

**Mt. Diablo Unified
School District**



**Parent Handbook
Special Education Transportation
2015**

Dispatch (925) 825-7440 extension 3710 or 3712

The Mt. Diablo Unified School District has prepared this information regarding the rules and regulations covering your child's school transportation. Our goal is to provide the safest, most reliable transportation service possible for your child. Please read carefully to familiarize yourself with the guidelines and procedures. Your cooperation is essential for reliable, safe, and efficient school bus service.

TRANSPORTATION REQUEST

In order to keep emergency information on each child as current as possible, parents/guardians will be required to complete a transportation request form at the beginning of every school year. The Special Education Office provides the form to the parents/guardians prior to the start of the school year. Completed forms must be returned to the Special Education Secretary.

BUS STOPS

Under most conditions, special education students are transported from their home to school and back. Services also allow for pick-up and drop-off at day care facility within the boundaries of the Mt. Diablo Unified School District. Please be advised that no student can have more than one pick up and drop off location.

Unless physically impossible for the bus, the stop will be in front of and on the same side of the street as the student's address. Pick-up or release of a rider will not be made in any area determined to be unsafe. Safety always takes precedence.

Each child is assigned to a defined bus route and may be assigned to a particular seat. State law requires that no child be permitted to leave the bus at a point other than his/her assigned stop.

Parents or guardians may not make private arrangements with the bus driver. If you are requesting a change, please phone the Transportation Department at (925) 825-7440 extension 3710 or 3712.

Drivers must follow established routes. They may not make changes in these routes unless authorized by the Transportation office. GPS is used to monitor departure and arrival times and to ensure the most efficient route possible.

If you move or make changes that affect transportation during the school year, please notify the Special Education Department at (925) 682-8000, extension 4057 and allow ten (10) days for the change to be routed. You will need to submit proof of residence to your child's school. Address changes provided to the bus driver will not be changed in the transportation system. Delays in providing address verification may result in breaks of service for your child's transportation.

BUS SCHEDULES

Prior to the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians are notified of the pick-up and drop-off schedule. Buses, routes and times may change throughout the school year. Parent/guardian will be notified of changes as they occur.

Please note: Buses may run late during days of unfavorable weather conditions, traffic accidents or road construction. While we do our utmost best to adhere to the established schedule, the district cannot be liable for fees or missed appointments associated with late buses.

PICK- UP PROCEDURE

Students must be supervised by an adult and be ready five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled time. Drivers are prohibited from honking the bus horn to announce the arrival of a bus. The parent /guardian is responsible for getting the student to the bus. The bus driver may not leave the bus except to operate the lift gate for students in wheelchairs. It is the bus driver's responsibility to load and unload the students and to ensure that the wheelchairs are secured and all seatbelts are fastened. Buses must operate on a definite schedule in order for classes to start on time. Buses will not depart from a stop prior to the designated time and will wait only one **(1) minute** before continuing on the route. This wait time is only for occasional delays, not scheduled into the route as part of the daily route time. Repeated one (1) minute delays are reported to the Special Education Department and your child's transportation service may be affected.

In the event that your child misses the bus, it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to transport the student to school.

PROCEDURE FOR ARRIVAL AT HOME OR AT A DESIGNATED DROP-OFF

The parent/guardian or designated adult must be at the assigned stop to receive the student from the bus unless the student transportation form indicates that the student may be left unattended. No student is permitted to leave the bus at any point other than the assigned stop. If there is an emergency, and the designated adult is unable to meet the bus, arrangements must be made for another adult to be there when the bus arrives. If the parent/guardian feels the student does not need to be met by an adult, please place request on the Transportation Request form.

In the event that no adult is available to meet the student and there is no unattended authorization on file, the bus driver will notify the dispatcher by radio immediately. If other students are on board, the bus driver will continue on route. The Transportation Office will make every attempt to locate a parent/guardian or alternate drop off point using the information provided on the **Transportation Form**. At the completion of the route, if no responsible adult is located, local law enforcement will be contacted.

ILLNESS OR ABSENCE PROCEDURES

Please notify the Transportation Office at 925-825-7440 extension 3710,3714.

- If your child will be absent from school for one day, please contact Transportation one hour prior to scheduled pick-up.
- If your child will be absent from school for an extended period of time.
- If you choose to drive your child to school. In addition, inform Transportation whether he/she will require a ride home.

Please note - you must also notify your school office of absences.

In fairness to your child and the other children, keep a sick child at home. Most doctors recommend that children be free of fever for at least 24 hours before sending them back to school. If a child becomes ill at school, the parent/guardian is required to transport the child home.

LOST ARTICLES

Please label all personal items sent to school. Transportation assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen articles including cell phones or any other electronic device. Any articles found on the bus will be held at the transportation until claimed or ten (10) days past the end of the school year.

BUS RULES FOR STUDENTS

Please discuss the following with your child:

1. Students must remain seated at all times when the bus is in motion.
2. Seat belts are to be worn at all times.
3. For safety purposes, students should use quiet voices on the bus.
4. Hands, arms, legs and feet must be inside the school bus at all times.
5. No foul or abusive language is to be used.
6. Eating or drinking is not permitted on the school bus, unless medically necessary.
7. No items may be brought aboard the bus that could be hazardous to other passengers.
8. Vandalism to the interior or exterior of the bus is prohibited.
9. Be courteous, respectful and cooperative with the driver at all times
10. Do not be destructive.
11. Do not throw items out the window.
12. Do not bring large items or glass containers on the bus.
13. All cell phones or musical devices must be used with headphones or ear buds.

