

CL District Procedure: Special Transportation

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I. BACKGROUND

Under federal and state special education law, transportation is defined as a related service when, because of the disability, the student requires specialized transportation in order to benefit from his/her special education. When an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team determines that transportation is a related service for a student, it must be written into the IEP. The vast majority of special education students use the regular school bus system. These guidelines are for the small percentage that for differing reasons can not be transported on the regular school bus system.

Clear communication regarding students identified as requiring specialized transportation to access educational programming is integral in providing the correct service to students and families. This document outlines the process for ensuring consistency in communication with the transportation professionals.

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Guideline #6: A Special Education Guideline for Transportation is available on the St. Croix River Education District's (SCRED) website for additional information regarding determination of special transportation needs and the initial authorization process. (Special Education → Special Ed Guidelines → [Special Transportation](#)). The purpose of this document is to outline the process for staff working in Chisago Lakes School District in using and routing the Transportation Information Form.

II. DETERMINING NEED FOR SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION

Special education transportation includes the need for different vehicles, equipment, procedures and staff. The need for special education transportation should be discussed at the initial IEP meeting, at the annual review, or when a student's needs related to transportation change. If a different mode of transportation, other than the regular school bus system, is thought to be needed, special education professional staff need to take the steps described in this guideline pertaining to their student's area of need. Situations Requiring Special Education Transportation

There are five situations when special education transportation is needed and therefore should be listed on a student's IEP:

1. **Accessibility:** The regular bus is not accessible for the child.
2. **Social Behavior:** The student's bus conduct requires a different mode of transportation. This will only be offered after the school psychologist and/or Social Behavior Services Coordinator design, implement and document two interventions for the regular bus.
3. **Health/Medical Condition:** A health/medical condition exists which involves the safety of the child or others. Health issues may include seizures, oxygen equipment, fatigue that causes the student to fall asleep on the bus, assistive devices needed to maintain a sitting position, communication issues (hard of hearing, visually impaired, nonverbal), or assistance in walking up and down stairs.
4. **Early Childhood Special Education:** The child needs to attend an early childhood program to receive his/her special education services and there is not a regular bus transporting to the early childhood program.
5. **Special Placement:** The student is attending a special program to receive the special education services identified in his/her IEP (out of district or within district) approved by the Special Services Supervisor and there is not a regular bus transporting to this specially designed program.

III. AUTHORIZATION PROCESS - For initial procurement of special transportation.

When special education staff believe that one of the first three situations apply, they should fill out the [Special Education Transportation Authorization Form](#) and request a consultation with the SCRED Services Coordinator in the area for which services are provided to the child. The authorization process should be completed prior to any change in mode of transportation for the student and prior to any changes to the student's IEP.

The Services Coordinator will utilize the Special Education Transportation Authorization Form and other data to evaluate the need for a different mode of transportation. Criteria for each of the prior listed conditions are described below:

1. **Accessibility:** The Services Coordinator will make recommendations or consider recommendations from the IEP team for any equipment or adaptations that the bus may need.
2. **Social Behavior:** The IEP manager will request assistance from the social behavior

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services coordinator and/or school psychologist in designing an intervention for the regular bus. Two significantly different interventions must be attempted and documented. If the principal feels a safety issue is involved, the interventions may be waived after consultation with the Social Behavior Services Coordinator and the Special Services Supervisor.

3. **Health/Medical Condition:** A health/medical condition exists which involves the safety of the child or others. Health issues may include seizures, oxygen equipment, fatigue that causes the student to fall asleep on the bus, assistive devices needed to maintain a sitting position, communication issues (hard of hearing, visually impaired, nonverbal), or assistance in walking up and down stairs.

Once a determination regarding special education transportation has been reached, the SCRED Services Coordinator will review the Special Education Transportation Authorization Form and resulting recommendations with the building principal and then the Special Services Supervisor. The signed Special Education Transportation Authorization Form will then be returned to the case manager to initiate the next step in the process: the case manager completing the Transportation Information Form.

