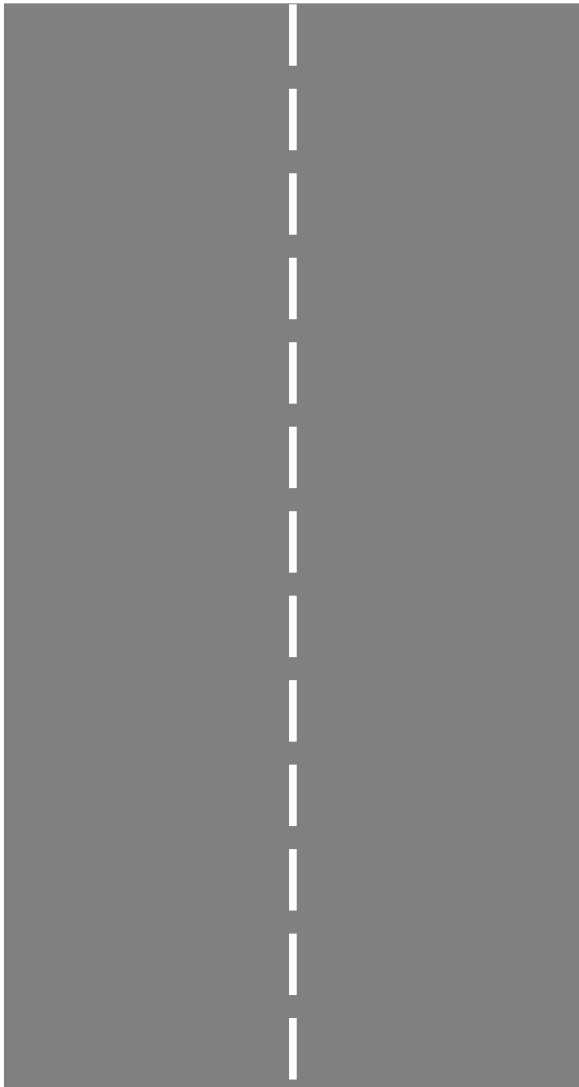


September 2003

# Student Transportation



# Handbook



**SHENENDEHOWA**  
CENTRAL SCHOOLS

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# Student Transportation Handbook

## **POLICY**

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### ✓ **Board Policy 8410 states that:**

Transportation shall be provided to eligible students residing in the district in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and local policies. The major objectives of the transportation department shall include the following:

- ◆ To provide safe and efficient service in an equitable manner to students.
- ◆ To adapt busing to the needs of the instructional program.
- ◆ To explore and implement cost effective procedures and practices.
- ◆ To maintain all vehicles in the best possible condition.
- ◆ To train staff to meet and exceed legal requirements for safety.

## **GUIDELINES**

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### ✓ **School bus scheduling and routing**

The school transportation director will determine the district school bus schedules and routes for students following the guidelines below:

- ◆ Safety will always be the first consideration in establishing bus routes and bus pick-up points.
- ◆ Similar transportation shall be offered to all children in similar circumstances residing in the district.
- ◆ Distances from home to the school building attended shall be measured by the nearest publicly maintained route.
- ◆ Distances from home to the bus pick-up point shall be measured by the nearest publicly maintained route.
- ◆ For students on regularly scheduled *in-district* bus routes, to the extent that resources allow, scheduled travel time should not exceed one hour either to or from school.
- ◆ To minimize both driver and student confusion in busing students, each student must be dropped off at the same address each school day. For example, a student will not be dropped off at a child care location Tuesdays and Thursdays, and at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. (Guideline in place beginning 1998-99 school year.) Please see *Special Transportation, Occasional Special Busing*, page 5.

- ◆ Students are not allowed to cross Route 146 or Route 9 when boarding or departing the bus.

## **BUS STOPS**

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### ✓ **Determining safe bus stops:**

A number of safety factors are considered when setting up bus stops. These include (among others), the student's age, the type of road, its speed limit, the proximity of residences, whether it is straight or curved, and the number of students needing pick-up or drop-off in the area. The measurement to a bus stop is made from the driveway of the residence to the bus stop assigned.

### ✓ **Length of walk to and from bus stops:**

Kindergarten students (walking alone) – *as close as possible to a home stop*

Elementary (grades K-5) – *.2 mile maximum*

Secondary (grades 6-12) – *.3 mile maximum*

Because of the factors noted above (and others too numerous to list), although a student will not be asked to walk a greater distance than the maximum for his grade level, students will walk varying distances. Requests from residents, who do not have children attending school, will also be considered in determining bus stops.

