

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

5181.

1. Statement of Policy

The Meriden Board of Education (the "Board") will provide transportation for students under provisions of state law and regulations. In determining the provision of transportation, the Superintendent of Schools shall consider the guidelines contained in this policy and shall administer the operation so as to:

1. provide for the safety of students, including consideration of hazardous conditions whether or not described in this policy;
2. provide for appropriate supervision for students while on school transportation, consistent with the Board's student discipline policy; and
3. assist disabled students by providing appropriate specialized transportation when required by law.

II. Definitions

1. "School transportation" means the procedure, program, or implemented plan by which a pupil is transported to and/or from school from his/her residence or the assigned bus stop at public expense, whether by use of publicly owned equipment or by contract. Such transportation shall be over public roads approved and maintained by the municipality or the state of Connecticut, or private roads approved pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-220c.
2. "Walking distance" means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the pupil's residence and his/her school from a point at the curb or edge of a public or private road nearest the pupil's residence to a point at the entrance of the school, or a safe entrance to the school grounds located within one hundred feet of the school building entrance or the bus pick-up area, or the route from the point on the public thoroughfare nearest the residence to the school bus or vehicle embarkation point established by the Board.
3. "One mile walking distance" means a reasonable measurement of a route to be traversed extending from the point of measurement at least 5,280 feet, but not more than 5,380 feet.
4. "Grade K" means kindergarten, or a school program appropriate to a beginning pupil.
5. "Hazard" means a thing or condition, as prescribed in this policy under "Hazardous Conditions" that affects the safety of pupils walking to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area.
6. "Sidewalk" means a portion of the landscape right of way approximately three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes which may be paved or unpaved, and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area or fencing; apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement.
7. "Raised walk area" means a portion of the landscape right of way approximately three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes which may be paved or unpaved, distinguished by some elevation above the street pavement level and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area or fencing; apart from and independent of any painted safety markings along the street pavement.

8. "Walking route" means the route that the student is expected to travel between his/her residence to and from school and/or an assigned bus stop.
9. "Bus stop" shall be defined as a geographical location designated by the Board, school administration or their designee where students can safely wait for purposes of embarking or disembarking a school bus.
10. "Pupil" means any individual of school age enrolled in a public or nonprofit private school located within the school district or contiguous school district as the case may be.

III. Provision of Transportation

Transportation by private carrier may be provided whenever such practice is more economical than using school district-owned/leased facilities. If parents volunteer, and the administration permits, parents may be reimbursed for transportation of eligible students whenever such practice is more economical or convenient for the school district.

In determining the provision of transportation for resident public and eligible private school students, the following guidelines regarding walking distances will be considered. Distance measurements will be based on the most direct route from the student's home beginning at a point at the curb or edge of a public road or highway nearest the home to the edge of the school property.

<u>School Level</u>	<u>Limit</u>
Elementary School	1 mile
Middle School	1 1/2 miles
High School	2 miles

Students living within the stated distance limits will receive transportation when, in the opinion of the Superintendent of Schools, it is in the best interests of the district to provide transportation.

IV. Access to Bus Stops/Transportation

Parents and/or guardians are responsible for ensuring the safety of their children up until the point when students board the school bus or other school provided transportation, and after students get off the bus after school. This responsibility includes the selection of walking routes to/from any bus stop and/or the school building and the provision of supervision that is appropriate to the student's age, maturity and conditions along the walking route and/or at the bus stop at all times.

Given that bus pick up times may vary, the Board expects that parents and/or guardians will ensure that their children arrive at the bus stop in advance of any scheduled pick up time.

V. Hazardous Conditions

The administration shall consider the following guidelines for hazardous conditions when making decisions regarding the transportation of children:

1. Except as provided in Paragraph 7 of this Section, a street or road, along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area, having an adjacent or parallel sidewalk or raised walk area shall be deemed hazardous when any one of the following conditions exist:

a) For elementary school students:

(i) the absence of a pedestrian crossing light or crossing guard where three or more streets intersect, and a pupil is expected to cross the street; OR

(ii) street crossings where there are no stop signs or crossing guards and the traffic count during the time that pupils are walking to or from school exceeds sixty vehicles per hour at the intersection, and a pupil is expected to cross the street.

b) For middle and high school students, the absence of a traffic light or stop signs or crossing guard at an intersection where three or more streets intersect that has a traffic count that exceeds ninety vehicles per hour during the time that pupils are walking to or from school, and such pupils are expected to cross the street;

c) For all pupils:

(i) any street, road, or highway with speed limits in excess of forty miles per hour which does not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where pupils must cross when going to or from school or the bus stop; OR

(ii) the usual or frequent presence of any nuisance such as open man-holes, construction, loading zones where delivery trucks are permitted to park on walkways, commercial entrances and exits where cars are crossing walking areas at speeds in excess of five miles per hour, and the like, including such nuisances which are hazardous or attractive to children.

