

**File: EEA**

## **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

The Sharon Public Schools will provide transportation services to aid students in traveling to and from school in an efficient, safe, and economical manner.

If transportation services are performed by an outside contractor, contracts will be awarded by competitive bid. Bus and taxi contractors must comply with all local and state laws, regulations and contract specifications, including but not limited to those relative to bus design and bus equipment, safety inspections, qualifications and examinations of drivers, driving regulations, small vehicle requirements, and insurance coverage.

In order to best ensure the safety of students, children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting a school bus, and proper and safe conduct while aboard. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.

Any provider of transportation services by contract shall furnish the Assistant Superintendent/Transportation Supervisor with a list of names of drivers and their safety records for the last three years. A satisfactory Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check of all transportation personnel by the Sharon Public Schools is required. In case of any change of bus driver, the contractor will notify the transportation supervisor as soon as possible. The Superintendent reserves the right to approve or disapprove persons employed by the bus contractor to transport students.

The Superintendent, working with the bus contractor and other appropriate administrators, will be responsible for establishing bus schedules, routes, stops, and all other matters relative to the transportation program. The Superintendent may delegate this authority to the Transportation Supervisor.

Transportation at town expense shall be furnished to all students in grades K-6 who live two miles or more from the school they attend. If pay-to-ride buses are running on their route, those who participate in the free and reduced lunch program are eligible to ride free of charge. Additionally, transportation shall be provided at town expense for children whose Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) requires such transportation.

No additional buses and no new stops will be added for students paying late. New residents will be allowed to purchase a seat on a bus if one is available.

Prorated refunds of transportation fees may be made for families who move out of the district during the school year, but no refund will be given if a student participating in a pay-to-ride program loses his/her transportation privileges because of misbehavior.

For the purpose of determining whether bus service will be free or pay-to-ride, the two-mile measurement will be made from the sidewalk or public way in front of or nearest to the home of the student to the public way in front of the school the student is attending. The measurement will be made using the shortest (walking) route.

The School Committee will determine the cost of pay-to-ride transportation. Parents with special circumstances may appeal fees to the Superintendent to establish a payment plan.

All students being transported, either at town or parent expense, shall be issued a bus tag on the first day of school and may be required to display it in order to ride.

Bus stop locations may be changed as ridership and the need for economy and efficiency dictate. A strong factor in scheduling will be ensuring that no student rides for more than one hour each way. Parents of riders may designate a regular bus stop other than the one closest to their residence if:

1. the stop is on a route scheduled for their child's school; and
2. space is available on the bus.

Only one such request will be honored.

Parents/guardians are responsible for the behavior of students before they board a bus and after they disembark.

On a school bus (to include vans or smaller officially sanctioned student transportation), a rider is in the care of the School District, just as s/he would be at school. All responsibilities for good behavior at school apply on a school bus. Specific rules and regulations in effect on a school bus are published in the student handbooks of each school, and are available at the Superintendent's office. Transportation regulations are also enumerated in School Committee Policy EEA-E.

Each student must have a seat on the bus in order to ride.

In cases when a child does not conduct him/herself properly on a bus, the bus driver or the supervisor of transportation shall bring such instances to the attention of the building Principal. The building Principal shall inform the parents immediately of the misconduct and request their cooperation in monitoring the child's behavior.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the School Committee. In such cases, the parents of the children involved become responsible for seeing that their children get to and from school safely.

Legal Refs.: M.G.L. 71:48A, School Safety Patrols: Functions; Limitations; Liability  
M.G.L. 71B:5, Children with Special Needs; Costs or Obligations; Payment; Budget  
M.G.L. 71B:8, Transportation To and From School; Reimbursement to Parents  
M.G.L. 74:8A, Vocational Education: Transportation of Students  
M.G.L. 76:1, School Attendance: Requirements and Exceptions  
Highway Safety Program Standard No.17, Pupil Transportation Safety

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