IV. TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION FORMS FOLLOWING INITIAL AUTHORIZATION

After the special education transportation has been authorized, the case manager needs to initiate the process of completing the Transportation Information Form. The purpose of this form is to communicate the need for special education transportation to the transportation department and also to educate the driver (and, if applicable, paraprofessionals supporting the student on the vehicle) regarding the student's specific transportation related needs. The following steps should be completed :

1. Once authorization is obtained, the case manager completes a SpEd Forms Data Change Request indicating the student will be using special transportation. This request will prompt the district's Due Process Secretary to create a copy of the district's template for Transportation Information Form using the following naming process: "Transportation Information Form - Last Name, First Name [yy-yy]"
 - a. In addition, the Due Process Secretary will need to update the student MARSS code to 03.
2. The Due Process Secretary will share the document with the case manager in the building where the student is currently attending.
3. A hard copy of the form should be printed and signed by the case manager and sent to the district's Due Process Secretary along with the Special Education Transportation Authorization Form, either via interoffice mail or by scanning.
4. The Due Process Secretary will obtain the signature of the Director of Transportation/Business Manager on the Transportation Information Form and route both hard copies to the Transportation Department via e-mail.
 - a. The hard copy of the Transportation Information Form will remain on file in the District Office.
5. Information on the Transportation Information Form will be reviewed by transportation staff and signatures will be obtained by needed individuals in the Transportation Department.

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Any communication regarding the procurement of special transportation should be completed via e-mail and sent to both the Director of Special Transportation and the District Transportation Director/Business Manager.

V. TRANSPORTATION FORMS WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION NEEDED

All students in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) programs and all students in K-12 programming, including 18-21 programs, who receive special transportation must have a Transportation Information form completed each school year. In the vast majority of cases, this form can and should be updated at the student's annual IEP meeting. In addition, the form should be updated if there are any significant changes needing to be communicated with transportation. (Examples of the types of changes that should result in an update include, but are not limited to: change of pickup or drop off address, change in contact information for parents/guardians/adults responsible for student, or changes to accommodations affecting the safe transport of the student.) Families are encouraged to contact the transportation department directly for changes in address.

There are 4 common situations when the authorization process is not needed.

A. Student has continued need for special transportation.

Following an annual IEP meeting where it has been determined the student continues to require special transportation to access educational programming, the case manager should take the following steps.

1. Case manager updates information on the Transportation Information form for the student.
2. Once information has been updated, the case manager changes the school year on the title of the document to reflect the current school year. (This will be an electronic indicator that the form has been updated.)
3. A hard copy of the form should be printed and signed by the case manager and sent to the district's Due Process Secretary, either via interoffice mail or by scanning.
4. The Due Process Secretary will obtain the signature of the Director of Transportation/Business Manager on the Transportation Information Form and route both hard copies to the Transportation Department via e-mail.
 - a. The hard copy of the Transportation Information Form will remain on file in the District Office.
5. Information on the Transportation Information Form will be reviewed by transportation staff and signatures will be obtained by needed individuals in the Transportation Department.

Should a student qualify for special transportation, but the family chooses to delay the start (i.e. parent chooses to transport), the case manager would only fill out SpEd Forms Data Change Request to initiate the process when the family wanted to begin special transportation.

Any communication regarding the procurement of special transportation should be completed via e-mail and sent to both the Director of Special Transportation and the District Transportation Director/Business Manager.

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B. Students new to the district with special transportation currently identified in the IEP.

The IEP team will meet and determine whether special transportation continues to be necessary for the student to access his/her education. If it does, the following process should be followed:

1. The school psychologist, or case manager, completes a SpEd Forms Data Change Request indicating special transportation is needed.
 - a. This request will prompt the district's Due Process Secretary to create a copy of the district's template for Transportation Information Form using the following naming process: "Transportation Information Form - Last Name, First Name [yy-yy]"
2. The Due Process Secretary will fill out general student information, including: student's name, address, and demographic information available.
3. The Due Process Secretary will share the document with the case manager in the building where the student is currently attending. The case manager will finish completing relevant information.
4. A hard copy of the form should be printed and signed by the case manager and sent to the district's Due Process Secretary, either via interoffice mail or by scanning.
5. The Due Process Secretary will obtain the signature of the Director of Transportation/Business Manager on the Transportation Information Form and route both hard copies to the Transportation Department via e-mail.
 - a. The hard copy of the Transportation Information Form will remain on file in the District Office.
6. Information on the Transportation Information Form will be reviewed by transportation staff and signatures will be obtained by needed individuals in the Transportation Department.

Should a student qualify for special transportation, but the family chooses to delay the start (i.e. parent chooses to transport), the case manager would only fill out SpEd Forms Data Change Request to initiate the process when the family wants to begin special transportation.

Any communication regarding the procurement of special transportation should be completed via e-mail and sent to both the Director of Special Transportation and the District Transportation Director/Business Manager.

