

## Series 3000 - Business and Non-Instructional Operations

### 5. Non-Instructional Operations

#### G. Auxiliary Agencies

##### (1) Transportation

###### Purpose

The Suffield Board of Education shall provide transportation, under provisions of state law and regulation, for all students eligible to be transported to and from school. The Board shall also provide for its students enrolled in any grade from kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, attending nonpublic nonprofit schools within the district, the same kind of transportation services provided for its students in such grades attending public schools when a majority of the students attending such a nonpublic school are residents of the State of Connecticut.

Suffield Public Schools will not provide transportation to out-of-town schools except as required by State Statutes, without specific permission from the Superintendent. The primary objective of the bus operation is the safe, efficient and cost effective transportation of students to and from school.

Parents and/or legal guardians are reminded that prior to pick up and upon drop off, it is the parent's responsibility to ensure the child's safety.

###### Federal Compliance

Transportation will be provided for homeless students to and from the school of origin as required by the No Child Left Behind Act. These services shall be provided throughout the regularly scheduled school year and day as determined by the Board.

Transportation will be provided for an eligible student who attends a district school out of the student's attendance area because the home school has been identified as in need of improvement, the student is a victim of a violent criminal offense occurring in or on the grounds of the school the student attends, or the student attends a school identified as persistently dangerous.

Transportation may be provided to eligible students who transfer from a district school to an out-of-district school under a cooperative agreement because their home school has been identified as in need of improvement under the No Child Left Behind Act.

##### 1. Definitions

“**Bus stop**” means a geographical location designated by the board of education or school administration where students can safely wait for purposes of boarding or debarking a school bus.

“**Grade K**” means kindergarten, or a school program appropriate to a beginning pupil.

“**Hazard**” means a thing or condition, as prescribed in these guidelines, affecting the safety or students walking to and from school or the bus stop.

“**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.

“**Parent**” means parent and/or guardian.

“**Student**” 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.

“**Raised walk area or sidewalk**” means a portion of the landscaped right of way at least 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, fencing; apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement.

“**School transportation**” means the procedure, program or fully effective and implemented plan by which a pupil is conveyed to or from school from home or the bus stop at public expense, whether by use of publicly owned equipment or by contract. Such transportation shall be over public roads approved by the municipality or private roads approved pursuant to C.C.S. Section 10-220c.

“**Walking distance**” means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the pupil’s residence and his 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 stop or vehicle embarkation point established by the board of education or school administration.

## 2. Hazardous Conditions

- a) The maximum walking distances from home to school or to a prescribed point of embarkation are the following:
1. students enrolled in grades K through 5, one mile;
  2. students enrolled in grades 6 through 8, one and one-half miles;
  3. students enrolled in grades 9 through 12, two miles.

Any walking route to either the bus stop or the school which is in excess of the above distances shall be hazardous.

- b) A street or road having an adjacent or parallel sidewalk or raised walk area shall be deemed hazardous when any one of the following conditions exists:

1. For students enrolled in grades K through 5, absence of pedestrian crossing light or crossing guard where three or more streets intersect, and at street crossings where there are no stop signs or crossing guards and the traffic count during the time that students are walking to or from school or bus stop exceeds sixty (60) vehicles per hour at the intersection;
  2. For students enrolled in grades 6 through 8, the absence of a traffic light or stop signs or crossing guard where three or more streets intersect and has a traffic count which exceeds ninety (90) vehicles per hour during the time that students are walking to or from school or bus stop;
  3. For all students, any street, road or highway with speed limits in excess of forty (40) miles per hour which do not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where students must cross when going to or from school or bus stop; and
  4. For all students, the usual or frequent presence of any nuisance such as open man-holes, construction, snow plowed or piled on the walk area making walkways unusable, 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 (5) miles per hour, and the like, including such nuisance which is hazardous or attractive to students.
- c) Any street, road or highway which has no sidewalks or raised walk areas shall be deemed hazardous if any one of the following conditions exist:
1. For students enrolled in grades K through 5, any street, road or highway possessing a traffic count of sixty (60) or more vehicle per hour at the time that students are walking to or from school or a bus stop;
  2. For all students, the presence of man-made hazards including attractive nuisances, as stated in number 4 above;
  3. For all students, any roadway available to vehicles that does not have a minimum width of twenty (20) feet as shown in the records of the Town of Suffield;
  4. For students under age ten, or enrolled in grades K through 3, any street, road or highway possessing a speed limit in excess of thirty (30) miles per hour.
- d) Any street, road or highway which has no sidewalks or raised walk areas shall be deemed hazardous when the line-of-sight visibility together with posted speed limits do not permit vehicular braking/stopping in accordance with the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles, Connecticut Department of Transportation or other reasonable standard and confirmed by the Suffield Police Department.
- e) Any walkway, path or bridge 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 students and the track; and any crossing of railroad tracks that carry moving trains during hours that students are walking to or from school shall be deemed hazardous unless, (1) a crossing guard is present; or (2) an automatic control bar is present at crossings used by students under age ten, or, a bar or red flashing signal light is operational when the crossing is used by students over ten years of age.

