

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

The District of Columbia Public Schools ("DCPS") is committed to the provision of safe and appropriate special education transportation services to students with disabilities, in accordance with applicable local and federal law and relevant DCPS Policies and Operating Procedures. The following Standards have been established for this purpose and, in conjunction with DCPS Policy Directive 530.3 and the Operating Procedures of the DCPS Transportation Branch, shall be used to measure performance in the provision of special education transportation services to all eligible students. These Standards shall apply to all providers of special education transportation services for District of Columbia students with disabilities, including DCPS personnel, other D.C. agency personnel and contract personnel.

These Standards shall be used as the basis for measurement and/or evaluation of special education transportation services for District of Columbia students in connection with monitoring activities designed for these purposes; however, their establishment is not intended to create any private right of action with respect to special education transportation services not otherwise existing under local and/or federal law.

STANDARDS

PERSONNEL TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT

1. Special education and transportation administrators and supervisors shall have the knowledge and training necessary to fulfill their responsibilities associated with the transportation of students with disabilities, and shall participate in training in accordance with DCPS Policy Directive 530.3, the Operating Procedures of the DCPS Transportation Branch, and the curriculum developed pursuant to the Special Education Transportation Corrective Action Plan approved by Court Order of March 21, 1997 (hereinafter referred to as the "Transportation Plan").
2. Drivers and attendants shall complete pre-service training and engage in ongoing training, in accordance with DCPS Policy Directive 530.3, the Operating Procedures of the DCPS Transportation Branch and the curriculum developed pursuant to the Transportation Plan.
3. Drivers shall be licensed in accordance with the provisions of Title 18, D.C. Code of Municipal Regulations (hereinafter referred to as "DCMR").

4. Students shall be transported in vehicles that meet the standards for school buses set forth in the National Standards For School Buses And School Bus Operations (1995 Revised Edition)<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the "National Standards For School Buses"). All such vehicles also shall be equipped with working two-way radios, which shall have the capability to communicate with the Transportation Branch from all locations on their assigned routes.
5. Vehicles shall be inspected in accordance with the requirements of DCMR, as well as the daily inspection requirements set forth in the DCPS Operating Procedures developed pursuant to the Transportation Plan.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY

6. Drivers and attendants shall adhere to the general health and safety practices set forth in OSHA's Universal Precautions.
7. Drivers and attendants shall follow the specific safety, emergency, and evacuation plans set forth in the Operating Procedures of the DCPS Transportation Branch and the National Standards For School Buses, taking into account individual student needs.
8. Drivers and attendants shall assist students in boarding and departing from vehicles in a manner that ensures the students' safety as well as their own, in accordance with DCPS Policies and Operating Procedures and the National Standards For School Buses, taking into account individual student needs.
9. As determined by the IEP, students may be picked up and/or dropped off at the door or at the curbside.

#### PUNCTUALITY

10. Parents shall be notified whenever pick-up or drop-off will occur more than twenty (20) minutes before or after a scheduled pick-up or drop-off. Parents also shall be notified whenever a permanent change is being made to a scheduled pick-up or drop-off.
11. Students shall be delivered to their school programs no more than thirty (30) minutes and no less than ten (10) minutes prior to program start time.

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<sup>1</sup>Or most current version.

12. Vehicles shall arrive at school programs to pick up students sufficiently prior to their dismissal to ensure that vehicle departure occurs no more than fifteen (15) minutes after dismissal. Vehicles shall not depart prior to dismissal times, except as otherwise specified through the IEP process.

13. Students requiring transportation to and/or from special education related services shall be delivered to and picked up from the sites of such related services on time, such that the related services can begin on schedule and are in no way curtailed.

### RIDE TIME

14. Ride time<sup>2</sup> for students who live within the District of Columbia shall not exceed the following limits:

- Sixty (60) minutes, if attending programs located within the District of Columbia;
- Sixty (60) minutes, if attending programs located in Maryland that are seven (7) miles or less from the District of Columbia<sup>3</sup>;
- Seventy-five (75) minutes, if attending programs located in Maryland that are more than seven (7), but less than fifteen (15), miles from the District of Columbia;
- Ninety (90) minutes, if attending programs located in Maryland that are between fifteen (15) and twenty (20) miles from the District of Columbia;
- Seventy-five (75) minutes, if attending programs located in Virginia that are eight (8) miles or less from the District of Columbia;
- Ninety (90) minutes, if attending programs located in Virginia that are more than eight (8), but less than fifteen (15) miles from the District of Columbia.

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<sup>2</sup>"Ride time" is defined for purposes of these Standards as the time between student pick-up from home or other designated location and arrival at school program or related service site, or student pick-up from school program or related service site and arrival at home or other designated location.

<sup>3</sup>For purposes of calculating distance from the District of Columbia, measurements will be from the zero milestone. The DCPS Transportation Branch will maintain a list of such schools and related services providers and their distances from the District of Columbia.

15. Long-term exceptions to the above ride-time limitations shall be made on an individual basis through the IEP process for students who: attend school programs located outside the distances from the District of Columbia described above; live outside the District of Columbia; and/or have in their IEPs documented individual needs limiting the amount of time they can tolerate in transit pursuant to a physician's or other appropriate expert's determination.