C. Students with an IEP in Early Childhood

Students in Early Childhood Special Education programs fall into a unique category for special transportation. All students who attend ECSE will receive special transportation because these students receive his/her special education services and there is not a regular bus transporting to the early childhood program. At the present time, mid-day transportation will be provided to all ECSE students.

However, in certain circumstances, there may be ECSE students who require special transportation due to the following concerns: ability to access transportation, social/behavior concerns, and/or health/medical issues. The IEP team needs to determine the reason the student requires special transportation and document it in the IEP.

Because of the unique programmatic differences in early childhood, the authorization process does not need to be completed. Case managers should follow the process outlined above in

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letters A or B for ECSE students.

For Early Childhood students receiving speech and language services ONLY, a Transportation Information Form does not need to be completed. Instead, each Speech Language Pathologist needs to maintain a list of students and share that list of students with the Special Services Supervisor, the District Transportation Director, and their Building Principal. This list will then be provided to the transportation company for routing information. Additionally, the special transportation need should not be documented as a service in the student's IEP, but rather a statement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) section. This is due to the student not requiring specialized transportation due to their disability, but rather due to their age.

D. Students moving from ECSE to Kindergarten

Due to the unique nature of all ECSE students receiving special transportation, when any ECSE students are transitioning to Kindergarten the following steps should be taken to evaluate continuing need for this service.

1. At the spring transition meeting from ECSE to Kindergarten, the IEP team will use data gathered by the student's current functioning on special transportation as a basis for determining whether the student has continued need for this service or if special transportation should be discontinued when the student transitions to kindergarten.
2. Should the student no longer need special transportation in kindergarten, the case manager should follow the process outlined in Section VI of this procedure.
3. Should the student continue to need special transportation in kindergarten, the case manager should follow the process outlined in Section V, A of this procedure.

Example language to include in a Prior Written Notice to parents is located in [Appendix 1](#) at the end of this procedure.

E. Students receiving transportation from another school district

Chisago Lakes School District both receives, and sends, students to specialized programs where special transportation is needed to provide students access to their education.

When a Chisago Lakes student attends a program outside of the district, it is the responsibility of the case manager where the student is placed to provide the district with the student's Transportation Information Form. The following process will be followed when this is the case:

1. The case manager in the placing district will route the completed Transportation Information Form to the Due Process Secretary
2. The Due Process Secretary will notify the district's Transportation Director
3. The Due Process Secretary will route the form to the transportation department
4. The Due Process Secretary will keep an electronic record of the form

When a student is placed in a program located in Chisago Lakes, it is the responsibility of the case manager where the student is receiving services to provide the student's resident district with the student's Transportation Information Form. The following process will be followed when this is the case:

1. The case manager will complete the Transportation Information Form for the student. In the section titled "District Staff Review", on the line indicated "Due Process Secretary Signature and Date", the case manager will write "N/A [resident district] transports"
2. The case manager will provide the form to the program coordinator or school

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- psychologist
3. The program coordinator or school psychologist will route the completed form to the Director of Transportation in the student's resident district

ADD SECTION ABOUT DAY TREATMENT AND HOMELESS TRANSPORTATION

VI. STUDENTS NO LONGER NEEDING SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION

Following an annual IEP meeting where it has been determined the **student no longer requires special transportation** to access educational programming, the case manager should take the following steps:

1. After parental consent for the removal of special transportation has been received (either signed PWN or passive consent), the case manager will update the Transportation Information Form by indicating the current date and checking the "cancel" box at the top of the form.
2. A hard copy of the form should be printed and sent to the district's Due Process Secretary.
3. The Due Process Secretary will:
 - a. obtain the signature of the Director of Transportation/Business Manager on the Transportation Information Form and route the hard copy to the Transportation Department, and
 - b. move the student's electronic Transportation Information Form to the "Archive" folder in the student's current building of attendance.

VII. OTHER DISTRICT PROCEDURES

- A. Quarterly Review
 - a. Transportation department and school district staff will meet and compare/contrast students receiving special transportation
 - i. Review lists before meeting and discuss discrepancies at meeting
- B. Ending the School Year
 - a. No later than May 1st, the district's Due Process Clerk will review the status of Transportation Information forms and communicate with case managers, building principals, and school psychologists for any forms needing to be updated. This will be done via a shared spreadsheet for each building.
 - b. Once all forms are updated and confirmed, the Due Process Secretary will ensure student forms in the correct building folder prior for the next school year. The information should be reviewed for accuracy and questions directed to the district's Due Process Secretary.
- C. Starting the School Year
 - a. On or near August 5, the transportation department will send a list of students identified as needing special transportation to the Due Process Clerk.
 - b. The Due Process Clerk will sort the list by building and forward to the school psychologist in each building.
 - c. The school psychologist will
 - i. Cross-reference current enrollment and ensure all students identified as needing special transportation are accounted for and communicate back this information to the transportation department via e-mail and update

the shared spreadsheet. This information will be provided to the transportation department by August 15

1. Any issues or concerns should be communicated to the Special Services Supervisor and Transportation Director
- ii. Ensure each case manager has access to a Transportation Information Form for every student on their caseload identified as receiving special transportation.

