



Transportation Guide

Policies and Procedures

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Transportation Guide is to provide important information for all students and parents in the Southeast Polk Community School District regarding transportation policies and procedures. These policies and procedures have been developed to promote the safety and wellbeing of all students and district personnel. Parents are encouraged to review this guide with their student/s to become familiar with what is expected for safe and orderly transportation to and from school. Although every effort will be made to update this guide in a timely manner, the procedures, practices and policies described here may be modified or discontinued from time to time without notice, consultation, or publication. The District reserves the right, and has the sole discretion, to modify or change any portion of this guide at any time.

ELIGIBILITY FOR TRANSPORTATION

Per State of Iowa Code 285.1, the district shall provide transportation, either directly or by reimbursement, for all resident pupils.

Students in grades Kindergarten through 8th Grade shall be entitled to transportation only if they live more than 2.0 miles from the school designated for attendance. Students in grades 9th through 12th shall be entitled to transportation only if they live more than 3.0 miles from the school designated for attendance. Students living within the 2-mile radius for grades Kindergarten through 8th grade and within the 3-mile radius for grades 9th through 12th can receive transportation services at a charged fee of \$180.00 per child per year, from established bus stops.

When measuring distance to determine eligibility for transportation, distance shall be measured by using the shortest distance on public roads only. School buses do not travel on private roads, lanes or in private subdivisions. Distance is measured from the student's driveway to the assigned attendance center's closest driveway. Any pupil may be required to meet a school bus on the assigned route, a distance not to exceed three-fourths of a mile.

Special Education Students

The district shall provide transportation to eligible students as determined by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Questions regarding special education transportation should be directed to the Director of Special Education at (515) 957-3400. Assignment of teacher associates to a school bus is determined by a student's IEP. Associates are employed by the Transportation Office.

ELL Students

For students requiring English assistance and assigned to an English Language Learners (ELL) program, the district will provide transportation to the school where the ELL services are provided if these services are not provided at the student's attendance center and if this school is more than 2.0 miles from the student's home address.

Seat Belts/Child Restraints

School buses are exempt from child restraints unless a special needs child has an IEP that defines the use of, or a van is used by the school for transport.

If students are transported in a 9-passenger or less family-type vehicle the law requires:

- A child under 1 year of age and weighing less than 20 pounds shall be secured in a rear-facing child restraint system used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- A child under 6 years of age, who does not meet the description above, shall be secured by a child restraint system used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- A child at least 6 years of age but less than 4 foot 9 inches tall shall be secured by a child restraint system used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions or by a safety belt or safety harness.

ROUTE ASSIGNMENT

Routes are designed to achieve maximum utilization, elimination of unnecessary mileage, safety, and duplication while assuring timely arrivals and departures within the framework of established school hours. Students will be assigned to a bus route based on their home address(es) and will be transported only on the route to which they have been assigned unless special alternate route requests have been made with the school district (i.e. Transportation to/from child care provider.)

The district will place busing pick-up/drop-off information on each student's campus portal two weeks prior to the beginning of each school year if they have registered for busing. In the event that the bus route needs to be adjusted during the school year (i.e. time change of 10 minutes or more, bus stop location), information will be provided by email and a letter will be provided to student riders. The transportation office will provide at least 3 days' notice prior to changing the route.

Per state law 281-43.1 (3) district bus routes will be designed to ensure riding time on the school bus is no longer than 60 minutes for elementary students and 75 minutes for secondary students. This time is measured from school bus departure from the building/campus.

BUS STOPS

Once the Transportation Department has established bus routes, students will be assigned bus stops. Student riders will be picked up and dropped off at their assigned bus stop only. Students will not be allowed to get off at a different location or ride a different bus. Students are not allowed to board or disembark at a school building where they are not enrolled; students that miss the bus are not to chase or board a different bus.

Elementary students in grades K-5 will normally not be asked to walk more than 5 blocks to a bus stop if the students have access to a sidewalk, or 1 block without access to a sidewalk. Secondary students in grades 6-12 may be asked to walk no more than 10 blocks with sidewalk access, or 5 blocks without.

