

HOPKINTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Student Transportation

The School Committee provides safe, efficient, and economical student transportation that meets the requirements of Massachusetts laws and regulations.

Eligibility

Massachusetts law requires districts to provide transportation to kindergarten through grade six students if the distance between the child's residence and the school exceeds two miles. The School Committee may provide transportation beyond the requirement of the law to kindergarten through grade six students living less than two miles from their school as well as to students in grades seven through twelve. The Superintendent or his/her designee may make exceptions to the mileage limit where the safety of students is involved, as determined by the Transportation Coordinator in consultation with the Police Department Safety Officer, or where efficiency and economy would be increased. The School Committee may also provide transportation for extracurricular activities or late buses when that is warranted.

Eligibility for transportation services is determined by the location of the student's home in relation to the school to which the student is assigned, and does not entitle students to door-to-door service. If a student is not eligible for transportation as provided for by this policy, the parent/guardian is responsible for assuring that the student gets safely to and from school.

Students who require accommodations under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) or §504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are provided transportation in accordance with current statute and regulation and the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or §504 plan. Special Education transportation arrangements are made directly through the Special Education department, and §504 accommodations are made through the building principal. Students who are receiving transportation services from a private vendor according to the students' IEP or §504 plan should consult the vendor's handbook for their busing rules.

Hopkinton students who attend Joseph P. Keefe Technical School are provided transportation under the funding arrangement between the Town of Hopkinton and the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District.

Hopkinton students who attend approved regional schools for programs other than those offered by Joseph P. Keefe Technical School under Chapter 74 section 7C (Non-resident Students) are provided transportation by the Hopkinton Public Schools. Transportation is arranged by the Hopkinton Transportation Coordinator to and from the school.

Bus Routes and Stops

The Transportation Coordinator establishes all routes and stops using these guidelines:

- Bus capacity.
- Length of bus routes and travel time.
- Safety of the street and/or bus stop location.

- Distance that an eligible student would be required to walk to a bus stop, which will not exceed the statutory limit of one mile.
- Grade of student(s) to be transported.
- Student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or §504 plan.

A parent/guardian or an adult designated by the parent/guardian must be at the bus stop for the drop-off of all kindergarten students. Kindergartners will not be dropped off otherwise and will be transported back to the school.

The behavior and actions of a child while at a designated bus stop and walking to and from the bus stop are subject to the parent's/guardian's supervision and are not the responsibility of the school district. The district's responsibility begins when the child boards the bus at the pick up location and disembarks at the drop off location.

Fees

The School Committee may charge a bus transportation fee as allowed by law, which is due by June 15. Late fees may apply if bus fees are not paid by the deadline. The School Committee will establish the level of service and fees each year. If a fee is charged at the elementary level, it shall be based on the distance between the child's residence and home in accordance with state law, which mandates that transportation be provided for all elementary students who live more than two-miles from the school.

Bus Switching

For safety and efficiency, students should arrive at school and leave school on the same bus as determined by their residence. In situations where parents live separately in Hopkinton and there is shared physical custody or the non-custodial parent is qualified under Mass. General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 34H*, students may be picked up from and discharged at two residences.

Grades K-5

- No day-to-day bus switching will be allowed.
- Starting the Monday of the third week of school, students may be dropped off at an approved stop on the student's regular bus route with a note to the school from their parents.

Grades 6-12

- Starting the Monday of the third week of school, bus switching will be allowed at dismissal time for those students with a bus pass, subject to available space on the bus, and for approved stops on the route;
- Bus switching will not be allowed on early release or early dismissal days;
- No large groups (three or more additional students going to one location) will be allowed.

Transportation to and from Childcare Locations

In addition to the child's residence(s), transportation to or from no more than two childcare locations is permitted under these conditions:

- The bus has available space;
- The child care locations are continuous throughout the school year and on an approved bus stop;
- Notification of the student's childcare bus stops is received in the Transportation Office by June 15.

For all grades, in extenuating and emergency situations, exceptions to this policy will be made, at the discretion of the school principal and Transportation Coordinator, subject to available space on the bus. The bus driver may not exceed the agreed-upon capacity limits set by the bus company and district. Any decision to exceed these limits may be made only by the Transportation Coordinator with approval by the bus company management.

Request/Complaint Procedure

Requests/complaints must be submitted in writing to the Transportation Coordinator. A response will be provided within fifteen (15) school days of receipt. In accordance with Massachusetts General Law, a complaint concerning the district's compliance with law may be made to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906.

First Reading	November 1, 2007, September 1, 2011
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Legal References	M.G.L. 40:5; 71:7A, B, and C; 71:37D; 71:48A; 71:68; 71:71A; 71B:4; 71B:5; 71B:8; 74:8A; 76:1; 76:12Bi; 76:14
Policy Cross Reference	EEAE Bus Safety, EEAE Student Conduct on School Buses, KBBA Non-Custodial Parents' Rights
Procedure Reference	