

## **COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **Transportation Procedures**

#### **ELIGIBILITY TO RIDE ON COLCHESTER BUSES**

Per Colchester School District (District) policy F12: Transportation, where it is reasonable and necessary to enable a student entitled or required to attend a school within the District, the District may furnish student transportation to and from school on public roads. Except where mandated by federal and state law, the provision of transportation is a privilege and it is not required or mandated for most students.

Eligible riders are:

1. Resident students in grades K-12 enrolled in District schools or enrolled by the District in other selected area schools.
2. People approved by the administration for clearly stated reasons (i.e. chaperones, coaches, aides, monitors, etc.).
3. School staff (other than described in item 2 above) with approval of the Superintendent.

#### **ESTABLISHMENT OF ROUTES**

The Contractor shall be responsible for establishing bus routes on public roads. All routes will be approved by the Superintendent or designee before being finalized.

The following factors will be considered when determining routes and stops:

1. the age and health of pupils,
2. safety of walking routes between pickup location and bus stop,
3. number and size of buses available,
4. number of students to be served,
5. geographic area to be served,
6. school start and end times,
7. distance to be traveled from pickup location to school,
8. condition of the road and
9. type of road.

The Contractor and Superintendent or designee may consider any other factors they deem appropriate when establishing routes and designated stops. Bus routes will not be developed to accommodate transportation to a student's place of employment. Bus stops will not be granted outside the town limits of the Town of Colchester. The Superintendent or designee is empowered to make changes to any bus route to meet current needs. Such changes, however, require clear notification to the parents/guardians of affected students.

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 one mile to a bus stop and students in grades K-5 will not walk more than .5 mile to a bus stop.

Although every effort will be made to ensure that students are not spending more than forty-five (45) minutes riding to or home from school, those limits cannot be guaranteed.

For students who qualify as a Colchester resident per Vermont Residency Law and reside with a parent/guardian who lives in another town, the district is not responsible for providing transportation to and from the non-Colchester residence.

### **TRANSPORTATION FOR K-2 STUDENTS**

Students in grades K-2 who live within the area known as “the Zone” will be eligible for transportation to the school to which they have been assigned upon enrollment, either Porters Point School or Union Memorial School. The following streets constitute the Zone:

Acorn Lane	Gilman Circle	Mountain View Drive	South Park Drive
Bay Ridge Estates	Harvest Lane	Naomi’s Way	Suncrest Terrace
Blakely Road	Hawkes Way	Oak Circle	Sunderland Woods Road
Camels Hump Avenue	Hercules Drive	Perimeter Drive	Truman Drive
College Parkway	Hill Spring Lane	Poor Farm Road	University Lane
Commerce Street	Jefferson Drive	Rathe Road	Winchester Place
Coolidge Court	Johanna’s Lane	Rea Janet Drive	
Dalton Drive	Johnson Avenue	Red Pines Lane	
Douglas Drive	Lincoln Drive	Roosevelt Highway (Severance to Hercules)	
East Lakeshore Drive	Lone Birch Drive	Severance Green	
Edgewood Drive	Mt. Mansfield Avenue	Sophie’s Lane	
Ethan Allen Avenue	Mt. Sterling Avenue	South Oak Circle	

If a family lives outside of the Zone and is approved for a waiver to attend the school on the other side of town from where they reside, they are responsible for providing daily transportation for their student if their home is not on an existing bus route to/from that school.

### **DROP OFF FOR KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS**

Students in kindergarten must be picked up by a parent/guardian or other individual listed as one of the student’s contacts. For bus riders, if an authorized individual is not visible at the bus stop, the student will remain on the bus and be returned to the school to be picked up by a parent/guardian or individual listed as one of the student’s contacts. Families will be notified via phone call.

### **NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS**

Transportation for non-resident students may only be provided by action of the Colchester School Board (Board) on the recommendation of the Superintendent, or designee, where the number of students geographically would make it cost effective. Transportation for non-resident students will be regularly evaluated and may discontinue at the conclusion of any school year, to take effect the following school year.

