

COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY: COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY

DATE ADOPTED: February 4, 2003

ELIGIBILITY TO RIDE ON COLCHESTER SCHOOL BUSES

Those resident students legally enrolled in grades K-12 or those eligible for transportation under IDEA-B (Special Education) and federal Section 504 laws in the Colchester Public Schools are eligible to ride on school busses during regular trips to and from school stopping only within the town limits of Colchester.

If the District places a student in a program outside the District, Colchester will ensure that adequate transportation to and from the program is provided.

School staff members may not ride the school bus on a regular basis. The Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, may authorize persons other than students to ride the school busses. School personnel who are assigned bus related responsibilities are authorized to ride on the bus.

On school sponsored trips, only those students, teachers, and chaperones recognized and appointed by the principal of the school from which the trip originates or by the Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, are eligible to ride on the school bus. The school administration is responsible for presenting the bus driver with a list of who is eligible to ride on a field trip.

ESTABLISHMENT OF ROUTES

The contractor's Transportation Supervisor shall be responsible for establishing bus routes in accordance with the provisions of this policy. She/he will work in close cooperation with the bus drivers who know the roads and are aware of any hazards or problems that may exist. She/he will work with the Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, as well as the appropriate town officials to ensure that routes are planned in a safe manner over roads that will be maintained by the Town of Colchester, the State of Vermont or neighboring towns as applicable.

Normal routes (to and from school) will not include stops outside the town limits of the Town of Colchester.

While not always possible, an attempt will be made to establish and operate bus routes close enough to students homes so that students in grades 6-12 will not walk over 1 mile to a bus stop and students in grades K-5 will not walk more than .5 mile to a bus stop.

Date Warned: December 13, 2002
 First Reading: December 17, 2002
 Second Reading: February 4, 2003

Each kindergarten driver will receive adult acknowledgment before dropping off the student.

The School Board empowers the Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, to make changes to any bus route in order to meet current needs. Such changes, however, require clear notification to the parents/guardians of affected students. Every effort will be made to notify at least three days before any change takes effect.

CANCELLATION/DELAY/EARLY RELEASE DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

The School Board has empowered the Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, to close or delay the opening of school or close school early when conditions require such action.

The decision to close school will be announced to the public over the Internet, local radio and television stations.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Bus transportation is a privilege in the Colchester School District. The necessity of providing safe transportation requires students to exhibit self-control and proper behavior while riding on a public transportation system.

Regarding student conduct matters, the school bus is an extension of the school facilities. Accordingly Board Policy DISTRICTWIDE DISCIPLINE POLICY (F1) applies. Specific bus rules are included in the procedures to this policy.

Violation of these rules may result in the student's loss of transportation privileges.

USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLES

The transportation of students for school activities in privately owned vehicles is discouraged. School activities include: field trips, class outings, athletic events, club meets, community service projects, and any other school sponsored functions for which the school district routinely assumes the responsibility to provide transportation to students. In limited circumstances, however, when district owned or contracted vehicles are unavailable or impractical, the individual school principal and the Superintendent of Schools, or her/his designee, may approve such transportation arrangements.

The Colchester School District assumes no responsibility or liability for any claim or damages arising from the transportation of students in private vehicles.

PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BUS ROUTES

- When establishing bus routes, the following factors will be considered: age of students; condition of roads to be traveled; school schedule; distance between home and school; safety of walking routes between home and bus stops; number and size of busses available; number of students to be served; and areas needing bus service. Every attempt will be made to run bus routes close enough to students' homes so that students in grades 6-12 will not walk over 1 mile to a bus stop and students in grades K-5 will not walk more than .5 mile to a bus stop.
- Every effort shall be made so that students are not riding to the outer points of the school district and then returning over the same route to be dropped off or picked up at home.
- Door to door stops, where possible, will be established for picking up and dropping off noontime kindergarten and pre-school students on certain school bus routes. Each kindergarten driver will receive adult acknowledgment before dropping off the student.
- Capacity Guidelines shall be in compliance with state regulations governing safe riding conditions.
- Published bus routes shall be available in the district to families on or about two (2) weeks before the start of the school year.
- Bus drivers shall have accurate, clearly written routes prior to the start of school, including direction of travel, stop locations, and approximate times.
- Although every effort will be made to ensure that students are not spending more than forty-five (45) minutes riding to school or home from school, we cannot guarantee these limits. Also, our guidelines define that every effort will be made to ensure that students arrive no earlier than twenty (20) minutes between school bus drop off and the start of the school day or school bus pick up at the end of the school day.

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING STUDENT BEHAVIOR ON BUSES

