

BUSINESS

Transportation Policy

It is the responsibility of the Board of Education to provide for the transportation of children to and from school. This responsibility is shared with parents. The Board is charged by the State Department of Education with providing the service and hearings. The State Board of Education provides consultative services and hears appeals. The Motor Vehicle Department establishes rules and regulations about equipment and operation of buses and makes annual inspections. Town government is responsible for town roads. Local police are responsible for crossing protection, physical security and enforcement of traffic regulations.

This policy shall be used to establish bus stops and walking routes for public and non-public schools within the Town of Manchester. The Manchester Board of Education shall not be able to determine specific safety hazards, in advance, for each section of town prior to bus route scheduling. Thus, if citizens question specific areas such as safety, distances, and/or hazards, the Manchester Board of Education shall make every reasonable effort to ascertain the specific problem. If dangerous situations are recognized, bus routes, bus stops, and walking routes shall be modified in accordance with the administrative regulations attached.

The maximum walking distances from home to school or to a prescribed point of embarkation (bus stop) area as follows:

Students enrolled in elementary school Grades K-6, one mile

Students enrolled in grades 7 and 8, one and one-half miles

Students enrolled in grades 9 through 12, two miles

Adopted: May 6, 1974

Revised: June 24, 1986

Revised: October 23, 1989

Revised: November 25, 1991 (effective 1992-93 school year)

Revised: March 12, 2012

Revised: December 23, 2013

Revised: January 27, 2014

Policy 3541

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

- 10-221c Development of procedures for reporting complaints.
- 10-280a Transportation for students in non-profit private schools outside school district.
- 10-281 Transportation for students in non-profit private schools within school district.
- 14-275a Use of standard school bus required when.
- 14-275b Transportation of handicapped students.
- 14-275c Regulations - school buses and motor vehicles used to transport special education students.
- 14-280 Letters and signals to be concealed when not used in transporting children. Signs on other vehicles.

Transportation Administrative Guidelines

I. Responsibilities:

Under Connecticut General Statutes, it is the responsibility of the Manchester Board of Education to provide for the transportation of children to and from school, within the criteria listed below.

- A. The Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles establishes rules and regulations about equipment, capacity and operation of buses; and inspects vehicles, which provide student transportation, services to school.
- B. The Manchester Police Department is responsible for crossing guard protection, physical security and enforcement of traffic regulations.
- C. The transportation contractor is responsible for providing student transportation within the laws and regulations established by the State of Connecticut, the Manchester Police Department and within the policies established by the Manchester Board of Education as listed below.
- D. School bus drivers will be responsible for the safety of all pupils while they are on and about the bus. Drivers are required to report to the building principal and bus company supervisor violations of any rules and regulations concerning the conduct of pupils on the bus or at bus stops. Drivers are expected to maintain order among the students in their charge.
- E. The School Administration is responsible for managing and overseeing the adopted policy and administrative regulations of the Manchester Board of Education. At each school, the principal will provide for the safe unloading and loading of buses at the beginning and end of the school day.
- F. The student is responsible to remain seated during the ride to and from school, to be respectful of others, to not use foul language, to not throw items from the bus and to follow the instructions of the driver.
- G. The parents and guardians are responsible for the behavior of their children and for working with the school district to make student transportation as safe as possible.

II. Definitions:

A. "School transportation" means the procedure, program, or fully effective and implemented plan by which a student is conveyed to and /or from school from the student's residence or the bus stop at public expense, whether by use of publicly owned equipment or by contract. Such Transportation will be over public roads approved by the Town or private roads approved pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-220c.

B. "Walking distance" for elementary school students means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the student's residence and the bus stop or school, measured from the center of the curb line or edge of the paved road in front of the student's residence to the bus stop or bus pickup or drop-off area at the elementary school.

"Walking distance" for middle school and for high school students means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the student's residence and his/her bus stop or school, measured from the center of the curb line or edge of the paved road in front of the student's residence to the designated stop or nearest safe entrance to the school grounds.

C. Parents and guardians are encouraged to walk children to bus stops and monitor behavior until the students enter the bus.

D. Nearest Safe Entrance

1. Manchester High School -nearest safe entrance

Southwest-at a point on the east side of Huntington Street at the intersection of Center Street where the pavement meets Memorial Field.

