

Frequently Asked Questions

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Answers

1. Who should I call if the bus does not arrive on time?

After twenty (20) minutes you should call the school or Transportation Office at (609) 628-3513 ext 286.

2. *What information should I have ready when I call?*

You should know your child's route letter/number as well as the school, child's name and stop location.

3. *What are the hours of operation at Transportation?*

The 1st Student (1-866-965-1818) dispatch area is staffed from 6 am until 6pm and the Sheppard Bus (1-800-451-4099) dispatch area is staffed from 6 am until 6 pm on school days.

4. *Will my child have the same driver every day?*

Your child may have different drivers for the AM and PM routes. This is necessary since most drivers provide service for at least two trips during every shift. In addition, the variety of school programs and calendars has a severe impact on driver assignments.

5. *Can the driver stop at my house to pick up or drop off my child?*

Only certain students, whose needs are addressed through an IEP or 504 plan, are eligible for "curbside" service. This service is typically restricted to situations where a less restrictive environment is not possible or where medical issues require this type of service.

Every effort is made to improve route efficiency by clustering students to stops and, where possible, providing service on major streets.

6. *Can I require that my child only be released to me at the bus stop?*

Only certain designated students, whose needs are addressed through an IEP or 504 plan as well as kindergarten students or students involved in custody issues are eligible for "must be met" service. For all others students the parent/guardian is responsible for meeting the bus if they deem it appropriate.

7. *To whom should I report my address or telephone number change?*

The school and transportation department should be contacted as soon as possible with address or telephone number change information so these changes can be properly recorded into the district's database.

8. *Why is the bus late and why wasn't I called?*

Some of the situations that could cause lateness include traffic, road closures, weather, vehicle breakdowns or a late prior route. Since we operate close to 100 routes daily, it is virtually impossible to contact parents when the bus is slightly late.

9. *How will I be notified of a change to my child's stop time (or stop location)?*

The Transportation Department prints a bus/stop change form every time a student's stop assignment or time changes. These are distributed to the school sites for distribution to the students. You should receive this information in the same manner you receive other information from your school site.

10. *I got home late (in PM) and I cannot find my child. The school is closed (no answer). What do I do?*

A call to Transportation is usually the best option in these circumstances. “Must be met” students are usually returned to school if they are not met. If the student is not a “must be met” student transportation staff can assist others in locating your child. This may involve contacting the NJ State Police and/or home contact of school personnel.

11. *I have a question regarding a bus stop location or pick up/drop time. Who should I call?*

Please contact the Transportation Department. Leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

12. *If my child uses a wheelchair what do I need to know?*

Wheelchairs are transported on school buses in a forward facing position. If it is possible for your child to transfer to a bus seat, we will do so at your request. If transported in a chair, the chair must have working brakes and functioning foot rests, the seat and back of the chair must be properly attached to the chair, the harness and/or trunk support system must be attached and the lap-belt must be “auto” quality and not Velcro. In addition, lap trays, if used by the student, must be removed and stored during transportation. The driver or attendant will be responsible for this as well as all other securement issues. Finally, we remind our drivers that even if the child is independent, the driver or attendant should still be the one wheeling the chair onto the lift. We ask that power chairs be put in the manual position when possible.

13. *If my child uses a car seat what do I need to know?*

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has issued guidelines regarding the safe transportation of this age population in the school bus. Based on its research, NHTSA has determined that these children are safest on a school bus when transported in a child restraint safety system or car seat device. The car seats used must be certified and not have been involved in a crash or subject of a recall. To ensure that the seats meet all these criteria, the district, when possible, will provide the seat for the child. If the parent is using their own seat, district personnel will ensure that the seat meets all the necessary certifications. The transportation provider is responsible for ensuring the seat is secured properly in the school bus. If you have any questions regarding your child’s car seat, please contact our office.