Families are notified of stops and pick-up and drop-off times by mail in August. *Students must plan to be at their bus stop at least 10 minutes early.* It is the parent's (guardian's) responsibility to see that their children arrive at the designated bus stop at the appropriate time. Students are expected to board the bus and sit down as quickly as possible. In order for our buses to arrive at school on time, it is important for students be ready for pick-up. *Parents (guardians) are responsible for the behavior and safety of their students at the bus stop until they enter the bus and after they depart the bus.*

## **MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

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A student's medical condition should be reported to the director of transportation (as well as the school nurse.) If the condition should change, this should also be reported to the director. Student records will be kept confidential with information shared only on a "need to know" basis.

## **BUS IDENTIFICATION**

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Each bus has a distinctive and easily identifiable picture posted on a card in the second window from the entrance door. *STUDENTS SHOULD NOT RELY ON THE*

*PAINTED BUS NUMBERS*, as the bus on the route may change due to maintenance or assignment to a special trip.

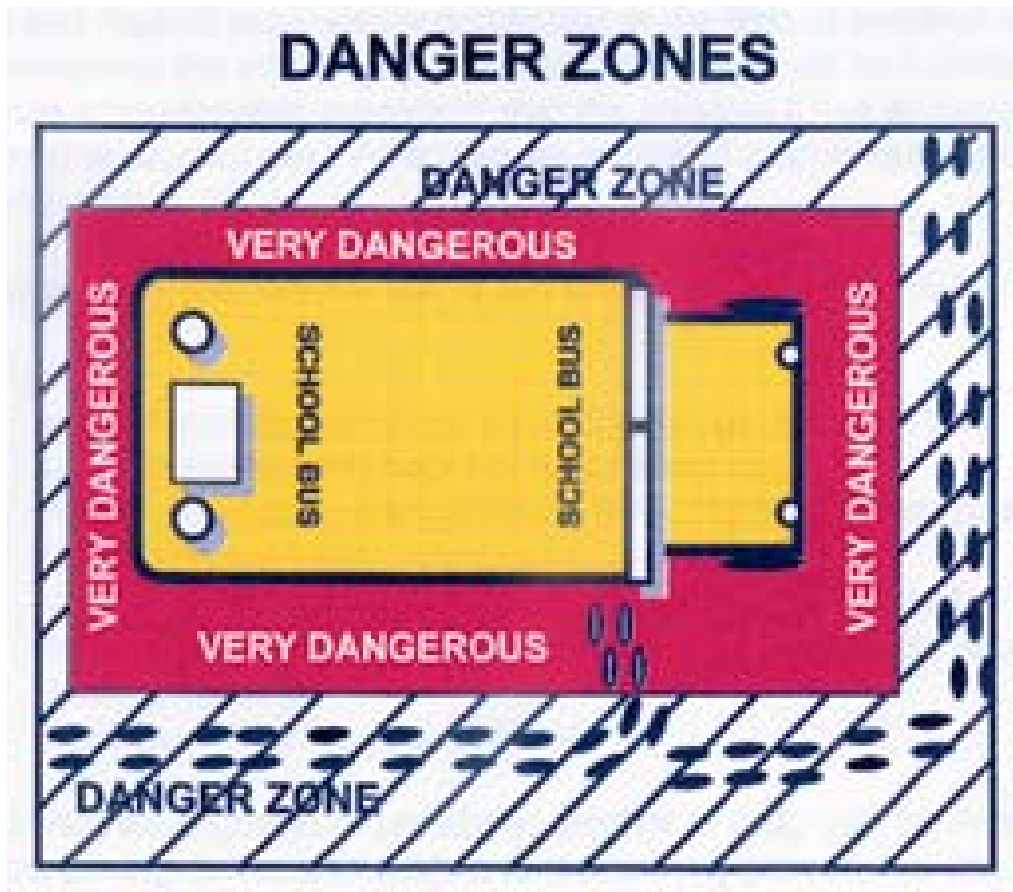
## **CROSSING RULES**

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Crossing safely is vitally important. All students will follow the bus driver's instructions when crossing a road. The driver will direct students crossing before releasing non-crossers.

At a stop where there are children who have to cross in front of the bus (crossers) and children who do not (non-crossers), the driver will instruct the crossers to walk forward of the bus until they can see the driver's instructions. They should look at the driver and wait for the driver's signal, stop at the end of the bus, and look both ways before continuing. If warned by the driver, (by sounding the horn or speaking through the outside PA system) the student should return to the starting point on the safe side of the street.

