

WINDHAM/RAYMOND SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION POLICY**Preamble**

The intent of the Windham /Raymond School Bus Transportation Policy is to provide flexibility in establishing bus routes within the framework of safety, uniformity, economy and time savings. Consideration of transportation requests shall be subject to the following criteria.

Bus Stops

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the student's safety on the way to and from and at the bus stop. Bus stops shall be determined by the Transportation Director. Bus stops shall be designated for groups of students residing near each other and will be located to load and unload students in the safest manner allowed by road conditions. The distance between stops may vary according to safety factors. If possible, students will be loaded and unloaded so that it is not necessary for them to cross a main highway to reach their homes. The Transportation Director may need to make changes throughout the year to the bus routes and bus stops. A change in a bus stop may be requested by the parent/guardian. Requests will be considered and acted upon by the Transportation Director.

Roads

Bus routes will be limited to School District approved roads. All roads must have a suitable turnaround as determined by the School District. Students living on unapproved roads, or on private roads, will be transported from the designated bus stop on a main road to the school. If the student resides in a location remote from and/or inaccessible to schools or public roads, the student's parents shall be responsible for providing transportation to school or to the nearest designated bus stop.

Elementary Schools

Students will generally be assigned to one specific bus stop that is closest to their designated bus stop based on where they reside, or where their daycare is located. Students may not be assigned to different buses except on Wednesdays for early dismissal. The Wednesday drop-off must be at a consistent location. Exceptions for emergencies only will be made and only if space is available.

Middle Schools and High School

It shall be required that each student riding a school bus always ride their specific, Windham/Raymond School District assigned bus, from the designated bus stop closest to their residence to school and from school. Bus stops will be assigned by the Transportation Director. Students may not be assigned to different buses except for early dismissal days or in the case of an emergency. Any exception to this rule is at the discretion of the Transportation Director or his/her designee and exceptions will be made only if space is available. A request for a change in buses requires written permission, with parent contact information, signed by a parent, dated, and approved by the Transportation Director or his/her designee in advance of the time of the exception. The written request may be given to the school secretary no later than 8 am the day of requested transport who will contact the Transportation Office.

Transportation to High Schools

For Raymond students attending high schools other than Windham High School, transportation shall be provided to the RSU 14 designated bus stop in Raymond as long as the receiving School District provides transportation from the designated bus stop to the receiving High School in that District. This service will continue until the end of the 2012 - 2013 school year. Beginning with the 2013 – 2014 school year, parents / guardians of students attending high schools other than Windham High School are responsible for their student's transportation. If the Receiving District ceases to provide transportation, the parent / guardian is responsible for their student's transportation.

Elementary Schools

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to assure that their student is attended to at the designated bus stop. At the beginning of each school year, you will receive a letter and release form so you may designate your preference regarding your child's supervision when he/she is dropped off at their bus stop.

Possible exceptions

- A. Special transportation for children with temporary or permanent physical handicaps and children with special needs as designated in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- B. The Superintendent and/or the Transportation Director shall decide to eliminate or curtail bus transportation service due to hazardous conditions.
- C. Principals have the authority to keep bus students after school for school discipline problems and/or for academic work. Parents will be informed before the student is kept after school; however, this is done only to inform the parent and not to seek his/her permission. Transportation home then becomes the responsibility of the parent and the student. When activity or late buses are operated at a time later than the normal return bus runs, students who stay after school for school-related purposes may use this service with prior approval.
- D. In situations when it is necessary to transport a student home or to a hospital because of illness or injury, the administrator on duty or his/her designee shall first contact the parent or guardian to apprise them of the situation. It is the prime responsibility of the parent and or guardian to provide, or make arrangements for transportation to the home or to a hospital. If the parent and or guardian is unable to provide transportation, the parent may request that the student be provided transportation home by a responsible adult or be provided transportation to a hospital by a Rescue unit.

Safety

Bus drivers shall not permit any person other than an authorized student, teacher, school administrator, authorized parent/guardian/chaperone, mechanic, police officer, or emergency rescue person to board or ride the bus without the consent of the Transportation Director or his/her designee.

All School-Funded Sponsored Athletic, Academic, or Co-Curricular Trips

All students participating in athletic, academic or co-curricular trips or athletic trips shall be transported by Windham/Raymond School District buses/vans. All student participants must travel to and from games/events on the designated school bus/van. An exception to this will be permitted in unforeseen circumstances for a valid reason, but only under the following conditions:

- The parent/guardian or designee must present themselves personally to the coordinator of the activity to pick up the student, and must sign Release Forms (refer to Policy EEAE Exhibits 1 and 2).
- Students may be transported by another adult with parent/guardian approval by the Athletic Director/ Transportation Director or his/her designee. Parents/Guardians must sign Release Forms (Policy EEAE Exhibits 1 and 2A Transportation Release Form).
- Following Policy EEAE, the Athletic Director/Transportation Director Administrator may approve alternative transportation at his/her discretion.

Late Bus Runs

Late bus runs have been scheduled to transport our students who are involved in after-school activities at the Middle and High Schools. These routes are along major roads and are primarily to transport our students as close to home as possible without making house-to-house stops. Students will not be allowed on these buses without a bus pass approved by a teacher or an administrator.

Food / Beverages on Buses

Students will not be permitted to eat or drink on school buses during the regular bus ride to and from school.

Policy Appeal Procedures

Parents/Guardians who have unresolved transportation problems may appeal in writing to the Transportation Director by submitting a Change Request. Decisions regarding Change Requests will normally be made by the Transportation Director. If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the decision of the Transportation Director, he/she may appeal. First to the Assistant Superintendent and then to the Superintendent.

Cross Reference: Student Transportation in Private Vehicles (EEAE); Student Conduct on School Buses (EEACC), Permission for Release Form (EEAE Exhibit 1)

Legal References: MRSA 20-A, Chapter 215 § 5401

Previously Adopted: May 26, 2010

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