Southeast-at a point on the west side of Brookfield Street at the intersection of Center Street where the pavement meets Memorial Field.

Northeast-at a point where Brookfield meets East Middle Turnpike.

Northwest-at a point where the west driveway meets East Middle Turnpike.

West-at a point where Perrott Place meets the driveway to Manchester High School.

Policy 3541

2. Bennet Academy - (walking distance established at 1 mile nearest safe entrance)

At a point where the measurement meets the sidewalk on streets that surround Bennet Academy. (Wells Street, Vine Street, School Street, and Main Street).

3. Illing Middle School-(walking distance established at 1.5 miles) nearest safe entrance

At a point where the main driveway intersects with East Middle Turnpike.

At a point on the north boundary of the property where a walkway intersects with Hollister Street.

- E. "One mile walking distance" means the reasonable measurement of a route to be traversed, extending from the point of measurement at least 5,280 feet, but not more than 5,380 feet.
- F. "Hazard" means a thing or condition, as prescribed in these administrative procedures, affecting the safety of students walking to and from school. The Board of Education recognizes the Town's Director of Public Safety for the purposes of making judgments regarding safety.
- G. "Raised walk or sidewalk" means a portion of the landscaped right-of-way at least three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes which may be paved or unpaved; and may be distinguished by some elevation above the street pavement level; and may be marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area, or fencing, apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement.
- H. "Student" means any individual of school age residing in Manchester and enrolled in a public or non-profit private school, located within the school district.
- I. "Grade K" means a kindergarten student.
- J. "Elementary Student" means a student in grades K through 6.
- K. "Middle School Student" means a student in grade 7 or 8.
- L. "High School Student" means a student in grade 9, 10, 11 or 12.

M "Bus Stop" means a geographical location designated by the Manchester Board of Education or school administration where students can safely wait for purposes of boarding or debarking a school bus.

III. Guidelines for extending transportation to students for reasons of safety and/or health.

The following guidelines are established to assist the administration in making judgments relative to extending transportation privileges to students who must travel to and from school and whose safety and/or health may be affected by requiring such a student to walk.

A. Health Considerations

1. The Manchester Public Schools may provide transportation to students who have a disability or illness, which could be aggravated by requiring the student to walk the required distance set forth in the Policy.
2. Each request will be filed with the Coordinator of School Health. The request will be accompanied by any medical record, certificate, evaluation, recommendation, etc., deemed sufficient to review the medical status of the Student.
3. The Coordinator of School Health will notify the Transportation Office of his/her findings and recommendations within five working days of receipt of all documentation related to the case and previously requested.
4. **Appeals For Health Considerations**
If a parent is dissatisfied with the ruling of the school official the parent may make a request in writing for a hearing to appeal the decision.

Appeals resulting from decisions of the Coordinator of School Health will be heard by the Transportation Committee of the Manchester Board of Education.

B. Safety Hazards

Policy 3541

1. Manchester Public Schools may provide transportation to students where a hazardous condition exists according to the following standards:
 - (a) Street or road having an adjacent or parallel sidewalk or raised walk area will be deemed hazardous when any one of the following conditions exists:

For elementary students, absence of a pedestrian crossing light or crossing guard where three or more streets intersect, and at street crossings where there are no stop signs or crossing guards and the traffic count during the time that children are walking to or from school exceeds 60 vehicles per hour.

Any street, road or highway with speed limits in excess of forty miles per hour, which do not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where students must cross while going to or from school.

The usual or frequent presence of any nuisance which is potentially dangerous to children including but not limited to open manholes; construction; snow plowed or piled on the walk areas making walkways unusable; loading zones where delivery trucks are permitted to park on walkways; commercial entrances and exits where cars are crossing walking areas at speeds in excess of five miles per hour.

- (b) Any highway or main artery, which has no adjacent or parallel sidewalks or raised walk area and is used as an accepted or suggested route for non-residential vehicular traffic will be deemed hazardous for elementary school students. Streets in residential sections in which the use primarily serves the needs of the people living in those areas will not be considered hazardous unless otherwise determined by the Director of Public Safety of the Town of Manchester.
 - (c) A lake, pond, stream, culvert or waterway may be deemed a hazard in the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier fixed between the student and the water.
 - (d) Any area adjacent to a roadway, walkway or bridge having a drop of three or more feet per four feet of travel length on either side of the established lanes, without a fence or other suitable barrier, will be deemed hazardous for elementary school students.