- At the beginning of each school year, bus drivers are responsible for communicating consistent rules/expectations for student behavior while riding on the bus. All transportation and school personnel will review these rules periodically. Bus drivers also assume responsibility for ensuring that these rules are posted on all busses and observed.
- Discipline procedures will be initiated by the bus driver by issuing a bus conduct report and carried out by the proper building principal according to school discipline policies and School Board Policy DISTRICTWIDE DISCIPLINE POLICY (F1).
- If the behavior continues up to three (3) occurrences, and in the opinion of the bus driver, proper disciplinary action has not taken place to ensure the safety of the other passengers, the driver will report the behavior to the Transportation Supervisor first, the Business and Operations Manager second, and subsequently the Superintendent. The decision of the Superintendent is final.
- School bus transportation is a privilege that may be lost as a consequence of inappropriate behavior. Parents of students who have lost bus privileges are required to see that students attend school, providing the student has not also been suspended from school.
- If a child has been kept after school for detention, it is the parent's responsibility to provide transportation. While the school district is NOT responsible for transporting these students, school administrators may, on a case-by-case basis, allow a student to ride a late bus.
- Every effort will be made to limit the number of students to the bus's capacity guidelines in order to decrease potential discipline and safety issues related to crowding. Bus aides, student bus patrols, intercom/radio systems, video recorders, or other techniques may be used to assist in the safe transportation of students.
- Use of busses for field trips, sporting events, or other school functions is subject to the same rules and regulations as daily bus trips. Adult chaperones involved in these activities are responsible for enforcing the bus rules. If discipline is not maintained, the bus driver has the authority to report the incident to the Transportation Supervisor, principal, or athletic director. The group will receive an initial warning. Continued occurrences may result in the loss of bus privileges for that particular group.
- Specific discipline steps will be dictated by each school's discipline policy. Generally, these steps involve:
 1. Written warning to both students and parents.
 2. Suspension of bus privileges.
 3. Total loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the semester/year if the behavior continues.
- Whenever individual or group discipline problems can be managed while the bus is in motion, bus drivers will do so. If, however, any discipline problem cannot be managed

safely while moving, the bus will be stopped. The driver will then determine whether the bus can proceed safely. The driver may return students to school, leave the bus stopped, and/or radio for assistance. Colchester schools are currently using the form printed on the back of this page as a communication tool to share student bus behavior.

BUS CONDUCT REPORT	STUDENT'S NAME		CLASS-GRADE																		
	DATE OF INCIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> 1ST NOTICE <input type="checkbox"/> 2ND NOTICE <input type="checkbox"/> 3RD NOTICE																			
	BUS NO.	TRIP NO.	DRIVER'S NAME																		
NOTICE TO PARENTS																					
1. The purpose of this report is to inform you of a disciplinary incident involving the student on the school bus. 2. You are urged to both appreciate the action taken by the driver and to cooperate with the corrective action initiated today.																					
DRIVER'S REPORT:																					
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> VIOLATION OF SAFETY PROCEDURES</td> <td style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> EXCESSIVE MISCHIEF</td> <td style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> EATING-DRINKING-LITTERING</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> WRITING</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> RUDE-DISOURTEOUS-ANNOYING</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> FIGHTING-PUSHING-TRIPPING</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> SMOKING</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> UNACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> _____</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>_____</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>_____</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>				<input type="checkbox"/> VIOLATION OF SAFETY PROCEDURES	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCESSIVE MISCHIEF	<input type="checkbox"/> EATING-DRINKING-LITTERING	<input type="checkbox"/> DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY	<input type="checkbox"/> WRITING	<input type="checkbox"/> RUDE-DISOURTEOUS-ANNOYING	<input type="checkbox"/> FIGHTING-PUSHING-TRIPPING	<input type="checkbox"/> SMOKING	<input type="checkbox"/> UNACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE	<input type="checkbox"/> _____			_____			_____		
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<input type="checkbox"/> _____																					

PRELIMINARY ACTION:		PRESENT ACTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:																			
<input type="checkbox"/> CHECKED STUDENT'S FOLDER <input type="checkbox"/> HELD CONFERENCE WITH STUDENT <input type="checkbox"/> CONSULTED COUNSELOR <input type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONED PARENT <input type="checkbox"/> _____ _____ _____		<input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT REGRETFUL, COOPERATIVE <input type="checkbox"/> PLACED ON PROBATION <input type="checkbox"/> RECURRENCES WILL BE REPORTED <input type="checkbox"/> SUSPENDED <input type="checkbox"/> DENIED BUS PRIVILEGE UNTIL _____ <input type="checkbox"/> REFERRED TO: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____ _____ _____																			

(DRIVER'S SIGNATURE)

PARENTS' COPY - WHITE

(ADMINISTRATOR'S SIGNATURE)

OFFICE COPY - BLUE TRANSPORTATION COPY - PINK

(DATE)

DRIVER'S COPY - YELLOW

PROCEDURES FOR USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLES

Whenever such approval is granted, the following conditions must be met prior to the trip:

1. The operator of the vehicle certifies that:
 - a. He/she is at least eighteen (18) years of age and has a valid driver's license.
 - b. He/she has comprehensive automobile liability insurance. Minimum insurance coverage is: \$100,000 per person, \$300,000 per occurrence, and \$50,000 for property if the vehicle has a seating capacity of nine passengers or less and \$300,000 per person \$500,000 per occurrence, and \$50,000 for property if the vehicle has a seating capacity in excess of nine passengers.
2. Written consent from the owner of the vehicle including a statement indicating the capacity of the vehicle.
3. The parent or guardian of each student who may be transported in a private vehicle has been notified of the use of private vehicles and has signed a written permission form authorizing the transportation of their son or daughter in a private vehicle. The permission form shall specifically indicate that the School District does not investigate or make any representations regarding the suitability or driving record of any operator of a private vehicle.
4. Mileage reimbursement may be paid to the owner of the vehicle. However, no other compensation or remuneration may be paid. This provision shall not apply to employees of the District who, in the scope of their employment, transport students.
5. The operator of the vehicle will comply with federal and state Safety Belt and Child Restraint laws.