1. Any street, road, or highway, along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area, that has no sidewalks or raised walk areas shall be deemed hazardous if any one of the following conditions exist:

a) For elementary school students:

(i) any street, road, or highway possessing a traffic count of sixty or more vehicles per hour at the time that pupils are walking to or from school; OR

(ii) any street, road, or highway possessing a speed limit in excess of thirty miles per hour.

b) For all pupils:

(i) the presence of man-made hazards including attractive nuisances, as stated in 1(c)(ii) above;
OR

(ii) any roadway available to vehicles that does not have a minimum width of approximately twenty-two feet; OR

(iii) any street, road, or highway where the line-of-sight visibility together with posted speed limits do not permit vehicular braking/stopping in accordance with the Connecticut Drivers Manual or Department of Transportation, Division of Design Standard, or other reasonable standard.

1. Any walkway, path, or bridge, along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area, in an area adjacent or parallel to railroad tracks shall be considered hazardous unless a suitable physical barrier along the entire pedestrian route is present and fixed between pupils and the track; and any crossing of railroad tracks carrying moving trains during hours that pupils are walking to or from school or to and from a designated bus pick-up area shall be deemed hazardous unless:

a) a crossing guard is present; OR

b) for elementary school students, an automatic control bar is present at crossings; OR

c) for middle and high school students, a bar or red flashing signal light is operational.

1. For elementary school students, the following conditions shall be deemed hazardous:

a) a lake, pond, stream, culvert, water-way, or bridge shall be deemed a hazard in the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier fixed between the pupil and the water; OR

b) any area adjacent to a roadway, sidewalk, or bridge, along a designated walking route to or from school and/or to or from a designated bus pick-up area, having a drop of three or more feet per four feet of travel length on either side of the established lanes, in the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier.

1. For elementary school students, walking to or from school or the bus stop at any time prior to one-half hour before sunrise or any time one-half hour after sunset shall be deemed hazardous.

2. For all students, walking along any street, road, walkway, sidewalk, or path designated as a walking route which passes through an area which has a history of aggressive acts of molestation resulting in actual or threatened physical harm or moral degradation during the hours when pupils ordinarily walk to or from school shall be deemed hazardous.

3. It shall not be a "hazard" or "hazardous condition" for a pupil whose residence abuts a public street, road or highway to (1) wait for the bus on the private property where the pupil resides for the school bus, until the school bus's flashing red lights are activated to stop traffic so that the student can enter onto or cross the public street, road or highway to get on a school bus; or (2) exit a school bus that is stopped on the public street, road or highway, when the bus's flashing red lights are activated to stop traffic so that the pupil can enter onto or cross such street, road or highway to access the private property where the pupil resides.

VI. School Bus Routes

1. School bus routes shall be established by the Manager of Transportation in a manner that provides for the safe and timely arrival of students eligible for transportation services to and

from their bus stop to their assigned schools.

2. Bus stops shall be established primarily on main streets or avenues. Supplemental bus stops may be established on those secondary streets that connect with main thoroughfares.
3. In order to ensure equitable and efficient service, bus stops shall, when practical, be placed at street intersections.
4. School buses shall not be routed into condominium residential areas or streets that have cul-de-sacs, or other private roadways.
5. A student's bus stop shall be established at a location walkable from the student's residence, but may not exceed one (1) mile.
6. Bus stops shall not be established at an individual student's residence except where required by state and/or federal law.

VII. Applicability and Exceptions

1. This policy is applicable to public road approved and maintained by the municipality or state of Connecticut, or private roads approved for passage of school transportation vehicles in accordance with C.G.S. Section 10-220c.
2. Special Education pupils and pupils eligible for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act shall be judged on an individual basis, and appropriate transportation provided.
3. The Superintendent of Schools may grant an exception to any guideline set forth in this policy where a peculiar condition or combination of conditions renders such condition(s) a hazard based upon reasonable judgment; or where under the circumstances, other conditions exist under which the safety of students necessitates a variance with the guidelines within this policy.