Policy 3541

- (e) Any street, road walkway or path designated as a walking route for school students which pass through an area which has a history of aggressive acts or molestation resulting in actual or threatened physical harm or moral degradation during the hours when students ordinarily walk to or from school will be deemed hazardous. However, the school administration may designate alternate walking routes that students should travel.
 - (f) Any walkway, path or bridge in an area adjacent or parallel to railroad tracks will be considered hazardous unless a suitable physical barrier along the entire pedestrian route is present and fixed between students and the track; and any crossing of railroad tracks that carry moving trains during hours that students are walking to or from school will be deemed hazardous unless, (1) a crossing guard is present, or (2) an automatic control bar is present at crossings used by students under age ten, or, a bar or red flashing signal light is operational when the crossing is used by students over ten years of age.
2. The school administration, in consultation with the Director of Public Safety of the Town of Manchester, may grant an exception to any provision of this guideline where in the judgment of the school administration a unique condition or combination of conditions renders such conditions(s) a hazard.
 3. The Assistant to the Superintendent, Finance and Management will be responsible for administering the transportation program for students.
 4. Appeals for safety or denial of service: If a parent is dissatisfied with the decision of the Transportation Coordinator or the Assistant to the Superintendent, Finance and Management, the parent may make a written appeal of the decision. Appeals resulting from decisions of the Transportation Coordinator or the Assistant to the Superintendent, Finance and Management), will be considered by the Transportation Committee of the Manchester Board of Education.

IV. Transportation for Elementary Day Care Students

Manchester Public Schools will make no judgment whether day care facilities are paid or unpaid arrangements with a neighbor, relative, licensed or unlicensed day care center or home. The day care provider location must be permanent and the same location is required for pickup and drop-off. Transportation for day care purposes does not constitute an endorsement of that facility by Manchester Public Schools.

Policy 3541

If the student's residence is less than the walking distance to the school, but the day care provider is one mile or more from school, transportation may be granted on a space available basis. The day care must be located in the school district and more than one mile from the school. Parents or guardians of such student must submit a written request to the Transportation office prior to July 1 for the ensuing school year.

Transportation will not be granted if the day care provider location is within the one-mile walking distance to the school and the student's residence is more than one mile to the school.

Transportation accommodations to and from Day Care Providers will be under the same policies and guidelines as any other elementary student. No accommodation will be made for day care beyond elementary school.

V. Exceptions to Student Transportation Policy

a. Iling Middle School

It has been determined that Middle School Students living east and south of the intersection of East Middle Turnpike and East Center Street will be transported because of the extremely high traffic count at the time these students walk to school.

VI. Private, Charter Schools, Vocational Technical and Vocational Agricultural School Transportation - Connecticut General Statutes require Manchester Public Schools to transport children, who reside in Manchester, to and from private non-profit schools and certain Vocational-Technical Schools in nearby communities. The guidelines for this transportation are the same as those for public school children of the appropriate grade level.

VII. Student Behavior - Connecticut General Statutes allows school administration to take away transportation privileges to students engaging in improper behavior. The school administration will use due process procedures when removing privileges and must contact parents or guardians during the exclusion process. Video cameras may be used to monitor behavior.

VIII. Miscellaneous Regulations

a. The School administration shall establish suitable pickup and drop-off points for those students being transported.

b. Buses, with or without students, will not be permitted to enter roads that end in cul-de-sacs that require buses to back up. Motor vehicle regulations prohibit backing up a school bus during the pickup and drop off process.

Policy 3541

c. Transportation on a space available basis is only offered for elementary day care purposes.

d. Manchester Public Schools reserves the right to use video cameras to monitor behavior on school transportation vehicles.

X. Appeals

Parents may appeal a decision of the Transportation Committee of the Manchester Board of Education to the State Board of Education pursuant to Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes and in accordance with Sections 4-177 through 4-180 inclusive.