- f) A lake, pond, stream, culvert, waterway or bridge shall be deemed a hazard in the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier fixed between the pupil and the water for students in grades K through 5.
- g) Any area adjacent to a roadway, walkway, sidewalk or bridge having a drop of three or more feet per four feet of travel length on either side of the established lanes, the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier shall be deemed hazardous for students in grades K through 5.
- h) Any street, road, walkway, sidewalk or path designated as a walking route for all school students 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 students ordinarily walk to or from school shall be deemed hazardous.
- i) 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 for students in grades K through 5.

These guidelines are applicable to private roads approved for passage of school transportation vehicles in accordance with C.G.S. Section 10-220c.

Transportation requirements for students with physical disabilities and/or health conditions and Special Education students shall be determined on an individual basis consistent with the requirements of state and federal law, upon receipt of supporting documentation.

Exception:

The school administration, may grant an exception to any provision of these guidelines wherein a peculiar condition or combination of conditions renders such condition(s) a hazard based upon reasonable judgment. Exemptions will be documented by the district's Business Office manager which will include tentative start and end dates.

**Designated Bus Routes and Stops**

Bus routes and stops are developed taking into consideration safety and efficiency. School bus transportation is provided from the assigned pick-up point to school and from school back to the assigned drop-off area. The Board recognizes that for both safety and discipline reasons, all students should be transported daily on the same regularly assigned bus. Although strongly discouraged, the Board will allow limited exceptions to its position, when no other arrangements can be worked out by the parent. These exceptions are subject to the following regulations:

- a) Any and all exceptions are for the current school year.

- b) All parental requests to have their students picked up or dropped off at a daycare location other than the listed family residence must submit the request to the school principal at least 2 weeks prior to the effective date. The principal may approve the parental request only if the schedule for an alternate drop off or pick up location relating to daycare for elementary and intermediate students is for five (5) days per week. If approved by the principal, the bus company will be notified and the change will be accommodated subject to availability of space on the new bus, if not the same bus as the home address.
- c) In cases of infrequent, one school day, parental requests for either discharge at another stop along their bus route or a transfer to a bus other than their assigned bus, must be made in writing to the principal or designee. The principal or designee shall have the authority to grant or deny the request. If approved, the bus driver will receive a copy of the signed request and the office shall retain a copy in the school office.
- d) Mid-day Kindergarten drop-offs and pick-ups will be at the student homes, if possible. Morning pick-ups and afternoon drop-offs on regularly scheduled multi-grade runs will be at the designated bus stop location.
- e) Whenever possible, bus stops should include several students in a common area, or group stops.
  1. On streets with sidewalks, stops should not be less than ¼ mile apart and stops at neighboring houses will not occur, unless there are special circumstances as outlined elsewhere in this policy.
  2. On streets without sidewalks that are deemed hazardous in other areas of this policy, bus stops may be house to house stops.
  3. On streets that are not deemed hazardous, stops may be group stops along the road or at the intersection of another non-hazardous street.

### **Late Busses for After-School Activities**

Late busses may be provided as a convenience for students participating in after-school activities. If they are budgeted and provided, the intent is to bring students to the vicinity of their homes, but mileage requirements of this policy are waived. Parents are responsible for picking students up from the designated drop-off points.

Students may ride only the bus to which they are assigned, unless given specific release via a note signed by a parent or guardian and approved by a school principal or designee.

### **Transportation Appeals**

Appeals of any administrative decision, concerning school transportation shall be made in the following manner:

1. Discuss the matter with the Business Manager – other than student disciplinary issues.
2. If no resolution is reached under (1) above, discuss the matter with the Superintendent.

3. If no resolution is reached under (2) above, discuss the matter with the Facilities and Transportation Subcommittee of the Board of Education.

### **Appeals of School Accommodations**

Only matters of denial of school accommodations are eligible for Board review. Any parent/guardian or student at majority, or officer whose duty it is to compel the observance of attendance laws who believes that the superintendent/designee is not furnishing school accommodations, by transportation or otherwise, in a manner consistent with the laws of the State of Connecticut, request a hearing before the Board to demonstrate the manner in which the superintendent/designee has allegedly failed to furnish such required accommodations.

The Board shall hold a hearing within ten (10) days following receipt of such request. The hearing before the Board will be in compliance with the provisions of Section 4-177 to 4-180 inclusive of the Connecticut General Statutes.

A stenographic record or tape recording shall be made of such hearing.

### **Transportation Safety Complaints**

All complaints concerning school transportation safety, including issues relating to the drivers (but not student discipline), shall be made in writing to the office of the business manager. The business manager shall maintain a written record of all such complaints, and shall conduct appropriate investigations of the allegations. Appeals of decisions by the business manager may be made to the superintendent. The superintendent/ designee 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 (CGS)  
10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education  
14-275a Use of standard school bus required, when.  
14-275b Transportation of handicapped students  
14-275c Regulations re school buses and motor vehicles used to transport special education students  
School Accommodations workshop package/St. Dept. of Ed.  
10/08

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SUFFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Suffield, Connecticut