



Transportation Checklist for Community Schools and Chartered Nonpublic Schools

With so much uncertainty due to the COVID-19 virus community schools and chartered nonpublic schools are urged to work with families to ensure transportation requests are made as early as possible.

- In June schools should:
 - Request and review districts' transportation policies and procedures
 - Become acquainted with all timelines/deadlines
 - Identify the name and contact information of each district's transportation director and, if applicable, staff member(s) responsible for community school and chartered nonpublic school transportation
 - Contact district(s) and discuss start and end times, unique transportation needs (e.g., student work-study or internships).
 - Request a date by which the district will notify parents and the school of transportation arrangements.
 - Contact your school's families and urge them to request transportation as soon as possible.
 - Provide an initial list of all enrolled students to students' district of residence in June. Do not wait until all enrollment is finalized. It's easier to remove a student from a list than add students at the last minute.
 - Document all discussions and interactions.

- Explain the process for requesting transportation to students' parents/guardians:
 - Obtain copies of all transportation-related forms used by district(s) of residence of your students, particularly any documents related to impracticality and payment in lieu.
 - If the district(s) use an online system to request transportation, make sure parents/guardians understand how to access portal (if circumstances allow, have parents access online portals to request transportation while at the school.)
 - Request that parents submit their request for transportation as early as possible, preferably prior to mid-July.

- Parents/guardians should:
 - Contact the district of residence transportation office or use the designated portal to request transportation as early as possible in the



- summer. The request should be in writing (email if possible) with a copy or screenshot provided to your child's school.
- Work with your school to ensure all requests/notices are submitted on time.
 - If you need help, don't hesitate to ask your school staff for assistance.
- Document all interactions. Follow up any in-person or telephone conversations with an email reviewing the discussion and documenting any agreements, disagreements, next steps, etc. Ask parents to copy the school on any written communications regarding transportation with the district of residence.
 - Request periodic updates from districts. Do not wait until school begins to determine if there is a problem. If the district indicates that they plan to determine that transportation to one or more students is impractical, inquire as to the timeline of such action. Be prepared to act quickly. (Some school boards may not act on a resolution until well into the school year.)
 - Ensure any parent who wishes to appeal a determination of impracticality submit their rejection of payment in lieu and request mediation immediately.
 - Some districts require parents to use a specific form to reject payment in lieu. **Make sure the correct forms are submitted. Parents should also notify the district that they expect transportation until the dispute is settle through mediation or action of the State Board of Education.** State law requires that districts transport students from the time mediation is requested until the issue is settled.
 - **The notice rejecting 'payment in lieu' must be provided to the district of residence superintendent and Ohio Department of Education area coordinator for that region.**
 - The directory of area coordinators is available here:
 - <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Finance-and-Funding/Finance-Related-Data/School-Finance-Area-Coordinators-Fiscal-Consult/Area-Coordinators-Directory>
 - NOTE: Districts cannot determine impracticability of transportation at the school level. **All decisions must be made at the individual student level.**
 - Community schools only: If transportation is necessary for a student with a disability, make sure the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) includes a provision that transportation should be provided.



Transportation Laws and Rules

Ohio Revised Code 3327

- <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3327>

Ohio Administrative Code

- <http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/3301-83>

Ohio Department of Education Guidance

- https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Finance-and-Funding/School-Transportation/Transportation-Rules-and-Regulations/Position-Papers/pp_np_cs_transportation.pdf.aspx

General Information

- Eligible students in grades K-8 must be transported if they reside 2 miles or more from the school to which they are attended.
- Districts may transport students in grades 9-12, but are not required to do so.
- Eligible students attending a community or chartered nonpublic school are generally entitled to the same transportation services as those provided to students enrolled in the district. Students are eligible for transportation if the travel time from the designated pick-up point is less than 30 minutes to the community or chartered nonpublic school they attend.
- District bus stop locations for students in grades K-8 must be within ½ mile of the student's residence.
- State law categorizes school transportation into several types. Most commonly used types of transportation are district-owned yellow school bus transportation (Type I), yellow bus transportation provided through another district or consortium of districts (Type IA), yellow bus transportation provided by a vendor (Type II), transportation by public transit (Type III), and payment made in lieu of transportation (Type IV).
- Other categories of transportation include district-owned or operated vehicle other than a school bus that is used for special education students, homeless students, or students placed in an alternative school (Type V), transportation by privately-owned or operated vehicle other than a school bus including contracts with parents/guardian or other person(s) (Type VI), and transportation provided by a community school (Type VII).

Questions? Please contact James Ragland, School Choice Ohio Director of Outreach, at jragland@schoio.org.