Students will be assigned one bus stop for use in the a.m. and one in the p.m. They do not have to be the same stop in the morning as the afternoon, but will be used daily. Parents/guardians are required to contact the Transportation Director to request such service. Any student not meeting these criteria will be considered "Discretionary", a route and/or bus stop is designed at the district's discretion and a fee not to exceed \$180 per year, will be charged to bus discretionary students.

Students are asked to stand 10 feet from the curb at the designated bus stop, and arrive at least 10 minutes prior to their scheduled stop; standing inside the house, on the front porch, in the garage, etc. is not acceptable. If the driver cannot see the student waiting at their respective bus stop, the driver will continue on to the next stop. Failure to follow these guidelines may cause longer than necessary bus stops and thus delays in bus stop schedules, increase traffic congestion, and delay the arrival of students at school. Parents are responsible for the conduct of students while going to and from bus stops and for students waiting at bus stops.

During the evaluation of a bus stop, there are numerous criteria utilized in the determination of hazardous conditions such as student's age, existence of bridges or viaducts, railroad crossings, adequacy of sidewalks, width of shoulder used for walking, obstructions to pedestrian traffic, general traffic conditions (number of lanes, speed limits, traffic volume), visibility at crossings, traffic control devices, availability of crossing guards. Bus stops will not be assigned at the intersection of multiple streets, the bus will stop 150 feet short of the stop sign to allow traffic to see the lights and the stop arm.

Should a parent/guardian wish to appeal their student's assigned bus stop, they may do so by completing the online "Bus Stop Review" request form available on the District's Transportation website. All requests will be reviewed by the

District's Bus Stop Review Committee. Once the committee has reviewed the request they will provide a response in writing to the parent/guardian. For more information visit our website at: www.southeastpolk.org | District | Departments | Transportation

Parents/guardians should contact the transportation office if a student is not riding the bus each day. If a bus driver stops and the student is not waiting, or does not arrive at the bus stop, this will be considered a "no show". If a student is not present at his/her bus stop five (5) or more times, the transportation office will notify the parent to determine the status of the bus stop.

Transportation to/from Child Care Provider

An elementary student entitled to transportation may be transported to and/or from a child care provider within the student's attendance area upon request of the parent/guardian and approval by district transportation office. In order for transportation to be provided to and/or from a child care provider, the request has to have prior approval by the district's transportation department.

Late Buses

Weather, traffic, maintenance difficulties and unforeseen incidents may be responsible for delays in the arrival of school buses. In the event your bus does not arrive at the designated time, please allow 10 minutes before calling Transportation at 967-3793. If a school bus is running more than 30 minutes late before or after school, Transportation will attempt to contact the parents of each student and let them know the estimated bus arrival time as well as the building Principal. Information will also be posted on the SEP District Twitter and Facebook pages.

Parent Providing Transportation

In situations where transportation by school bus is impassable, service is not available or in special circumstances parents/guardians may be required to transport their children to the school designated for attendance. The parent/guardian will be reimbursed for such transportation service at a rate set by the school.

Bus Accidents

When a school bus or any vehicle transporting students is involved in a minor accident and the bus/vehicle is not delayed more than the 30 minutes, the transportation department will notify parents by email. In the event of a more serious accident that requires doctor's attention for any passenger and/or results in a delay of more than 30 minutes, information will be sent via email and the Transportation Office will call the parents/guardians of each student and provide pertinent information.

FEES

Non-Discretionary Bussing

Families residing outside the 2-mile radius for grades K - 8 schools and outside the 3-mile radius for grades 9-12 schools, will not be charged a transportation fee by the District, unless they are using multiple addresses to have their child(ren) transported to and/or from their respective school.

Discretionary Bussing

Students living within the 2-mile radius for grades K-8 schools and within the 3-mile radius for grades 9-12 schools can receive transportation services at a charged fee of \$180.00 per child per year, from established bus stops.

