

The superintendent or designee shall develop school bus routes in accordance with state law and regulations. All bus routes will be kept on file in the office of the board of education, and all changes will be filed within 10 days after such change becomes effective.

The safety of students and the efficient use of school buses shall be the determining factors when developing school bus routes and assigning students to designated bus stops along those routes. Students will be assigned to a bus that passes within one mile of the student's residence. However, if the superintendent or designee determines that road or other conditions pose a hazard to the safe operation of a school bus, the student's assigned bus will instead pass as close to the student's residence as practicable. In addition, school bus routes must be developed and bus stops must be designated in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Except in the limited circumstances described above, school buses should be routed so that a school bus passes within one mile of the residence of each student assigned to that bus who lives more than one and one-half (1.5) miles from the school which serves his or her school assignment area. In order to avoid hazardous walking conditions, a school bus also may be routed to serve students who live less than one and one-half (1.5) miles from the school which serves his or her school assignment area.
2. To the extent practicable and economically feasible, ride time should be less than one and one-half (1.5) hours one way.
3. To the extent possible, school bus routes and bus stops should be established so as to avoid steep hills, sharp curves, and other hazardous road conditions.
4. In urban areas and densely populated suburban areas, school buses should be routed so as to most safely and economically serve students eligible for transportation services.
5. In rural and suburban areas, school buses should be routed so as to most safely and economically serve students eligible for transportation services; however, school buses should be routed on main or primary roads and not onto side roads or into housing developments, unless: (a) seven or more students will be served by such routing of the bus; (b) the side road is a city- or state-maintained road; and (c) there is a safe location for the bus to turn around.

Parents will be informed of students' scheduled school bus arrival times. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that a student is present at a bus stop prior to the scheduled arrival time. Parents should contact the school with questions or concerns regarding school bus routes, bus stops, or scheduled school bus arrival times.

**A. TRANSPORTATION TO LOCATIONS OTHER THAN HOME**

Upon request, the superintendent or designee may, but is not required to, assign a student to a bus to transport the student to and/or from a location other than home if the following conditions are met.

1. The student's parent or guardian submits a written, signed request that states the specific location other than home to which the student is to be transported and acknowledges that the parent or guardian and not the school system is responsible for the student's safety once the child has departed from the bus.
2. The request for such transportation does not require a bus to deviate in any significant way from an established route.
3. There is capacity on the bus if the request would necessitate the student's riding a different bus from the regularly assigned bus.
4. The student's residence and requested bus stop are within the zone eligible for transportation service.
5. The request for such transportation does not cause the school system to incur any additional cost.
6. The proposed bus stop meets safety standards established by law, the board, the superintendent, or the principal.

Any changes in bus stops must be approved by the superintendent or designee.

#### **B. BUS ROUTES IN HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS**

School buses will not be allowed to operate if there is a serious threat to the safety of students or drivers. The superintendent or designee may develop a more limited bus route for hazardous weather conditions in order to operate only on roads that are safe. To the extent possible, parents will be notified in advance of the bus route that will be used in hazardous conditions. The hazardous conditions bus route will be on file in the office of the board of education.

A student who is identified as having special needs following procedures in the North Carolina *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities* will be provided with transportation services as required by law.

Legal References: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, 20 U.S.C. 1400 *et seq.*; G.S. 115C-240(d), -246; *Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities*, State Board of Education Policy EXCP-000; State Board of Education Policies TRAN-000, -002, -006

Cross References:

Adopted: March 14, 2016

Revised: October 10, 2016; May 24, 2017 (legal references only); January 9, 2018