

# Northborough - Southborough Regional - Transportation Procedures and Guidelines

## Transportation Procedures and Guidelines

The transportation program of The Public Schools of Northborough, The Public Schools of Southborough, and the Public Schools of Northborough-Southborough is one of many services that the district provides to support the education of its students from Kindergarten through Grade 12. The purpose of these procedures and guidelines are to provide uniform practices for transporting students to and from school, and to and from school-sanctioned events.

**Definitions:** For the purposes of these procedures, the following are defined:

**Measurable Distances:** *The distance between a pupil's residence and the school the pupil is entitled to attend or the nearest school bus stop shall be measured from "portal to portal" over a commonly traveled route.*

**Portal to portal:** *Defined as a public way or sidewalk in front or nearest to a pupil's home of residence to the entrance way of the school building the pupil is attending. When there is more than one entrance to the school building, any entrance may be used for measuring distances.*

**Commonly traveled route:** *Defined as a sidewalk or public way which, in the ordinary course, is open and accessible to pedestrian traffic.*

**Route Design:** Each year, the transportation contractor in partnership with the districts, develops routes based on the location of the residencies, historical ridership numbers and will be determined on the basis of safety before convenience.

In addition, the following will be considered when creating the routes:

- Avoid students crossing the road to embark and/or depart from the bus, when possible;
- Maximize sitelines at bus stops for upcoming and oncoming vehicles, preferably 200 feet visibility in each direction;
- Site bus stops based on a worst-case scenario in regard to weather (snow banks, full foliage, etc.);
- Avoid private lanes, dead-end roads, and cul de sacs (reduce the need for buses to turn-around);
- Consider the route conditions (narrow roads, location of sidewalks, safe gathering spots, site lines, etc).

**Bus stops:** For elementary routes, (Kindergarten through Grade 5), the districts will endeavor to have walking distances to stops no greater than 0.2 of a mile. For secondary age students (Grade 6 through Grade 12), the districts will endeavor to have walking distances to stops no greater than 0.5 of a mile.

Bus stops will be established by the school district at locations, which will be determined on the basis of safety before convenience. Bus stops will be consolidated when feasible and safe.

**Route Analysis:** Bus routes shall be re-examined each year and shall be revised as required to provide safe and efficient transportation. The districts will endeavor to publish routes at least 2 weeks prior to the start of school.

**Transport:** No bus shall transport/carry non-school personnel, other than drivers and members of the Contractor's staff, without the express permission of the Superintendent of Schools or designee while vehicles are in the performance of its contract.

Only The Public Schools of Northborough, The Public Schools of Southborough, and the Public Schools of Northborough-Southborough students and staff shall board the bus. Any parent, guardian or non-Northborough, Southborough, or Northborough-Southborough public school student boarding the bus without specific permission from the Transportation Coordinator, shall be treated as a trespasser.

**Reporting Transportation Concerns:** Problems with transportation should be reported directly to the building principal, who, if unable to resolve the issue, shall refer the matter to the Superintendent or designee. If the problem resolution is unsatisfactory, then it may be brought before the Superintendent of Schools, or designee.

**Bus Accident Protocol:** All accidents involving school buses or other vehicles engaged in work under the contract shall be reported to the building principal and Superintendent of Schools by telephone, immediately following said accident and in writing within twenty-four (24) hours of the accident. Such written report will state all the pertinent information concerning the accident, including a list of all injured parties and shall be accompanied by a copy of the accident report rendered to the Police Department and a copy of the accident report rendered to the insurance company. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of all riders of said vehicle will be notified by the principal's office. In the event of any injury during transportation to and from schools, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified immediately by the Administration. All inquiries regarding an accident will be directed to the Superintendent or designee.

**Discipline:**

The school principal, Transportation Coordinator, and/or Superintendent will investigate all reports of improper behavior, including the nature of the allegations. The school will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of both the target and the aggressor. If the school principal has a reasonable basis to believe that the incident may involve criminal conduct, the principal or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. Given the variety of situations that can be encountered during a route, the driver and monitor must exercise judgment regarding the seriousness of infractions. Discipline report forms are provided to drivers and bus monitors to document concerns. Completed forms are given to the appropriate school principal(s) and the Transportation Coordinator.