

The Board of Education affirms its responsibility to provide a reasonably safe and economical transportation system for District students. Transportation shall be provided at District expense to those students who are eligible as authorized by the Board of Education and specified in the Education Law. Such transportation shall be offered equally to all children in like circumstances. The distances in all cases will be measured by the nearest available route from house to school.

The District will expect that all nonpublic schools follow the Valley Central School District calendar for transportation requirements. Therefore, the District will only transport students to nonpublic schools on days when District schools are in session, except as required by law. The District will notify nonpublic schools of the District's calendar for the following school year after approval by the Board of Education.

The District shall apply the "empty seat" doctrine as to those buses used on regular runs. If a bus on a regular run has empty seats, those empty seats may be taken by children who attend the same school to which the bus is directed, and who reside along this regular run provided:

1. there is no additional cost to the District;
2. there is no change to the route other than stops;
3. the criteria for filling the empty seats is applied equally to all children in like circumstances, and in the event that the so-called empty seats are reduced because children entitled to the run require the seats, the reduction of the empty seats will be according to the formula used to fill the empty seats in the first instance, in inverse order; and
4. it is clearly understood that providing this empty seat space in no way subjects the District to provide transportation to persons other than those in like circumstances.

Students shall be made aware of all bus safety rules and regulations, and periodic bus safety drills shall be conducted for all students.

Students in Foster Care

The District will coordinate with the local department of social services (LDSS) to make an appropriate transportation plan that supports a student in foster care's school stability plan and is consistent with state and federal law. When there are additional costs incurred by the District to provide transportation to the school of origin, the District will first seek to have the LDSS agree to provide transportation through a separate contract, at the LDSS' expense, or by having the LDSS reimburse the District. The District will also consider, but is not required to, share the additional cost with the LDSS or absorb the full amount of the additional cost.

Cross-ref: 5320, Student Conduct on School Buses

Ref: Education Law §§1755; 3635 et seq.

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