

INTRODUCTION

The main objective of transportation is to maintain equal educational opportunities for all youth, regardless of where they might live.

BUS SCHEDULES

A. Rural Students

Transportation will be provided to all rural students irrespective of their school of attendance or the distance of their residence from such school.

B. City Students

Transportation will be provided from Darlington Municipal Building to schools of attendance for all students residing in the City of Darlington.

C. Schedules

A time schedule of bus stops shall be worked out each year between the contractor and administration. No child shall be required to ride the bus longer than sixty minutes one way. Routes should be reversed mid-year when possible in order to equalize riding time. Walking distance from where private lanes meet the road to the pickup point shall not exceed 1/4 of a mile except by parental consent.

TRANSPORTATION CONTRACTOR

- A. The Board will enter into a contract with a qualified transportation contractor to furnish transportation services to the District. The contract shall be reviewable annually and may be extended for three years following review.
- B. The Contractor must agree to transport children enrolled in the public and private schools of the District pursuant to the requirements prescribed by prevailing legislation and law and as required by the Board of Education.
- C. The Contractor must agree to provide transportation vehicles which meet the specifications and regulations as prescribed by prevailing legislation and law.
- D. The Contractor must agree to provide transportation in compliance with the routes, passenger lists, time schedules, and days of school operation as designated by the Board of Education or their school administrators with buses of sufficient capacity to accommodate legally the number of passengers assigned to each bus.
- E. The contractor must agree to provide qualified and properly licensed drivers. Said drivers must comply with all statutory requirements regarding physical condition, character, knowledge, age, and license.
- F. The transportation contractor must agree that all statutory requirements regarding insurance, vehicle quality, and other applicable law will be fully adhered to.

BUS DISCIPLINE

- A. Transportation to and from school is a privilege provided by the school district.
- B. Students who refuse or fail to comply with bus rules and regulations shall be disciplined. Such discipline may entail denial of bus privilege for a stipulated period of time. Under no circumstances shall a driver put a student off the bus. Drivers are expected to report bad conduct to the contractor and school authorities for disciplinary action.
- C. Principals will notify parents of contemplated discipline and attempt to correct behavior in cooperation with parents.
- D. Drivers are encouraged to work out potential problems with students and/or parents prior to requesting disciplinary action.

FIELD TRIPS

From time to time the School District sanctions field trips of educational value. Students may participate when the parent or guardian grants permission by signing a permission slip which states the time, date, and destination of the trip.

BUS COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

- A. Initial complaints from citizens, parents, or students about bus service, driver behavior, or student behavior are to be directed initially to the principal of the student directly or indirectly served. If there is doubt as to who should receive the complaint, the complaint should be registered with the K-8 principal.
- B. The principal receiving the complaint shall arrange informal visits with the contractor and complaining parties to attempt to resolve the matter informally. If the resolution of the complaint appears to require action in areas of decision and policy beyond the purview of the principal or contractor, the superintendent shall be called to assist in resolving the matter.
- C. If these attempts made pursuant to Section A and B fail to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the complainant, the superintendent shall inform the complainant of the recourse to register the complaint with the chairman of the Transportation Committee.
- D. The chairman of the Transportation Committee shall review the matter and determine (1) to support the resolution proposed or (2) institute a review by the Transportation Committee. Such review is to end with a decision and reports of the decision to the full Board of Education, the complainant, the bus contractor, and the administration.

TRANSPORTING STUDENTS IN PRIVATE OR DISTRICT-OWNED VEHICLES

The School Board recognizes the need for some district employees and other persons serving in an official capacity to transport students to educational opportunities. Transporting students in private or district-owned vehicles allows the district to cost effectively provide transportation for this limited number of individuals.

The following guidelines relate to transporting students in private or district-owned vehicles:

1. District employees are prohibited from using district-owned vehicles for any personal purpose. Use of these vehicles is for school district approved events only.
2. When a district-owned vehicle is not available, district employees or other persons serving in an official capacity may transport students in privately owned vehicles for school purposes provided they have obtained written permission of the district administrator or designee to do so. Permission may only be granted if the person providing transportation has satisfactorily met all district requirements and state law.
3. Any traffic violations committed by a driver while using district-owned vehicles are the financial responsibility of the driver. The vehicle driver and passengers must follow all applicable state safety and legal requirements.
4. If driving a district owned vehicle, the driver will need a valid driver's license. If driving his/her own vehicle, the driver will need a valid driver's license and proof of vehicle insurance. All vehicle damage is the responsibility of the owner.
5. Drivers shall insure that the students utilize seat belts at all times during transportation.
6. Staff failing to comply with this policy shall not be allowed to transport students and may be subject to appropriate discipline.
7. All people driving a vehicle for school purpose must submit a copy of their driver's license which will be subject to a state check.

It is expected that ordinary care shall be taken when operating or riding in a school vehicle.

All warning lights and gauges should be monitored and the vehicle checked when there is indication that the vehicle may be functioning improperly. The driver shall report any damage, malfunction, or impending malfunction to the District Administrator's office immediately.

Approved: December 16, 2008