Waiver

Families who seek the opportunity to have their child continue to attend a different school area; will be charged a transportation fee of \$180.00 for the school year. The 2-mile radius/3-mile radius is based on their home address and the new elementary school boundary, not the previous elementary school boundary. In order for this to happen, they must first complete a waiver to have their child attend the previous school. If the waiver is approved by the associate superintendent, they would be charged the transportation fee if bus service is provided.

Forced Waiver

Families who are placed at another school (within our district) because of enrollment/class size issues, will be excluded from transportation fees, unless they use multiple address locations.

Multiple Stops

Families who use/reside at multiple addresses, including the use of daycare services that are not on a daily basis. While having their child transported to and/or from the school will be charged a transportation fee of \$180.00 for the school year or \$90.00 per semester.

Open Enrollment

Families who have children that attend Southeast Polk “Open Enrollment” students will be charged a transportation fee of \$180.00 for the school year if the district provides transportation to the assigned school. Please note that the Transportation Department does not make the decision regarding the school of which the open enrollment student will attend. Those questions should be directed to the Central Education Office at 515-967-4294.

Free and Reduced

Families who qualify for free lunches under the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program will be excluded from transportation fees. Families who qualify for reduced lunches under the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program will pay for transportation at a reduced rate.

Family Emergency

If a family emergency occurs transportation fees may be waived, however, approval of such a waiver is very limited. Should a family believe that they have an extenuating circumstance warranting consideration, they must first contact the Director of Transportation where they will be provided with information regarding the steps and proof required for appeal of fees. Upon the receipt of all requested documents, information will be shared with the District’s “Bus Stop Review Committee” for final review and determination.

OTHER

Complaint Process

Parent/Guardian(s) should contact the Director of Transportation to report any concerns or problems with bussing. If the concern is with another student the Director of Transportation will provide all necessary information to the appropriate building principal. If the report concerns a driver, the Director will investigate and determine the appropriate action, if any, to be taken.

BOARD POLICIES

Southeast Polk Board Policy 712-02 -- STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Students utilizing school transportation will conduct themselves in an orderly manner fitting to their age level and maturity with mutual respect and consideration for the rights of the school vehicle driver and the other passengers. Students who fail to behave in an orderly manner will be subject to disciplinary measures.

The school vehicle driver will have the authority to maintain order on the school vehicle. It is the responsibility of the driver to report misconduct to the transportation director.

The board supports the use of video cameras on school buses used for transportation to and from school as well as for field trips, curricular or extracurricular events. The video cameras will be used to monitor student behavior and may be used as evidence in a student disciplinary proceeding. The videotapes are student records subject to school district confidentiality, board policy and administrative regulations.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the transportation director to develop administrative regulations regarding student conduct and discipline when utilizing school transportation.

Southeast Polk Board Policy -- 712-02R1 STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION REGULATION

All persons in school district vehicles will adhere to the following rules and regulations while waiting for a school vehicle, traveling to and from school, or on school related activities. The driver, sponsor or chaperones are to enforce the rules and report violations to the transportation director or building administrator.

The following provides a description of a broad range of behavior considered to be student misconduct. The behavior described should be viewed as representative of the misconduct that most frequently causes a disruption to the orderly educational process. The District breaks down infractions into three categories or tiers based on severity: Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3.

Tier 1 - The punishment for a Tier 1 offense ranges from a verbal warning to the filing of a report into the district's student information reporting system (Infinite Campus). The report may also be shared with a building principal and appropriate disciplinary action taken by the Principal if warranted.

Tier 1 Acts of misconduct may include but are not limited to:

1. Students will be at the designated loading point before the bus or school vehicle arrival time.
2. Students will wait until the bus or school vehicle comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter.
3. Students may not extend arms or heads out of the bus vehicle windows at any time.
4. Aisles must be kept cleared at all times.
5. All student bus riders will be loaded and unload through the right front door. The emergency door is for emergencies only.
6. Students are not permitted to leave their seats while the vehicle is in motion.
7. Permission to open windows must be obtained from the driver.
8. Students are not allowed to have food, gum or drink (choking hazards) on school vehicles.
9. General student misbehavior such as horseplay, yelling, blocking the aisle, distracting use of electronics, spraying of perfumes/deodorants, inappropriate language is not allowed.

