

Rhode Island Department of Education
Office of Statewide Transportation – Standard Operating Procedures

Procedure Number	Topic		
RIDESOP.012	Transportation Program Operating Parameters		
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Statement

Students receiving transportation services within the RIDE Statewide Student Transportation Program will be routed to their school in the most efficient and effective manner possible consistent with safety. For the system to work effectively for all students, it is necessary to establish certain operational parameters. The bus routes administered by the statewide program will be planned and operated in accordance with the following criteria.

Procedures

Eligibility for service:

Students eligible for service within the RIDE Statewide Transportation System include:

1. Students with Disabilities placed in any program outside his or her sending district’s boundary.
2. Students that attend out-of-district private, charter or career and tech schools within designated regional boundaries.
3. Students enrolled by school district/LEA/DCYF who are McKinney Vento or in Foster Care who reside outside his or her sending district’s boundary.

Courtesy transportation may be provided by the statewide program for any students that do not meet these eligibility criteria on a case-by-case basis with the approval of the Director of Statewide Efficiencies.

Bus stops:

- Depot Bus Stops will be utilized for all PCCT students, but Students with Disabilities will not be assigned to Depot Stops.
- The placement of Bus Stops shall be determined by the System Manager in line with standard industry practice, with due regard for safety, and in accordance with the following criteria:
 - Stops shall be placed at road intersections wherever possible.
 - Safety permitting, no two bus stops serving the same route shall be placed closer than 0.25 miles apart.
 - Within a 5 mile radius of the student’s home.
- Depot stops are not to be removed or changed in anyway by bus operations staff; All stop change requests must be managed by the System Manager.

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- Each student will be assigned one location for morning pickup and one location for afternoon drop-off. Stop locations will be assigned by and shall be changed only at the discretion of the System Manager.
- Parent concerns regarding bus stop safety will be addressed and may require approval of RIDE for implementation.
- Students with Disabilities, Kindergarten, and Grade 1 students must have guardian supervision present at applicable afternoon drop-off locations. In the event a guardian is not present to receive one of these students, a call will be made to the guardian and, if necessary, remaining students will be delivered to their stops before returning to deliver the student whose guardian was not present.
- To maximize overall system efficiency, infrequently used bus stops may be eliminated at the discretion of the System Manager. Before a stop is eliminated a call will be made to the family to determine if the stop should remain in force. If a stop is eliminated, affected students will be reassigned to the nearest active stop which may be a depot stop serving the destination school.
- For special needs students, stops will not be eliminated without prior discussion with student's parent(s) or guardian(s), as well as the special education director of the student's resident district.

Bus routing parameters:

- The objective for the *maximum* allowable student ride time on any one trip is 90 minutes for PCCT/MV/ESSA and 60 minutes for special ed, defined as the length of time from when the student boards the bus until the student arrives at his/her destination.
- In certain cases, students may be required to take longer than 90 or 60 minutes if no viable logistical alternatives exist. In all cases, every effort will be made to minimize the ride time for students.
- Special Education students receiving a ride time over 60 minutes require a supplement sheet be added to their transportation letter outlining why the ride time exceeds 60 minutes one way. REFER TO FORM 012
- Students will be assigned to buses per accepted industry standard:
 - 3 students per seat for grades K-8
 - 2 students per seat for grades 9-12
 - Average of 2 students per seat (i.e., 3 per row) for Students with Disabilities, unless otherwise required per the student's IEP.

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- Transfers and shuttles shall be used as necessary at the discretion of the System Manager.
- Buses shall be scheduled to arrive no more than 30 minutes prior to the opening or closing bell time at school. Supervision shall be provided by school personnel during this arrival/ dismissal window.

Customer service parameters:

- The System Manager will process a transportation change request within 24 hours of receipt, whenever possible. Newly created bus stops will be implemented two business days after they are sent to the bus yard. The closest active stop will be used as a temporary stop until the new stop begins.
- To ensure compliance with the Transportation change request timeline each System Manager router is required to complete a minimum of 10 new student requests per day.
- Routers and Analyst are to add 5 minutes to each student's profile who are indicated as needing a harness. They are to add the extra time in the student transportation in & out data.
- Routers and Analyst are to add 10 minutes to each student's profile that are indicated as using a wheelchair. They are to add the extra time in the student transportation in & out data.
- Routers and Analyst are to add 3 minutes to each student's profile that are indicated as using a car seat. They are to add the extra time in the student transportation in & out data.
- The System Manager will respond to a service complaint within two business days of receipt.
- Transportation Coordinators will notify parents/guardians of all changes a minimum of 2 business days before the change takes effect. Any routing completed after 4pm must be assigned to the coordinator present or the notification must be completed by the router themselves.
- All notification made to parents/guardians regarding a change to the route using the call alert system must be reviewed by the coordinator on the next business day for any parents who did receive the message based the school messenger report.
- Transportation letters will be mailed to parents and provided to OSCAS within 5 business days of the route completion date.
- All feedback received from bus yards, schools or districts regarding a route not functioning as expected will be reviewed and corrected by a member of the routing team within 2 business days.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation coordinators, upon creating a new student file for a school not currently serviced will be required to gather the corresponding school calendar, bell times, and contact information. • Transportation Coordinators upon receipt of a student residing out of State will gather the corresponding business office contact information and add it to the district contact list.