by email to the Transportation Manager. The Transportation Manager shall maintain a written record of all such complaints and shall conduct appropriate investigations of the allegations in a timely manner. The investigation shall include: 1) the review of the complaint raised with the appropriate personnel responsible for transportation of students; and 2) the opportunity for the complainant to discuss the complaint with the Transportation Manager.

If the complaint is not resolved by the Transportation Manager, the Transportation Manager shall inform the complainant that he/she may request review of the matter by the Assistant Superintendent or her designee. Upon receipt of such a request, the Assistant Superintendent of Schools or her designee shall review the complaint and advise the complainant of her decision.

If a complaint covered by Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes is not resolved by the Assistant Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent shall inform parent or guardian, or an emancipated minor or a pupil eighteen years of age or older, of his or her right to request a hearing regarding the complaint. Such hearing, if requested, shall be held in accordance with Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as it may be amended from time to time.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education

10-220 Duties of boards of education

10-221c Development of policy for reporting complaints regarding school transportation safety

14-275b Transportation of mobility impaired students

14-275c Regulation re: school buses and motor vehicles used to transport special education students.

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**Shelton Public Schools**