The District is not responsible for the transportation of school choice students to or from schools in other towns.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES TRANSPORTATION**

Schools must provide an authorized coach, chaperone, or staff member to ride on all extracurricular and field trips to help monitor and remind students of behavior norms, including keeping the bus free of trash. Exceptions to having an adult ride along may only be made by mutual agreement, in advance, of the coach/activity adviser and bus contractor for intra-district trips and be approved by the Principal in advance.

Students are required to ride the bus to/from all events for which the school provides transportation. Exceptions for alternative transportation must be requested in writing by the student's parent/guardian and must be approved by the authorized school representative (athletics/activity director, coach, advisor, teacher) in advance. Only a responsible adult may provide alternative transportation home from an extracurricular or field trip. While on the bus, students are expected to adhere to the rules of the bus driver and bus contractor and to pick up all trash before exiting the bus.

The District does not compensate families who transport their child(ren) to and from extracurricular activities or field trips.

### **DELAY AND CLOSURE NOTIFICATION**

The Board empowers the Superintendent 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 families and employees via phone call, email, and text message via the District's mass communication system. The public will be notified via local radio, television stations, and the District's website.

When possible, the District may communicate to families when a bus is delayed to or from one of the district's schools. The message will be sent to the families whose students ride on the affected route.

### **ALTERNATE STOPS**

Permission slips from parents and approval from the school are required for any single-day changes to normal drop-off/pick-up points. Please send a written notice to the front office as preferred by the child's school (email, note, electronic form, etc...) with as much advance notice as possible.

Permanent address changes should be coordinated through front office staff at the child's school. These staff will update the student information database and coordinate with the Contractor on any busing needs.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

Bus transportation is a privilege. The necessity of providing safe transportation requires students to exhibit self-control and proper behavior while riding. Refer to District policy F1: Student Conduct and Discipline for the specific expectations of each school.

Violation of these rules may result in the student's loss of transportation privileges. Loss of privilege is determined by the Principal. They may consult with the Bus Driver and/or Contractor, but the decision of the Principal is final.

### **CAMERAS AND VIDEO RECORDINGS**

Refer to District policy E6: Video Surveillance for information regarding the use of cameras and video recordings on school buses.

## **SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION**

There are times when the general transportation provided to all students is not sufficient in meeting a student's documented transportation needs to access school (i.e. wheelchair accessibility, placement in an alternative school, modified day). In these situations, specialized transportation is needed. The Colchester School District supports specialized transportation using district owned and operated vans and contracting with transportation companies. The scheduling of specialized transportation is done through the transportation coordinator. Assignments for rides are done with the overall needs of the district in consideration. At times, changes to the mode of transportation (i.e. type of vehicle, specific driver, times of transportation, group size) will need to be made to meet the transportation demands.

## **TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS BY EMPLOYEES IN PRIVATE VEHICLES**

The District acknowledges that there are positions that require employees to transport students in their private vehicles. Employees should never transport a student in a private vehicle without administrative approval. For positions where transporting students is not required, the district strongly discourages the use of private vehicles. However, there are times, such as but not limited to the following, when the use of private vehicles is allowed:

- as part of an employee's job (i.e. Arches, Life Skills and Work Study, etc.),
- certain athletic and co-curricular events or
- a student is unable to ride a bus safely to/from a field trip.

Private vehicles are prohibited for use on field trips except where noted in bullet 3 above.

Whenever a private vehicle is used, the following conditions must be met prior to transporting students:

1. The operator of the vehicle certifies that:
  - a. They are at least eighteen (18) years of age and have a valid driver's license.
  - b. They have 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 more than nine passengers.
2. Written consent from the owner of the vehicle including a statement indicating the capacity of the vehicle.
3. The parent/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 child in a private vehicle. The permission form shall specifically indicate that the District does not investigate or make any representations regarding the suitability or driving record of any operator of a private vehicle.
4. The District understands there are times when written parent/guardian permission can't be obtained. Every effort will be made to get verbal permission from the parent/guardian. For example, if a student gets injured on a walking field trip, they may need to be transported back to school by private vehicle.
5. Mileage reimbursement may be paid to the employee. However, no other compensation or remuneration may be paid, such as vehicle maintenance.

6. The operator of the vehicle will comply with federal and state Safety Belt and Child Restraint laws.

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