CAR SEATS, WHEELCHAIRS AND SEAT BELTS

Students who cannot sit safely secured by a seat belt or safety vest must be transported in district provided approved car seats or personal wheelchairs.

Wheelchairs must be equipped with brakes and seat belts and are to be properly maintained by the owner of the chair. (Velcro fasteners do not meet minimum state requirements and cannot be the sole source of seat restraint). All wheelchair brakes must be maintained to prevent the wheels from moving when the brakes are applied.

Electric wheelchairs transported on school buses shall be capable of being locked in gear when placed in a school bus, or they must have an independent braking system capable of holding the wheelchair in place. Wheelchair power must be turned off prior to being transported in a school bus. Batteries used to propel electric wheelchairs shall be both leak-resistant and spill-resistant or must be placed in a leak-resistant container. Batteries must be secured to the wheelchair frame in such a manner as to prevent separation in the event of an accident.

Any wheelchair, which does not meet minimum state requirements, will **not** be transported. It is the parent's responsibility to provide equipment that meets the minimum safety requirements.

All students are required to wear seat belts while riding the school bus. Seat belts are not to be unfastened until the bus has stopped at the proper destination. Safety vests are available for students unable to sit upright without extra support.

SCHOOL BUS EQUIPMENT

All school buses are inspected daily by the driver, routinely by District mechanics, and annually by the Department of California Highway Patrol. Each vehicle must be certified so that it meets all applicable regulations and laws relating to pupil transportation in the State of California. All district operated buses are equipped with GPS which may be used to track arrival and departure times of buses. In addition, some buses may be equipped with video cameras which may be reviewed at a later time if needed.

SCHOOL BUS DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

The Mt. Diablo Unified School District and State law require that all school bus drivers attend regularly scheduled safety meetings and in-service training sessions to maintain skill levels. State law requires each driver to have a valid School Bus Driver Certificate, first aid training, a physical exam, and traffic and criminal clearance.

SCHOOL BUS ACCIDENTS

In the event of a school bus accident, the California Highway Patrol must be called. When there is less than \$750.00 damage, the bus will be allowed to continue. In the event there is more than \$750.00 damage, a law enforcement officer must respond to the scene and delays of up to one hour are common. When an accident occurs, it is the Transportation Department's responsibility to notify proper authorities, determine if there are any injuries and the extent of the damages, which includes California Highway Patrol, the Driver's Supervisor and Ambulance if necessary. The Transportation Office will notify the schools as soon as it is safe to do so, as soon as practically possible upon determining the names of students on board and to the extent of the injuries (if any), the location of the accident, and a description of the accident. Attached is the Mt. Diablo Unified School district vehicle accident policy.

DISTRICT VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

1. The driver involved in the accident must immediately radio Dispatch or call ext. 3708 to report the accident. The bus driver will let Transportation know who is on the bus when they report the accident. The emergency line for Transportation is extension 3777. The Transportation Supervisor will call the CHP or Police Department. The CHP must be called when students are involved (whether they are injured or not). The City Police Department is called if there are no students involved.
2. If students are involved in an accident (injured or not), the parents must be notified by their school of attendance. The school sites have the emergency cards with the contact information. A Transportation Supervisor must drive to the scene of the accident and is involved at the scene with the police or CHP and district employee. The Dispatcher will call the school to let them know which students are involved (best case scenario before the Transportation Supervisor leaves for the accident scene). After the accident, parents of students may contact the Transportation Coordinator for further information at (925) 825-7440 ext. 3709
3. The Transportation Supervisor reports to the scene of the accident, takes photos, and gets as much information as possible before the police or CHP arrive because they will not allow Transportation staff to talk to the other parties involved when they arrive on scene. A mechanic may be contacted to assess if vehicle should be driven.
4. The Director of Maintenance/Operations will be contacted by the Transportation Supervisor prior to leaving for the scene of the accident. A Transportation Manager should immediately contact General Counsel at ext. 4002 with as much information as possible. However, if it is known that anyone has been injured (our employee, students or 3rd parties), **ext. 4444 should be called immediately**. The Supervisor dispatched to the accident will give additional details upon their return to the office. If an injury-related accident occurs before or after hours, the Transportation Supervisor, should be contacted so they can call the appropriate District employees, including the Director of Maintenance.
5. Once the employee gets back to the yard, an Accident Report must be completed with all the details. The Transportation Secretary types the handwritten report. The handwritten form should be printed neatly with as much information as possible.
6. The original Accident Report for every vehicle accident is sent to General Counsel with color photos.
7. As soon as the CHP or City Police Department reports are obtained, General Counsel is to receive a copy.
8. The Transportation Training Supervisor keeps a copy of the Accident Report in a file at their desk along with the police report.
9. The Office of General Counsel handles all claims for accidents that are the fault of the District and Transportation handles all claims for accidents that are not the fault of the District. It is determined by the CHP or Police Report who is at fault.