VII. Complaint Procedure

1. All complaints concerning school transportation safety shall be made in writing to the Superintendent of Schools or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall maintain a written record of all such complaints, and shall conduct appropriate investigations of the allegations in a timely manner. The investigation shall include 1) the review of the complaint raised with appropriate personnel responsible for transportation of students and 2) the opportunity for the parent or other person making the complaint to meet with the Superintendent or designee to discuss the complaint and any possible resolution thereof.
2. Annually, within thirty (30) business days of the end of the school year, the Superintendent of Schools or designee shall provide the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles ("Commissioner") with a copy of the written record of complaints received during the previous twelve (12) month period.
3. The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall make a written report of the circumstances of any accident within the Board's jurisdiction and knowledge, involving a motor vehicle and any pedestrian who is a student, which occurs at a designated school bus stop or in the immediate vicinity thereof, to the Commissioner within ten (10) business days thereafter on a form prescribed by the Commissioner.
4. If a complaint is covered by Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes, and is not resolved by the Superintendent or designee, the Superintendent or designee shall inform the

parent or guardian, or an emancipated minor or a pupil eighteen years of age or older, of his or her right to request a hearing regarding the complaint. Such hearing, if requested, shall be held in accordance with Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as it may be amended from time to time.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education re: school attendance. Hearings. Appeals to state board. Establishment of hearing board. Readmission. Transfers.

10-187 Appeal from finding of hearing board.

10-220 Duties of boards of education.

10-220c Transportation of children over private roads. Immunity from Liability.

10-221c Development of policy for reporting complaints regarding school transportation safety.

10-273a Reimbursement for transportation to and from elementary and secondary schools.

10-280a Transportation for students in non-profit private schools outside school district.

10-281 Transportation for pupils in nonprofit private schools within school district.

14-275 Equipment and color of school buses.

14-275b Transportation of mobility impaired students.

14-275c Regulations re: school buses and motor vehicles used to transport special education students.

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Amended: November 21, 2017

Amended: September 1, 2020

Previous Policy Number: EE1

5181.1 (R).

The Meriden Board of Education has adopted the following guidelines to govern the eligibility for and use of transportation services by students residing in Meriden.

A. Definitions

1. *Walking distance* as used in these guidelines means the line of measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the student's residence and the school to which he/she is assigned from a point at the curb, or edge of a public road or highway nearest the student's residence to a point on a paved walkway within 100 ft. of a school building entrance.
2. *Mile walking distance* as used in these guidelines means a reasonable measurement of a route to be traveled extending from a point of measurement to a point of measurement of 5,280 feet, which will be used to determine a student's eligibility for transportation services.
3. *Walking route* as used in these guidelines means a portion of the right of way at least two feet wide, paved or unpaved, usually parallel to the traffic lanes and marked, for example, by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area, or fencing apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement.

B. Eligibility for Transportation

1. Transportation shall be provided for:
2. Elementary school students (includes preschool and kindergarten) who have a walking distance to their assigned school of more than one (1) mile.
3. Middle school students who have a walking distance to their assigned school of more than one and a half (1.5) miles.
4. High school students who have a walking distance to their assigned school of more than two (2) miles.
5. Transportation shall be provided to students with special needs in accordance with federal and state laws following notification from the Director of Pupil Personnel.

C. Walking Route A walking route shall be deemed hazardous when the Manager of Transportation determines that any one of the following conditions exists:

1. For students enrolled in grades PreK-5, the absence of a pedestrian crossing light or a crossing guard where three or more streets intersect, and at street crossings where there are no stop signs or crossing guards;
2. Any street, road or highway with posted speed limits in excess of forty miles per hour which does not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where students must cross in going to and from school; or
3. The usual or frequent presence of any nuisance such as open manholes, construction, loading zones where delivery trucks are permitted to park on walkways, commercial entrances and exits where cars are crossing walking areas at speeds in excess of five miles per hour.
4. Any street, road or highway which has no sidewalks or walk areas shall be deemed unduly hazardous when the Manager of Transportation determines that any of the following conditions

exists:

5. A posted speed limits in excess of forty miles per hour where there are no pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where students must cross when going to or from school or the bus stop;
6. The line-of-sight visibility together with posted speed limits does not permit vehicular braking/stopping sufficient to ensure the safety of persons walking along the road; or
7. A line-of-sight obstruction caused by a hill, curve, structure, outcropping, land form planting, or other obscuring object or structure which may be safely negotiated by a vehicle traveling only at speeds under fifteen miles per hour.
8. Any walkway or path in an area adjacent and parallel to railroad tracks without a physical barrier along the entire pedestrian route between students and the tracks and any required crossing of railroad tracks which carry moving trains during the hours that students are walking to and from school shall be deemed hazardous unless one of the following conditions exist:
9. A crossing guard is present; or
10. An automatic control bar is present at crossings used by children enrolled in grades PreK through 5, or a bar or red flashing signal light is operational when the crossing is used for students in middle or high school.
11. Any street, road, walkway or path designed as a walking route for students which passes through an area which has a history of aggressive acts or molestation resulting in actual or threatened physical harm or moral degradation during hours when students ordinarily walk to or from school shall be deemed hazardous.
12. A walking route shall be considered unduly hazardous whenever students enrolled in grades PreK through 8 are required to walk to and from school at any time prior to one-half hour before sunrise or one-half hour after sunset.

