

# PARENT'S GUIDE TO SPECIAL NEEDS TRANSPORTATION



## Every Student Every Day

The purpose of the Parent's Guide is to provide our parents and students with some helpful Special Needs Transportation information. Communication plays a significant role in the success of special needs transportation. In the event your student will not ride the bus to/from school, please notify our **dispatcher at 234-1410 thirty minutes prior to your child's pick-up time. When calling,**

**please give your child's name, bus number, and school. The bus must depart your stop location no later than two minutes past the designated pick-up time.**

**If you have not called Transportation and your child has not ridden the bus for 3 consecutive days, the driver or paraprofessional will attempt to contact you to see if transportation is still needed. If we are unable to contact you transportation will be suspended until we hear from you.**

If your student misses the bus, it is not our practice/procedure to return for your student, as this makes the bus late for subsequent students and could make all students on the bus late to school.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Our goal in Academy School District 20 is to provide safe, dependable, and efficient transportation to and from school, enhancing the positive learning environment for each student on a daily basis. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that transportation be provided as a related service in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Transportation will be provided using the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) as a guideline. We believe all students

can behave appropriately and safely while riding on a school bus.

Academy School District 20 bus drivers and paraprofessionals receive training that exceeds state requirements outlined by the Colorado Department of Education

### II. DEPARTMENTAL PROCEDURE

#### A. CONFIDENTIAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL/BEHAVIORAL INFORMATION

State law requires that student medical/behavioral documentation be provided to the Transportation Office prior to transporting the student. A copy of these items will be on file in the Transportation Office and one will be carried in the drivers route book at all times. Drivers and bus paraprofessionals are instructed that this information is strictly confidential.

Information provided in the medical/behavioral documents enables the driver, bus paraprofessional, or paramedic to take appropriate action in an emergency. Parent/guardians are required to inform the Special Needs Department of any changes in emergency information.

#### B. HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Encourage your child to practice proper bus behavior.
- Due to the danger of choking, we ask that no food be brought on the bus unless medically required as noted on the transportation request form, allowing the intake of food or liquid to be supervised.
- To prevent the spread of bacterial diseases or viral infections, parents/guardians are requested to wash wheelchairs on a regular basis, keeping them clean of spilled foods, body waste, and other bacteria or odor promoting substances.
- **Parents/guardians are asked to inform the Transportation Department if their child contracts any contagious illness or infection that may affect transportation personnel or other students.**

### C. STOP LOCATION

Corner stops and/or regular bus stops will be used where appropriate. Curb-to-curb service is provided to students who are identified as needing that service. Parent/guardians are asked to give three full school days' notice of any changes in the pick-up or drop-off locations. **The driver is not permitted to change or modify a bus route/stop.**

### **All changes must be approved by the Transportation Department.**

**A student identified as maximum supervision must be brought to and met at the bus door** as noted on the transportation request form. If the bus is going to be unusually late or early, the bus driver will radio Transportation, the parent/guardian will be notified by phone as to the estimated time of arrival.

### D. PICK-UP

Students should be prepared to board the bus five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.



### E. SCHOOL PICK-UP

The safety of your student is our top priority. Good communication between home and transportation is

essential to insure student safety. Our drivers are trained to expect that all special education students will be riding the bus unless a parent or guardian has notified Transportation otherwise. **It is imperative that the parent/guardian contact Transportation (234-1410) to let us know when a child will not be using bus transportation at least 30 minutes prior to scheduled pick-up.**

### F. DROP-OFF

Drivers are instructed not to leave a student unattended at the designated drop-off address unless documented on the transportation request form. All special needs drivers are instructed to not pull away from a stop until child is safely inside. If a student is marked **as maximum supervision, it is imperative that a parent/guardian or designated responsible person meets the student at the bus door at the stop time. If this is not possible, the parent/guardian must call transportation at 234-1410.**

1. The driver will radio the Transportation Office to report that no one is home.
2. The dispatcher will attempt to contact the parent/guardian and check to see if an alternate address or emergency number has been designated on the Transportation Request Form.

3. The driver may be directed by dispatch to continue the route and return to the stop later.
4. The dispatcher will continue trying to reach the parent/guardian or the designated emergency contact person.

