

PRESTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

FILE: 12 - TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

File: 12-1 Student Transportation

Last Reviewed: 6-28-10

Next Review: 7-01-12

Pursuant to the authority granted to the Preston County Board of Education in WVC §18-5-13, the Board shall provide, at public expense, means of transportation for all children enrolled in programs of the Preston County Schools who live more than two miles by the nearest available road to their assigned attendance center. Enrolled students, employees or persons approved by the Board of education are the only passengers to be transported by the county school transportation system.

In addition, the board, within the available revenues, may provide adequate means of transportation for children living less than two miles from school under the following circumstances:

- ❖ They live along a regularly established bus route;
- ❖ The bus is not loaded to capacity when it reaches the pupils' stop;
- ❖ Bus safety is not a factor;
- ❖ Those under the limit, furthest distance from attendance area will be given preference;
- ❖ The transportation of such pupils shall not in any way interfere with the regularly scheduled run of said buses; and
- ❖ Children who must walk along extremely hazardous roads may be transported regardless of the distance from home to school.

In all cases, the Board will approve bus routes to be established only on roads that are approved and maintained by the State Department of Highways to the satisfaction of the Board of Education.

Preston County buses may also cross county lines to transport students transferring from one district to another by mutual agreement of both county boards of education. The agreement shall be recorded in the meeting minutes of each participating board.

The Board may also transport school children participating in Board-approved curricular and extracurricular activities. In all cases, the bus or other transportation vehicles owned by the Board of Education shall be driven or operated only by drivers regularly employed by the Board of Education.

The only other transportation specifically authorized by statute is the transportation of participants in projects operated, financed, sponsored, or approved by the Commission on Aging. If these participants are provided transportation services, all costs and expenses incident in any way to the transportation shall be borne by the Commission on Aging or the local or county chapter thereof. (WVC §17C-14-12, §18-2-5, §18-5-13, §18-5-16, §18-9A-7, SBP 4334 and 4336)

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R 12-1-1 School Personnel Responsibilities

The Board of Education expects its bus operators and all others associated with school transportation to be fully acquainted with and to respect the policies, rules and regulations governing the transportation of pupils as approved by the Preston County Board of Education, State Department of Public Safety (State Police) and the State Motor Vehicle Commission along with all regulations described in the Commercial Drivers License Manual. All bus operators shall be provided with the most recent copy of the West Virginia State Department of Education Transportation Regulations.

Operators shall keep accurate accounting of the residences of all students they transport. In the event of any student no longer riding an assigned bus, any new student riding a bus, or any student changing the school they are attending the driver is to immediately report the information to the school principals and provide a written note attached to their monthly reports.

Bus drivers shall deliver completed reports to the Coordinator of Transportation two days after the end of the school month. Failure to report promptly shall be considered neglect of duty. All school buses shall be parked, stationed, or stored at a place designated by the Coordinator of Transportation.

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R 12-1-2 Student Commutes – Home to School

Students generally arrive at school via one of these means: walking, riding in a private vehicle, or riding a county-operated school bus. The following guidelines are provided for the child's safety and the efficiency of the total school operation.

- ❖ Those students who walk should always walk on the left side of the road facing traffic and cross the highway only after carefully checking both ways for on-coming traffic.
- ❖ Following the dismissal bell, those students who walk, will assemble at a safe place away from school bus loading and wait for directions from teachers who will help them safely exit the area. All students present during the dismissal procedures are expected to comply with the authority and directions of the teachers in charge.
- ❖ Parents who deliver their children to school are asked to let them out of the car along a sidewalk, where applicable or in an area designated by the principal. Automobile drivers are to be careful not to block the route of arriving, departing or unloading school buses.
- ❖ Drivers who overtake buses with loading lights activated will be reported to the school administration by any employee who witnesses such action and a letter of warning will be sent to the offending driver. A report may also be sent to local law officials.
- ❖ Students who ride the school bus shall obey the posted rules and regulations governing school bus passengers. They should become familiar with those rules as soon as possible. In addition to those posted guidelines, the following shall be observed:
 - A bus driver has the same authority as a teacher or parent while students are on the bus and all passengers should be respectful to the bus drivers and obey their instructions;
 - Students are expected to remain in assigned seats unless the bus driver gives permission to do otherwise;

- Upon arrival at school, students are expected to directly enter the school and report to their homerooms;
- ❖ Any student who plans to ride another bus or go home in any manner other than usual shall present a written excuse to the principal prior to leaving the school grounds. The student will not be permitted to ride another bus that is already loaded to rated capacity.
- ❖ All students should make it a point to be consistently safe whatever manner of transportation they use.