D.School Bus Routes

1. School bus routes shall be established by the Manager of Transportation in a manner that provides for the safe and timely arrival of students eligible for transportation services to and from their bus stop to their assigned schools.
2. Bus stops shall be established primarily on main streets or avenues. Supplemental bus stops may be established on those secondary streets that connect with main thoroughfares.
3. In order to ensure equitable and efficient service, bus stops shall, when practical, be placed at street intersections.
4. School buses shall not be routed into condominium residential areas or streets that have cul-de-sacs, or other private roadways.
5. A student's bus stop shall be established at a location walkable from the student's residence, but may not exceed one (1) mile.
6. Bus stops shall not be established at an individual student's residence except where required by state and/or federal law.

E.Student Behavior

1. Students shall conduct themselves on a school bus and at a bus stop in a manner consistent

with established standards of conduct.

2. At the beginning of each school year, a copy of the Code of Behavior for Bus Students (the "Code") shall be provided to each student eligible for transportation services by the student's assigned school. Each student and his parent or guardian must submit written acknowledgment of receipt of the Code.
3. Students eligible for transportation services must present a current bus pass to the bus driver. Failure to produce the bus pass, upon request from the bus driver, may result in denial of transportation services.
4. Students found in violation of the Code shall be referred to their school principal for appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension of transportation services. (See Board Policy 5110).

F. Parental Responsibility

1. Parental cooperation is needed to maintain proper conduct of students at bus stops and on school buses.
2. Parents of preschool students are required to meet school buses when students are discharged. Failure to do so may result in the suspension of transportation services.
3. Parents of younger children are encouraged to meet buses until confident that their children are capable of safely walking to and from their school bus independently.
4. The Board of Education shall seek reimbursement of damages to school buses from the parents of children who have been found responsible for acts of vandalism.

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Amended November 21, 2017

Previous Policy Number: EE1-R

Ensuring the Safe Transportation of School Children

5181.2.

It shall be the policy of the Meriden Board of Education to maintain a record of all written complaints relative to school transportation safety. Complaints alleging a breach of safe operating procedures must be received in writing and should be specific as to the date, time and location of an incident, name of the driver or number of the bus involved, basis of the complaint, names of witnesses, if possible, and name, address, phone number of signature of complainant. The Assistant Superintendent will provide any complainant with a form for such reporting purposes. Upon receipt of the form, the Assistant Superintendent will investigate each incident and note on the form the results of that investigation, and will notify the complainant of the disposition of said complaint.

The filing of the complaint, the investigation and disposition of each case should be done in as timely a manner as possible. The Assistant Superintendent shall provide the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles with a copy of the written record of complaints within thirty days of the end of the school year.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes, 10-221c

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Amended November 21, 2017

Previous Policy Number: EE1.4

Authorized Transportation

5181.3.

Transportation of students participating in authorized activities such as educational field trips, participation in athletic events and participation in other authorized school activities may be furnished at the school district's expense or on a cost-sharing basis as determined by the principal or an appropriate member of staff. Approval for transportation shall be based on its educational value or on its value to support the established objectives of the school system.

Self-supporting, non-educational transportation must have prior authorization of the principal.

The Board of Education shall carry liability and property damage insurance in the minimum amount as determined by the city to cover non-city-owned vehicles used to provide transportation in Connecticut for an authorized activity of the Board of Education. Such liability and property damage insurance coverage shall be secondary to the employees- own insurance coverage. Employees who regularly use personal vehicles on Board business shall supply satisfactory evidence that there is currently in force liability and property insurance at least in the minimum amount of coverage as carried by the city.

Cross Reference:

Policy 6153 (Field Trips and Excursions)

Transportation Zones

5181.4.

Transportation zones shall be established and revised as necessary by the Board to provide transportation to and from school for those students who might be deprived the opportunity of obtaining an education because of hazardous walking routes, distances to school, topographical hardships, time or physical handicap.

Transportation zones shall include all areas of the school district and transportation shall be provided so that students shall not be expected to walk more than the following distances from their homes to the district school:

Elementary School 1 mile

Middle School 1-1/2 miles

High School 2 miles

Preschool, kindergarten and first grade students living less than one mile from the school may be provided transportation along regularly scheduled routes if seats are available on the regularly scheduled vehicles. The Superintendent may approve transportation for students when other extraordinary situations exist.

The Board shall establish and revise as necessary regulations to govern the transportation of students to conform to Connecticut statutes.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-220

Cross Reference:

Policy 5181 (Student Transportation)

Policy 3541.3 (Operation of Vehicles on Private Roads)

Approved 4/28/1981

Amended 7/16/1996