



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Because of the unique nature of special needs transportation, open communication and cooperation between parents, students, teachers, drivers, and transportation supervisory personnel is essential to ensure that safe, reliable and efficient services are provided for your child.

Attached is a summary of our transportation guidelines and safety rules as they relate to special needs transportation. The goal of these guidelines and rules are to provide you with information and answer questions you may have about your child's transportation service. Knowledge and understanding of these guidelines and safety rules will serve as a common foundation upon which we can build our working relationship and collaborate for safe, reliable, and quality services.

Please review the *Special Needs Transportation Guidelines and Safety Rules* with your child and your childcare provider. After your review, please sign and return the *Special Needs Transportation Guidelines and Safety Rules* to your child's case manager or driver, to ensure continued eligibility for transportation services for your child.

After reviewing the guide, please complete the *Transportation Request Form for Special Needs Students* and return it to your student's school case manager in the envelope provided **no later than May 15, 2016**. Please note that we must have signed forms for the upcoming school year for all students, new or returning. **Transportation services for your child cannot begin until we receive this form with all required signatures.**

Special Needs Transportation will be provided for your child as a related service and part of his/her individualized education program (IEP). It is the goal of the Transportation Department to support students and schools as a resource toward the overall success of the IEP and as such, the ride on the bus is an extension of the classroom. As a result of these efforts, strategies that are used at school and at home need to be applied on the bus to ensure the safety of all transported students. Daily contact and communication with your driver as your child boards the bus and returns from school will help reinforce the cooperation between school, bus, and home.

We look forward to working with you to ensure the safest and best possible service for your child. If you have any further questions about your child's transportation, please call us at 719-391-3540.

Sincerely,
Eric Lance
Operations Manager
Transportation Department

Sincerely,
Lisa Humberd
Executive Director
Special Education

Student's Name _____ Date _____

School _____ Grade _____ Route # _____



Transportation Planning

1. **Transportation Plan:** The Transportation Department will use the information provided in the IEP and Transportation Referral Form to determine personnel, vehicle, routing, and scheduling assignments. All information will be handled confidentially in accordance with the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA). **If the information provided during initial placement changes, contact the Transportation Department immediately at 719-391-3544.** Changes in placement must be approved by Special Needs Department and require a new Transportation Referral Form. Changes in address or names of individuals you designate for delivery of your child at the end of the school day must be requested by contacting the Special Needs Coordinator at 719-391-3544 or emailed to transportation@wsd3.k12.co.us. Please allow 3-5 workdays for processing changes.
2. **Routing and Scheduling:** Transportation scheduling is done on an individual basis. Without an IEP, Special Education/Case Management staff authorization, and complete, signed and dated Transportation Referral Form transportation services cannot be started. Routing and scheduling a student with special needs is complex and flexibility is essential. Daily changes in special needs transportation are the norm. The most efficient and economical route, which effectively meets the needs of the student, with the assets available to the District, will be selected. **Students must reside in and have a pick-up/drop-off location within the Widefield School District boundaries.** The Transportation Department will contact you on route assignments, pick-up and delivery times and address for pick-up and delivery. **Additional student assignments may change routing and scheduling times for your child throughout the school year.** When this occurs you will be notified of the change prior to implementation.

Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures

1. **Pick-Up and Drop-Off:** Transportation service for special needs students is curb-to-curb. Pick-up locations will be designated based on safety and the capabilities of the bus. Parents or guardians shall escort their student to and from the bus as necessary. Access to the boarding area must be kept free of ice and snow by the parent or guardian. During periods of adverse weather, if the child cannot be safely picked up, other arrangements may be required for a safe pick-up and drop-off area for the student.
2. **Boarding Time.** Students shall be ready to board the bus five (5) minutes ahead of the scheduled pick up time. If your student is not ready to board when the bus arrives, **the driver is authorized to wait for two minutes** after the scheduled pick-up time and then depart to continue the route. **The bus horn will not be sounded and drivers and monitors will not leave the bus** to check on the status of the child. If the driver does not arrive at the pick-up location within 5 minutes after the scheduled time, parents or guardians should contact the Transportation Department at 719-391-3540.
3. **Parent / Guardian/ Designated Individual to Meet the Bus:** Students, who are authorized to board the bus without assistance during pick-up, will be discharged from the bus without an adult or guardian present at the stop. Drivers will wait until the student is safely inside the residence before departing. If your child requires assistance to the bus for pick-up, you must insure that assistance is available at the drop-off location. Siblings assisting in the boarding and discharging of your student must be at least 12 years of age and have the maturity to provide the care needed for your special needs student. Drivers and monitors are not permitted to leave the bus or enter the residence of a student. **If your student requires assistance and no one is home when the bus arrives, the Transportation Department will attempt to contact your emergency phone number or the individual you have authorized in writing to accept responsibility for your child.** In your absence or the absence of the designated individual, your child **will not** be left with anyone not specifically authorized in writing. Notification of the Transportation Department shall be made 24 hours in advance of any change in designated individual. **In the event that the Transportation Department is unable to contact the parent / guardian or others who have been authorized to receive the child, custody of the child will be transferred to the El Paso County Sheriff Department to await your arrival.** The telephone number for El Paso Sheriff's is 719-390-5555.
4. **Student Not Riding:** If your child will not be riding the bus, call the Transportation Office at 719-391-3540 at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. If your child does not ride the bus for three consecutive school days, without your notification, transportation services will be suspended. Services will not be reinstated until the Transportation Department receives notification concerning the circumstances and reinstated services are requested.

Special Needs Transportation Related Matters

Medication and Personal Items: Your bus driver will gladly assist you in transporting medication, health aids and other items you send to school. All personal items and medication must be marked with your child's name and instructions for use. Medications must be in a closed container. All items and instructions will be transferred to school personnel, who meet the bus and are designated to assist your child. If your child has special medical needs that should be considered during transportation ensure that these issues are identified and that the Transportation Department is notified of any changes to ensure that proper care and accountability can be provided.

Wheel Chairs and Child Safety Restraint Systems: All preschool students riding a bus must be secured with a Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard certified Child Passenger Safety System, safety vest, or child seat. All wheelchairs must be in good repair and equipped with a manufacturers occupant restraint belt that must be fastened while riding on the bus lift and during transit to/from school. To assist in controlling the spread of colds and infections, parents shall maintain their child’s wheelchair in a clean and sanitary condition. The brakes on wheel chairs shall be in good working condition and must be locked while on the bus. If not, your child will not be transported until repairs are made. Furthermore, when purchasing, renting, leasing, or borrowing a wheelchair pay close attention to see if the chair meets ANCI/RESNA WC-19 minimum standards for transporting. Our Transportation Department prefers the students chair to meet or exceed WC-19 standards as it provides the student with the greatest protection in the event of an accident. Not all chairs will be transported; standard hospital chairs and chairs without proper weld points for floor securements will not be transported. For more information on WC-19 please call the Special Needs Transportation Coordinator at 719-391-3544 or visit the link below. Walkers, car seats, and other devices may accompany your child as long as they can be secured inside the bus and there is available room.

http://www.nercwts.org/nerc_wts2_kt/nerc_wts2_kt_stand/WC19_Docs/How_Safe_WC.pdf

Daycare Location: Before choosing a daycare provider, please check with the Transportation Department to ensure that the location is within busing boundaries for your child’s school.

Safety Rules – On the Bus

Follow all instructions from the school bus driver. Treat everyone (school bus driver, motoring public and fellow passengers) with courtesy and respect. INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT, USE OF OBJECTIONABLE LANGUAGE, OR ABUSE OF OTHERS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Do not extend objects, hands or head out the bus window.... Serious injury could result.

Remain quiet and orderly: Students will be assigned to a specific seat. Stay seated; seat-to-seat, back-to-back. Do not distract the driver. Keep the aisle clear. Talk quietly while on the bus. Be totally silent at all railroad crossings and major intersections.

Keep your belongings in your backpack. Items NOT allowed on the bus: animals, skateboards, scooters, balloons, laser pointers, weapons, or explosive items, any tobacco products, matches, lighters or any item that is a health or safety hazard. The driver has authority to secure all objects.

Special Considerations: Eating and/or drinking on buses are prohibited unless authorized for health conditions. Musical instruments will only be transported when space is available and they can be transported safely. Vandalism to the bus will be charged to the student and/or the parent/guardian.

Video/Audio Recording: Video and audio recording will occur on the bus during the school year.

I have read and understand the special needs transportation guidelines and safety rules.

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Signature: _____