



Irvine Unified School District

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

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SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

INITIATION, REINSTATEMENT, OR CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION

When a request to initiate transportation is received by the Transportation Department, on an average, it takes approximately 5 to 7 workdays **from the time of the appointment** with the Transportation Department to establish a new route.

As soon as our department receives the request to initiate transportation for your child, a Transportation Specialist will contact you. This person will schedule a meeting with you and your child to accomplish the following:

1. To designate a specific, safe, pick-up/drop-off location for the school bus.
2. To obtain emergency contact information.
3. To photograph your child for our computer data base and Transportation Identification Card.
4. To identify any special transportation needs, such as personal protective/assistive equipment, car seats, or safety securement devices.
5. To ascertain that any required wheelchair or wheeled mobility device is equipped with working brakes and lap belt, and can be properly secured inside the school bus.
6. To identify any pertinent medical problems or physical conditions.

When a request to reinstate, or make a change in a student's transportation is received by the Transportation Department, and can be served on an existing route, it will take approximately 5 to 7 workdays. The existing route must be reviewed and altered, and parents of the students on that route must be contacted with time changes, etc.

All initiation, reinstatement, or changes must be submitted to the Transportation Department by the student's Program Specialist/School/Teacher.

NOTIFICATION - You will be notified by phone regarding starting date and bus time.

LIMITATIONS

1. You are limited to **one** A.M. pick-up location, and **one** P.M. drop-off location, both of which must be within the boundaries of the Irvine Unified School District.
2. There will be no A.M. pick-up from any Child-Care facility, Day Care Center, Kid's Club, etc. (A.M. transportation is available **only from a residence** for pre-school children and severely disabled students, and from the nearest regular District designated school bus stop for non-severely disabled students.)
3. Parent-requested transportation changes are limited to **twice per school year**. This

applies to A.M. pick-up and P.M. drop-off locations.

EXCEPTIONS: Change of residence or family emergencies. If you move during the school year, please be sure to notify your child's Program Specialist/School/Teacher at least **two weeks in advance**.

TIME SCHEDULE - A.M.

The time you are given is actually departure time for the bus. Please regard this as you would departure time for a flight leaving an airport.

Your child must be ready and waiting 5 minutes prior to the departure time. The driver has not been directed to honk the horn, so please watch for the bus. In order to arrive at school on time, the bus must leave each bus stop on schedule.

If your child is not aboard the bus at the scheduled time, the driver will be directed to proceed to the next bus stop.

LATE BUS - A.M.

Occasionally, due to unusual traffic conditions, road construction, mechanical failure, or on-board student behavior problems, the bus may arrive at your bus stop later than scheduled. Again, we ask that you regard this as you would a delayed flight at the airport.

In the event your bus is running extremely late (approximately 10 to 15 minutes or more), our office will make every effort to contact you.

P.M. TRANSPORTATION

Due to circumstances that are beyond our control, we are unable to schedule precise after-school drop-off times. The number of students riding home on the bus can vary from day to day, lengthening or shortening the route time accordingly. Please be aware of your child's dismissal time (including modified day schedule) and expect to have him/her arrive at home shortly thereafter. The driver will not release a very young or severely disabled child unless you (or a person designated by you) is there to receive him/her.

If the bus arrives and no one is home, our office will attempt to reach you and/or your emergency contacts by phone. Your child may be taken back to the school, or to an alternate District facility, if staff is still on site. If the school or facility is not staffed and we have been unable to reach you, **the Irvine Police or Orange County Child Protective Services will be contacted, and the child will be given over into their care.**

If your child is capable of being released at the bus stop or at home without supervision, this should be stated and duly noted during the meeting with the Transportation Specialist.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT (949) 936-5370

If for any reason your child does not require transportation to or from school, please notify the Transportation Department by telephone as soon as possible. If there will be an extended absence from transportation (vacation, etc.), be sure to inform us of the date you will be returning.

If you do not notify us, and your child is absent from the bus for **5 consecutive days**, you will be automatically dropped from the transportation list.

BUS STOP DESIGNATION (DOOR-TO-DOOR TRANSPORTATION)

When setting up a student loading/unloading zone, safety must take precedence over all other considerations. Normally we attempt to place the bus adjacent to your home, but occasionally there are factors involved that limit how close we can park.

Some of those factors are:

- Streets or lanes too narrow for the school bus.
- Overhanging balconies or parking structure roofs (too low for bus to pass under).
- Dead-end streets that require the driver to back the bus. This is considered a high-risk maneuver in a school bus, as visibility to the rear is very limited. **We will not designate a bus stop that requires the driver to back the bus on a daily basis unless there is absolutely no alternative location within a reasonable distance from your home. “Reasonable distance,” in large apartment or condominium complexes, is sometimes as much as 100 yards from the front door.**
- For wheelchair bus stops, there must be paved access from the home to the bus, and adequate space to accommodate the wheelchair lift, preferably without blocking neighboring driveways, parking stalls, etc.
- If your child **does not** require assistance to board or disembark from the bus, State law mandates the use of the bus’ flashing red light system. All traffic must stop until the student is aboard and the lights are cancelled. On heavily traveled streets this can create a traffic jam, or worse, a safety hazard. Therefore, we are occasionally compelled to move a bus stop around a corner, or otherwise off a busy thoroughfare.

WHEN THE BUS ARRIVES

The driver is required to come to a complete stop and secure the vehicle before opening the entrance door. Please follow these simple rules in the interest of your child’s safety:

- Do not stand or allow your child to stand any closer than ten (10) feet from where the bus is going to stop.
- Do not allow your child to approach the bus until the driver opens the entrance door.
- **Never** allow your child to run toward the bus, whether it is in motion or has stopped.
- Make sure your child uses the handrail when climbing or descending the bus steps.

PASSENGER CONDUCT

The California Code of Regulations (Title V, Section 14103) states:

- “a) Pupils transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of and responsible directly to the driver of the bus, and the driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils while they are on the bus or are being escorted across the street. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation.”

While allowances must be made for difficult behaviors exhibited by some Special Needs Students, conduct which creates an unsafe situation aboard the school bus or causes discomfort to another passenger cannot be tolerated. If necessary, as a last resort, we will deny transportation.

We are always willing to work with school staff and parents to teach and encourage appropriate, safe behavior on the bus, and we go to great lengths to avoid using denial of transportation as a disciplinary measure.

BUS RULES

1) Passengers must remain seated with the seat belt properly fastened at all times.

(A child who persistently refuses or is otherwise unable to comply with this safety rule may be required to wear a safety restraint vest while riding the bus. The parents/guardians and Program Staff will first be advised of the child’s behavior, and consulted regarding alternative methods of obtaining the child’s cooperation.)

2) Passengers must keep their hands (and feet) to themselves while aboard the bus, and must never put any parts of their bodies outside the bus windows, or throw any object inside the bus or out the window of the bus.

(Inability to comply with this rule may result in the requirement of a safety restraint vest, as above.)

3) No eating, drinking, or gum chewing is allowed aboard the bus.

Exception: a diabetic child who is in danger of going into shock.

4) Oversized or hazardous articles are not allowed aboard the bus.

Objects too large to fit in the child’s backpack or lunch box may not be brought aboard unless prior arrangements have been made re: safe securement of such items (e.g., special homework projects).

Hazardous articles include (but are not limited to); glass containers, knives or any sharp or pointed objects, or anything which might cause injury to any child on the bus.

5) No animals (mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, fish, etc.) are allowed on the bus at any time.

Exception: a guide, signal and service dog.

ANY QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL US AT (949) 936-5370