VIII. TIMELINES FOR SETTING UP TRANSPORTATION

When new special transportation is being set up or changed, it is normal for the routing process to take a few days up to a week. Families should be advised of this and the IEP team should discuss interim plans while transportation details are being finalized.

Communication regarding the procurement of special transportation should be completed via e-mail and sent to both the Director of Special Transportation and the District Transportation Director/Business Manager. The transportation department will communicate with the family and with the school regarding timelines and any additional questions or information needed to ensure the student is able to be transported safely.

Once the Transportation Information Form has been completed (or updated), a copy of the form should be sent to the district's Due Process Secretary.

IX. CHANGES TO ROUTING (DROP-OFF AND/OR PICK-UP)

Any changes to routing need to be authorized by the transportation director. The Transportation Department will contact the building principal to ensure the student's legal guardian approves of the change. Need district administrator to ensure changes are appropriate; need in writing. .

Only need to let Doug know when there is the need to authorize a new route.

Changes to routing will be completed as soon as possible in a "reasonable amount of time", typically within 5 business days.

X. GUARDIANSHIP

Whenever known and possible, the Transportation Department needs to be notified when legal guardianship is different from parents and when the student's legal guardian is other than where they reside. Once this information is obtained, the building principal or designee will e-mail the Transportation Department and district Transportation Director/Business Manager.

XI. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Principal to reach out to transportation for input regarding equipment on vehicles. Setting III to Setting IV or any time there is movement to a singular transportation

Communication between transportation and school team regarding changes. Need to follow IEP process and amend IEP. Update transportation information form.

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Jen re-write and discuss at next meeting.

Appendix 1: Example PWN Language for ECSE to Kindergarten Transitions

Prior Written Notice for IEP

1. The district is proposing or refusing the following actions for your child:

The District is proposing to implement the IEP for STUDENT as discussed at the IEP Team Meeting on DATE. The IEP team proposes to goals in the areas of ZZZ and ZZZ. Services will be delivered in the preschool classroom for the remainder of the 2017-18 school year. Beginning in September 2018, STUDENT will receive ZZZ instruction in the special education setting. *[add one of the special transportation statements below]*

[If STUDENT needs special transportation in K:]

- Additionally, the district proposes to continue special transportation in kindergarten to support STUDENT's [describe needs] and ensure safety on the bus.

[If STUDENT does NOT need special transportation in K:]

- Additionally, the district proposes to discontinue special transportation in kindergarten as STUDENT is able to safely ride the regular bus to school.

5. Other factors relevant to the school district's proposal or refusal:

Upon turning six years old, STUDENT's special education services will be coded under Federal Setting of Z (on page 1 of the IEP), which means that less than ZZ% of the day is spent in the special education setting in kindergarten. The current code only applies to children enrolled in early childhood programs.

Transportation (refer to table on last page for specific para supports for each student)

*[If student DOES NOT need special transportation next year (**most students**):]*

In kindergarten STUDENT will no longer need special transportation to access the special education services.

[If student needs special transportation in kindergarten:]

STUDENT will receive special transportation in kindergarten due to [insert rationale].

PRESCHOOL TRANSPORTATION FORM

Date: _____

Student Name: _____ Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Birthdate: _____ Home Phone Number: () _____

Parent(s) Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Mother's Work #: () _____ Father's Work #: () _____

Mother's Cell #: () _____ Father's Cell #: () _____

Days Preschooler will be attending school: MWF or Tuesday/Thursday

Times Preschooler will be attending school: AM or PM

School Attending: Primary or Taylors Falls

Since we want the bus ride for preschool students to be a positive experience, it is very important that you select **ONLY ONE TAKE-HOME LOCATION** for your child.

Will your preschooler be at daycare? ☐ YES ☐ NO If YES, answer the following:

Name of Daycare Provider: _____

Telephone Number: () _____

Daycare Address: _____