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R 12-1-3 School Bus Scheduling and Routing

The generation of school bus schedules and routes along with periodic review and at least annual modification is the responsibility of the Coordinator of Transportation. S/he shall have the responsibility of scheduling bus routes in such a fashion that riding time and duplication of service shall be minimal.

Route assignments to drivers are for a specific area of the county and may be extended or shortened within the assigned area as the student residents in that area change. The Coordinator of Transportation should include principals in the planning of bus schedules where their schools are involved or where specific problems occur.

Any driver who knowingly fails to pick up children assigned to his/her route at the beginning or during the school term, shall be considered in neglect of duty and shall be subject to disciplinary action. Drivers are also required to follow the route and schedule as established and to be at each stop at the appointed time as nearly as can be safely accomplished. In the generation of schedules and routes the following guidelines shall be followed:

- ❖ A school bus route shall generally not be established for children who live less than two miles from school.
- ❖ Regular established school bus stops shall be at least two-tenths of a mile apart. The Coordinator of Transportation shall have the authority to make necessary adjustment in unusual circumstances.
- ❖ In case of emergency road conditions, the driver may have the authority to change bus stops for safety reasons.

Standards for the duration of school bus transportation times for students to and from school:

The high quality standards for transportation adopted by the state board pursuant to §18-2E-5D shall include standards for the recommended duration of the one-way school bus transportation time for students to and from school under normal weather and operating conditions as follows:

- ❖ For elementary school students, 30 minutes;
- ❖ For middle school, intermediate school and junior high school students, 45 minutes; and
- ❖ For high school students, 60 minutes.

The Board may not create a new bus route for the transportation of students in any of the grade levels pre-kindergarten through grade five to and from any school included in a school closure, consolidation or new construction project approved after the first day of July, 2008, which exceeds by more than 15 minutes the recommended duration of the one-way school bus transportation time for elementary students adopted by the state board in accordance with subsection (a) of §18-2E-5D unless:

- ❖ The county board adopts a separate motion to approve creation of the route and request written permission of the state board to create the route; and
- ❖ Receives the written permission of the state board to create the route.

The Board may not create, nor may the state board permit, the creation of a new bus route for the transportation of students in any of the grade levels prekindergarten through grade five to and from any school included in a school closure, consolidation or new construction project approved after the first day of July, 2008, which exceeds by more than 30 minutes the recommended duration of the one-way school bus transportation time for elementary students adopted by the state board in accordance with subsection (a) of §18-2E-5D.

The state board shall provide technical assistance to county boards with the objective of achieving school bus transportation routes for students which are within the recommended time durations established by the state board.

All bus schedule changes, made by the Coordinator of Transportation, shall be communicated to the parents and students as quickly as possible.

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R 12-1-4 Payment In Lieu of Bus Transportation

Circumstances and conditions may sometimes exist that justify the payment of an in lieu of transportation fee to the parents/guardians of certain students. In such cases the parent/guardian shall receive the same county reimbursement rate per loaded mile that employees and other persons receive for performing services for the school system (**loaded mile means transporting students to and from school**)

The Superintendent shall make a recommendation to the Board after s/ he, in collaboration with the Coordinator of Transportation, has investigated the existing conditions. The appropriate school officials shall fully explain the circumstances to the parents/guardians of the student and secure their approval of the plan. The plan must be in writing, signed by the Superintendent and the parents/guardians and shall be executed annually if the need for such an arrangement extends beyond the current school term.

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Adopted: August 28, 1995
Amended/Revised: June 28, 2010