Tier 2 -Under the Tier 2 offenses, the school vehicle driver files a conduct report with the building principal who then applies the student behavioral expectations and takes appropriate action. Tier 2 violations also carry the possibility of suspension of bus/school vehicle privileges and mandatory attendance at a Saturday Safety class.

Southeast Polk Board Policy -- 712-02R1 STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION REGULATION (continued)

Tier 2 Acts of misconduct may include but are not limited to:

1. Repeated violations of Tier 1 rules as determined by the transportation department in communication with the building principal.
2. Deliberate damage to the school vehicle/property.
3. Deliberate damage to the property of another student.
4. Subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint while disobeying the driver's redirection.
5. Defiance of the authority of school personnel that could be deemed as a major safety concern for the student(s) and/or driver.
6. Harassment - includes threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct or causing unwanted sexual advances, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health such that it has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational environment.

Tier 3 -Students committing Tier 3 offenses face loss of bus or school vehicle privileges for a time period agreed upon by the transportation director and building principal and mandatory attendance at a Saturday safety class before the students are allowed to ride the bus again.

Tier 3 Acts of misconduct may include but are not limited to:

1. Fighting
2. Possession of weapon (device used as a weapon)
3. Possession of tobacco/alcohol products
4. Repeat offender of Tier 1 and/or Tier 2 violations as determined by the transportation department in communication with the building principal.
5. Attempt to blind the driver operating the vehicle.
6. Possession of and/or threatening behavior involving flammable materials.

Southeast Polk Board Policy 712-02R2 -- USE OF VIDEO CAMERAS ON SCHOOL BUSES REGULATION

The board supports the use of video cameras on school buses as a means to monitor and maintain a safe environment for students and employees. The video cameras may be used on buses used for transportation to and from school, field trips, curricular events and extracurricular events. The contents of the videotapes may be used as evidence in a student disciplinary proceeding.

Student Records

The content of the videotapes is a student record subject to board policy and administrative regulations regarding confidential student records. Only those persons with a legitimate educational purpose may view the videotapes. In most instances, those individuals with a legitimate educational purpose may be the superintendent, building principal, transportation director, bus driver and special education staffing team. A parent may view the video without consent from any student or parent of a minor student also shown in the video if the other students are bystanders. But if there is an altercation between multiple students, then all parents must give consent in order for the video to be viewed by parents.

Southeast Polk Board Policy 712-02R2 -- USE OF VIDEO CAMERAS ON SCHOOL BUSES REGULATION
(continued)

videotape recorded during a school-sponsored trip, such as an athletic event, may also be accessible to the sponsor or coach of the activity. If the content of the videotape becomes the subject of a student disciplinary proceeding, it will be treated like other evidence in the proceeding.

Notice

The school district will annually provide the following notice to students and parents:

The Southeast Polk Community School District Board of Directors has authorized the use of video cameras on school district buses. The video cameras will be used to monitor student behavior to maintain order on the school buses to promote and maintain a safe environment. Students and parents are hereby notified that the content of the videotapes may be used in a student disciplinary proceeding. The content of the videotapes are confidential student records and will be retained with other student records. Videotapes will only be retained if necessary for use in a student disciplinary proceeding or other matter as determined necessary by the administration. Parents may request to view videotapes of their child if the videotapes are used in a disciplinary proceeding involving their child.

The following notice will also be placed on all school buses equipped with a video camera:

This bus is equipped with a video/audio monitoring system.

It is the policy of the Southeast Polk Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), genetic information (for employment), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact, Joseph M. Horton, Associate Superintendent, Affirmative Action Coordinator, Equity Coordinator and Title IX Coordinator, Southeast Polk District Office, 8379 NE University Ave., Pleasant Hill, IA 50327, [\(515\) 967-4294](tel:5159674294), joseph.horton@southeastpolk.org. Inquiries or grievances may also be directed to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Des Moines, IA, 50319-0201, [\(515\) 281-4121](tel:5152814121); or the U.S. Department of Education, Region VII Office of Civil Rights, 500 West Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661.