If a return trip to the stop is made, the driver will wait a reasonable length of time, and then return to the Transportation Office. We will make every effort to safely return the student, if the parent/guardian cannot be reached within a reasonable length of time, the Office of Social Services and/or the Police Department will be contacted. At that point, transportation cannot resume until the IEP team can meet and provide a resolution to the issue. It is essential that the Transportation Department be provided with current emergency phone numbers or addresses in the event of an accident or if parent/guardian are unavoidably detained, and cannot meet the bus.

#### **G. OUT OF DISTRICT SCHOOLS**

- On days District 20 is closed, students attending out of district schools will not be provided with transportation even if the out of district school is in session.
- On days District 20 has a 2 hour delay, students attending out of

district schools will be transported 2 hours later than usual, even if the out of district school is on a regular schedule.

- If District 20 has an early release due to adverse weather conditions, students attending out of district schools will be picked up at their school. Every attempt will be made to contact parent/guardian.

### **III. EQUIPMENT USED FOR SPECIAL NEEDS TRANSPORTATION**

A. CHILD SAFETY RESTRAINT SYSTEMS (CSRS) All preschoolers will ride in a CSRS.

B. TYPES OF SECURMENTS USED INCLUDE:

1. Safety vests
2. Integrated car seats
3. Star seats



### **IV. PROCEDURES FOR TRANSPORTING WHEELCHAIRS, ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

#### **A. WHEELCHAIRS**

- Preferred chairs - transit ready with installed anchor points.
- Acceptable chairs - rigid with weld points as anchor points.
- Unacceptable chairs - fold-up hospital type or sports chairs unless student transfers to a seat.
- Must be equipped with a positioning belt or internal harness.
- Must have wheel locks in proper working order.
- Should be clean and in good general repair.
- Use of extended back or head support is recommended.
- Batteries must be securely attached to the wheelchair. Batteries of a gel cell type are preferred.
- The bus driver/para will operate wheelchair lifts. No parent/guardian or school staff member may operate the lift at any time unless an emergency exists or when directed to do so by a transportation administrator.

- Parent/guardian should inform the Transportation Department if special handling is required and should point out suggested securement points for the wheelchair.
- If a student requires a change to any securement, (Chair, Vest, Walker) before a change is made to an existing chair, the Transportation Department must evaluate the situation before transportation begins.
- Wheelchair trays must be removed and secured while being transported unless required by the student’s IEP for therapeutic positioning.

**B. ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT-**

Walkers, crutches, braces, etc. will be secured to eliminate "free moving objects" inside the bus.

**C. SUPPLIES--** Diapers, snacks, etc. should be packaged so they are easily handled and transported. Due to safety concerns, no glass containers, sharp or dangerous objects, or large articles, which block the aisles, emergency door or service door of a school bus, will be transported.

**D. MEDICATIONS—**Transportation of all medication is the responsibility of the parent/guardian unless a contract for self-carry has been

completed and approved by the district.

- E. OXYGEN--** Oxygen bottles must be appropriately secured in an upright position or secured to the wheelchair in such a manner that the bottle will not become a projectile. Oxygen bottles in use must have protected valves and regulators. Oxygen bottles not in use must have a valve protector in place. A sign which specifies “Oxygen in Use” will be posted near both the rear and service doors.
- F. CANINE COMPANIONS--**If the parent/guardian is requesting transportation for a “service animal” please contact the Transportation Office.
- G. CHANGES--**The Transportation Office must be informed of any change in a student’s equipment (including oxygen), medical condition or behavior prior to transporting the student.

**V. EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILLS**

Bus drivers and paraprofessionals develop seating charts and written emergency evacuation plans which are carried in the driver’s route book. Evacuation drills are conducted twice each year. Students will be evacuated as

per each written evacuation plan. The safety of the student will not be compromised in any way during the evacuation. Wheelchair students will remain in wheelchairs during evacuations. They will exit the bus via the lift.

**VI. SPECIAL NOTE**

Should a confidential discussion regarding pickup and drop-off information, or an emergency change become necessary, **please contact the Special Needs Supervisor, Jesse Hill at 234-1431.** Our goal is for your child to have a SAFE and HAPPY ride! Academy School District 20 Transportation where it is about

**Every Student  
Every Day.**