The non-crossers will then be allowed to leave the bus, making sure they stay away from the side of the bus out of the danger zone. Children will not be permitted to cross in the back of the bus. Children should be instructed not to go to their mailboxes or to linger near the stop, because the driver has been instructed not to move the bus if there are students within fifteen (15) feet of the bus.



## **STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES**\_\_\_\_\_

It is important that all children behave properly and safely on the school bus and for parents to discuss safety and behavior with their children. The district's *Student Code of Conduct* includes a section on busing that should be reviewed by all parents. It prohibits food and drinks on the bus, smoking, throwing objects at or out of the bus, injury to another student, physical damage to a bus, insubordination or leaving the bus through an emergency door/window in a non-emergency, and many other busing safety/discipline issues. (Please see *Student Code of Conduct* which is included in the school calendar.)

Video cameras are sometimes used to monitor student behavior on school vehicles. The intended use of the recordings obtained from using such cameras shall be used to help in determining strategies for improving student discipline and as evidence of misconduct.

## **SEAT BELTS/BUS DRILLS**

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Students are trained to properly use seat belts and are encouraged to wear them. School bus drivers will instruct students on the proper use of seat belts during the three (3) bus drills scheduled during the school year.

New York State law requires drills which include practice and instruction in the location, use, and operation of the emergency door(s) and windows as a means of escape in case of a fire or accident and location of the first aid kit and fire extinguisher. Drills shall include instruction in safe boarding and exiting procedures with specific emphasis on when and how to approach, board, disembark, and move away from the bus after disembarking. Drills shall also include instruction in the importance of orderly conduct by all passengers with specific emphasis given to student discipline rules.

## **KINDERGARTEN TRANSPORTATION**

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***It is strongly recommended that a parent/designated person be available to accept a kindergarten student when the bus arrives.***

Kindergartners should wear identification tags provided for at least the first week of school. If a tag is lost, parents should prepare a similar “badge” for the student to wear.

A child who is simultaneously enrolled in more than one kindergarten program shall receive transportation to and from only one of those programs. If one of the programs is a non-public school program, that shall be the program to which the child receives transportation. The non-public request may be canceled only through a letter from the student’s parent. This restriction shall not apply to students with disabilities placed by the Committee on Special Education.

## **SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION**

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✓ **Occasional special busing:**

Parents (guardians) may request a short-term busing change on an occasional basis, for instance, in order for a student to visit a friend after school, scout meetings, or similar events. In these cases, the student should bring a note from the parent (guardian) to the principal who will authorize this request by stamping the note or issuing a pass if seats are available on the bus. Any permanent change in busing must be requested through the transportation department using the Alternate Transportation Form (also known as the Blue Form).

✓ **Injury or temporary medical condition:**

Requests for special transportation due to an injury or other medical condition must be accompanied by a medical certification form completed by the student’s physician

to be approved by the director of transportation or the director's designee. (Forms are available through the transportation department.) The medical certification should include the expected duration for the need for special busing. Every effort will be made to provide the special busing needed.

## **LATE BUSES** \_\_\_\_\_

The high school and middle schools are provided late buses (4:00 p.m. approximately) for club and other school activities and for disciplinary reasons. Routes will be established and posted in the appropriate schools. High School students are required to sign the appropriate form in the dean's office. High school and middle school students must present a pass to the bus driver. Students are usually required to walk a longer distance from the bus stop to home on late bus routes.

## **BUSING TO AND FROM CHILD CARE LOCATIONS** \_\_\_\_\_

Please see Board Policy 8418, *Transportation to Child Care Locations*.

## **FIELD TRIP AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY TRANSPORTATION** \_\_\_\_\_

Upon approval of a trip by the building principal, school vehicles may be used to transport students if buses are available. Students are expected to adhere to the *Student Code of Conduct* during out-of-district trips.

## **SPECIAL USE OF SCHOOL BUSES** \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Education is authorized to permit the use of school buses and other vehicles owned by the school district by other school districts and municipalities (and a limited number of other organizations/agencies as described in New York State Law). The district must be reimbursed the full amount of costs and expenses associated with the use of the buses or vehicles. Calculation of cost shall include but not be limited to costs of depreciation, maintenance and repair of such vehicles, and insurance costs.

## **BRINGING ITEMS TO SCHOOL** \_\_\_\_\_

All of the items that the child will be bringing to school should be packed in a carrying case, such as a tote bag or backpack, which must be small enough to be held on the student's lap. Large items and food for class parties may not be transported by school bus.

