

803 - Student Transportation and Bus Safety Policy

PACT Charter School

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Purpose

This policy aims to establish expectations and policies concerning the safe transportation of PACT Charter School students to and from school.

Policy Statement

PACT Charter School's policy is to comply with state law regarding student transportation and school bus safety.

General Expectations

Transportation by a school bus is an eligible student's privilege, not a right. A student's eligibility to ride a school bus may be revoked for violating school bus safety or conduct policies or violating any other law governing student conduct on a school bus. Revocation of a student's bus-riding privilege is not an exclusion, expulsion, or suspension under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act. For a student with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education

Act, United States Code, title 20, section 1400 et seq., Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, United States Code, title 29, section 794, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Public Law 101-336, revocation of the student's eligibility to ride the school bus must be consistent with the requirements of those laws.

Transportation Election / Option

PACT Charter School must arrange for the attendance of all pupils living two miles or more from the school unless the transportation privilege has been surrendered or properly revoked. Each year PACT Charter School will elect to provide its own transportation or sub-contract transportation services.

When a student enrolls in PACT Charter School, the school shall provide the parent with transportation information. Parents may be asked by PACT Charter School to voluntarily forego a student's school transportation privileges but are not required to do so.

The Election for PACT Charter School Provided Transportation

If PACT Charter School elects to provide transportation for its students, the transportation will be provided within PACT's designated transportation routes in which PACT Charter School services.

For students who reside outside the designated transportation routes in which PACT Charter School services, PACT Charter School is not required to provide or pay for transportation between the student's residence and the designated bus routes PACT Charter School services. PACT Charter School may reimburse a parent for the costs of transportation from the student's residence to the location of the nearest designated bus stop that PACT Charter School services if the student is from a family whose income is at or below the poverty level, as determined by the federal government. The reimbursement may not exceed the student's actual cost of transportation or 15 cents per mile traveled, whichever is less. Reimbursement may not be paid for more than 250 miles per week.

When providing its own transportation, PACT Charter School will utilize one or more of the following methods:

1. Contract with the resident district

2. Contract with another school district
3. Contract with a privately-owned school bus company
4. Contract with the parents of the students
5. Purchasing bus passes from a public transit agency (recommended for Secondary students only)
6. Use of bus(es) owned by the school (if any)

The election for the Resident District Provided Transportation

If PACT Charter School does not elect to provide transportation, transportation for students enrolled at PACT Charter School will be provided by the resident district in which PACT Charter School is located, according to Minnesota Statutes sections 123B.88, subdivision 6, and 124D.03, subdivision 8. If the resident district provides the transportation, the scheduling of routes, manner and method of transportation, control and discipline of the pupils, and any other matter relating to the transport of pupils shall be within the sole discretion, control, and management of the resident district.

Assigned Bus and Stop

- Students are assigned to specific buses and stops by the bus company we contract. Home pick-up or drop-off locations will only be assigned when there is a safety concern. Parents or guardians will receive a notice before the start of the school year that contains transportation information such as pick-up and drop-off locations, bus numbers, and times.
- A student who does not use the bus for ten consecutive school days will be removed from the bus stop.
- A student who is not assigned to a particular bus or stop, but wishes to ride home with another bussed student, may only do so with written parental permission provided by both students involved. Permission notes must be turned into the school office, where a bus pass will be issued for the student to give the bus driver.
- Bus routes and scheduled time stops will be posted on the school website.

Bus Routes and Stops

Bus stops and routes are designed to consider safety, efficiency, least cost, and shortest overall ride times.

- PACT transportation boundaries include the Anoka-Hennepin School District, the east side of the Elk River School District near Trott Brook Pkwy and 182nd Ave, and the south side of the St. Francis School District near the Oak Park Preserve Park.
- Attempts will be made to establish stops in neighborhoods within the cities of Ramsey and Anoka.
- Park and ride stops will be established as needed in areas outside of the cities of Ramsey and Anoka.
- Every effort will be made to establish bus routes so that no student rides for more than 75 minutes each way. However, there is no guarantee this will always hold true for everyone on every route.
- Every effort will be made for bus routes to be set up to run in the same order for morning stops and afternoon stops. This will allow students with a longer ride in the morning to have a shorter ride in the afternoon and vice versa.
- Bus stops are established at the discretion of the bus company management with input from the school. School bus drivers do not have the authority to change or add a bus stop.
- Bus stops are reviewed annually and changed as necessary to meet the needs of the majority of students requesting transportation.
- Students should plan to be at the scheduled bus stop five minutes before pick-up time.
- Parents should plan to be at the scheduled bus stop five minutes before drop-off time.
- Students will only be dropped off if a parent or guardian is at the bus stop unless parental consent for a student to walk is on file with PACT's contracted transportation company.
- Parents missing the assigned drop-off stop may safely drive to another stop on the route and wait for the bus to arrive. Students may then depart the bus to meet their parent or guardian.
- Students with no parent available to meet them at their bus stop will be returned to school for parent pick-up.

Safety Training

PACT Charter School will provide school bus safety training as required by Minnesota law and this policy.

1. PACT Charter School will provide its students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 10 with age-appropriate school bus safety training covering the following concepts:
 1. Transportation by school bus is a privilege and not a right;
 2. Policies for student conduct and school bus safety;
 3. Appropriate conduct while on the school bus;
 4. The danger zones surrounding a school bus;
 5. Procedures for safely boarding and leaving a school bus;
 6. Procedures for safe street or road crossing; and
 7. School bus evacuation.
2. Timing of Training
 1. Kindergarten through grade 6 enrolled during the first two weeks. Students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 6 who are transported by school bus and are enrolled during the first or second week of school must receive the school bus safety training competencies by the end of the third week of school. PACT Charter School may provide kindergarten pupils with bus safety training before the first day of school.
 2. Grades 7 through 10 enrolled during the first two weeks. Students enrolled in grades 7-10 during the first or second week of school who have not previously received school bus safety training must receive the training or receive bus safety instructional materials by the end of the sixth week of school.
 3. Students enrolled after the second week of school. Students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 10 who are transported by school bus and have not received training in their previous school district shall undergo bus safety training or receive bus safety instructional materials within four weeks of the first day of attendance.
3. Ongoing training. PACT Charter School will provide students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 school bus safety training twice during the school year. If students are transported by school bus, PACT Charter School shall conduct a school bus safety drill at least once during the school year.

4. Accommodations for Safety Training. PACT Charter School will make reasonable accommodations for the school bus safety training of pupils known to speak English as a second language and pupils with disabilities.

Procedures to Be Developed

1. **Development of Procedures.** If PACT Charter School elects to provide transportation for its students, the Administration shall develop and implement comprehensive, written procedures governing pupil transportation safety. The procedures must include:
 1. Provisions for appropriate student bus safety;
 2. Rules governing student conduct on school buses and in school bus loading and unloading areas;
 3. A statement of parent or guardian responsibilities relating to school bus safety;
 4. A system for reporting school bus accidents or misconduct and a method for dealing with local law enforcement officials in cases of criminal conduct on a school bus;
 5. A discipline policy to address violations of school bus safety rules, including procedures for revoking a student's bus riding privileges in cases of serious or repeated misconduct;
 6. A system for integrating school bus misconduct records with other discipline records;
 7. Operating rules and procedures; and
 8. Emergency procedures.
2. **Reportable offenses.** A "reportable offense" means misbehavior on a bus that causes immediate and substantial danger to self or surrounding persons or property. The Superintendent of Schools, the school transportation safety director, or other designated school official shall immediately report to the local law enforcement agency having jurisdiction where the misbehavior occurred if the reporting school official knows or has reason to believe that a student has committed a reportable offense on a school bus or in a bus loading or unloading area. The reporting school official shall issue a report to the commissioner of public safety concerning the incident upon request of the commissioner.

Appointment of School Transportation Safety Coordinator

If PACT Charter School elects to provide transportation for its students, the Superintendent of Schools shall designate a school transportation safety coordinator to oversee and implement pupil transportation safety policies. The transportation coordinator shall have day-to-day responsibility for pupil transportation safety.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. §124E.15, paras (b) to (d) (Charter school law)

Minn. Stat. §121A.59 (Bus Transportation general provisions)

Minn. Stat. §§123B.90 -.91 (School Bus Safety Training and Transportation Director)

Minn. Stat. §169.4582 (Reportable Offenses)

Resources: The Commissioner of Education is required by law to have developed and to maintain a comprehensive list of school bus safety training instructional materials for pupils who ride the bus that includes bus safety curriculum for both classroom and practical instruction.