### ✓ **Transporting Large Objects and Musical Instruments:**

New York State Department of Transportation and federal regulations *PROHIBIT* bringing large items and musical instruments on school buses. This prevents the *blockage of seats and aisles* in the event of an accident.

- ✓ **The following items are a partial list *allowed on the bus if held on lap*:**  
Piccolo, oboe, flute, soprano clarinet, bassoon, snare drum, alto saxophone, French horn, trumpet, violin, and viola.
- ✓ **Large items are *not allowed on the bus* – these include, but are not limited to:**  
Alto clarinet, bass clarinet, contra bass clarinet, trombone, baritone saxophone, cello, guitar, tenor saxophone, tuba, baritone horn, string bass, large school projects, skateboards, bikes, fishing poles, skis and poles, and sleds.
- ✓ **Other items *not allowed on the bus*. These include, but are not limited to:**  
Any weapons, pets or any live animals, glass containers, and aerosol cans.

## **LOST ARTICLES** \_\_\_\_\_

Articles left on the bus are normally kept on the bus so that students can reclaim them the next day. If not claimed, articles are returned to the appropriate school or to the bus garage. Students should label their clothes and other possessions.

## **NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION** \_\_\_\_\_

### ✓ **Requirements**

Under State Education Law, the Board of Education is required to provide transportation for resident pupils who attend non-public schools. The provision of this transportation is broken into two categories – students residing *under* fifteen (15)

miles from the school attended and students residing *over* fifteen (15) miles from the school attended. They are:

- ◆ Transportation from neighborhood bus stops is provided to non-public schools when *the distance from the center of the pupil's driveway to the drop-off point at the school is fifteen miles (15) or less*. The distance is measured by the nearest available publicly maintained route. The parent is responsible for transportation of the pupil to/from the pick-up point.
- ◆ Transportation is provided from central pick-up points when the approved school is over fifteen (15) miles from the student's residence (measured as above). An approved school is one attended by students living within fifteen (15) miles of the school.

Each year the director of transportation will establish centralized pick-up points based on the requests filed for busing by the parent's (guardian's) of non-public students by the April 1 deadline. The district is not responsible for providing transportation from home to or from the pick-up point. However, a district may provide school bus transportation to a student if the residence of the student is located on an established route for the transportation of students to the centralized pick-up point, provided such transportation does not result in additional costs to the district.

A student who lives more than fifteen (15) miles from the non-public school he or she attends, and who is receiving transportation between that school and a central pick-up and drop-off point, may disembark from the bus at an established bus stop other than the central drop-off point. In that case, the student's parent (guardian) must submit a signed request identifying the bus stop at which the student is to disembark. Moreover, an adult living within .2 miles of the bus stop must be designated as being responsible for the student once he/she leaves the bus. A new bus stop may not be established to accommodate a request pursuant to this regulation. This regulation does not authorize a student to transfer to a different bus, or to use any bus other than that which runs between the school the student attends and the central pick-up or drop-off point.

When scheduling pick-up and delivery times, a high priority will be given to the development of bus routes serving students attending those non-public schools with the highest number of Shenendehowa students.

### ✓ **Application for Busing for Transportation**

All reasonable means shall continue to be employed to notify district residents and, in particular, parents of children currently attending private and parochial schools of the relevant deadlines for filing of an application for transportation. April 1 is the deadline for non-public school students receiving transportation and who desire to continue for the next school year. The April deadline applies to students living within the district who may be considering non-public attendance for the following school year. An application should be filed, even if the parent (guardian) has not made a final

decision. The deadline for requests for transportation from new residents of the district is thirty (30) days after establishing residence in the district.

The school district continues to permit parents of non-public school children to submit transportation requests for more than one (1) school by the April 1 deadline and/or permit parents to transfer the original request by the April 1 deadline. However, all requests must be finalized no later than May 15 of each school year.

A child must be five years old on or before December 1 of the year prior to the school year for which busing is requested to be eligible for busing (same as public school).

All children for whom proper written application is made before the appropriate deadlines as provided for in Education Law and for distances within the limits specified in the Education Law, shall be assured of receiving the requested transportation.

If a parent has made appropriate application for a respective non-public school by April 1 and then, for whatever reason, moves within the school district, a new application for transportation from the new address should be made, as soon as possible, and must be made within thirty (30) days of the move to ensure busing. If the mileage exceeds fifteen (15) miles, it will become the parents' responsibility to transport the child to an appropriate pick-up point.

