

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENT TRANSPORTATION REGULATION

General

This regulation is designed to implement the Colorado Springs School District 11 Board of Education (the Board) policy for special needs student transportation (Policy EEAB). It shall be used as a guide to help determine eligibility and the level of transportation services to be provided to special needs students. The requirement that students with disabilities be transported “to the maximum extent appropriate” with students without disabilities (the “least restrictive environment,” or LRE) includes the focus on provision for individual needs and safe transportation for each student.

Determination of Transportation Eligibility as a Related Service

Transportation may be required when the student’s program assignment is not in the student’s attendance area boundary assigned school, or when the student is physically, mentally or emotionally incapable of getting to school safely. Each transportation decision shall be made on a case-by-case basis. Eligibility for transportation as a related service may not be a unilateral decision. Students with special needs receiving transportation should only be excluded from the regular bus when it has been determined what specific factors contribute to this decision. The decision shall be documented.

- Students with IEP(s).
 - The Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team that designs a student’s educational program determines the related services that are necessary for a student to access special education. When transportation is being considered as a related service, appropriate coordination with or participation by transportation staff, as related service providers, must be included in the IEP process to address safety and feasibility of various transportation options.
 - Typically, the IEP Team does not have discretion over the following topics unless there is a direct relationship to a child’s disability and the ability to benefit from appropriate transportation service: bus route, bus stop locations, driver selection, number of students on the school bus, school district service provider (school district or a contractor), time of pick-up and drop-off, and vehicle selection.
- Students with 504 Plans
 - The 504 Transportation Team shall evaluate students with disabilities which may impact on their ability to access their education. Student information shall be evaluated and the level of transportation services required determined by a multi-disciplinary 504 Transportation Team. The 504 Transportation Team shall be under the leadership of the District’s Equal Opportunity Programs Ombudsman (EOPO) and shall include as a minimum one representative from the District’s Department of Transportation, one representative from the school of attendance, and other representatives as deemed necessary.

Approving Authority for Special Needs Transportation

The District’s Special Education Facilitators will be responsible for reviewing and approving all IEP’s which require transportation as a related service. Requests for transportation shall be forwarded to the Transportation Department by the Special Education Department.

The District's EOPO, in conjunction with the 504 Transportation Team, will be responsible for reviewing and approving all 504's which require transportation as a related service. Requests for transportation shall be forwarded to the Transportation Department by the EOPO Office. Appeals of the 504 Transportation Team's decision shall be made to the Executive Director of School Leadership. Requests for appeals shall be submitted through the EOPO.

Scheduling of Transportation Services

Upon receipt of a transportation request for a special needs student, the Transportation Department will normally establish and commence services within three to five working days. Parents/guardians will be notified of the route, driver, pick-up and drop-off location and times prior to the start of any transportation services.

Pick-up and Drop-off Locations

The student's home address, established through legal guardianship, will be used to identify the pick-up and drop off location. Alternative pick-up and drop-off locations will be considered ONLY when the stop is within the attendance area boundary of the assigned school.

Bus stop placement will be determined using the following criteria:

- The regular bus stop, if the student's disability does not prevent the student from using the same transportation as non-disabled students.
- Nearest corner to the student's home when it is determined the student's disability precludes use of the regular bus stop but is able to access the closest corner to the student's home.
- Curb-to-curb when the student's disability prevents the student from utilizing the regular bus stop or the nearest corner bus stop. Curb-to-curb assignment creates the most restrictive transportation service. In general, curb-to-curb is considered the street curb located closest to the front of the student's home which can be safely accessed by a school bus/assigned vehicle.

Stops not utilized for more than three consecutive days will be discontinued unless prior notification has been provided to the Transportation Department by the parent/guardian or the school if a student has been placed on hold.

Confidentiality

Information provided to transportation staff to assist in the orderly and safe transportation of a student, including disabling condition, medical/health issues, or other personal characteristics or information, is protected by the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Special Needs Transportation Procedures and Safety Rules

The Transportation Department will publish and distribute detailed procedures and safety rules consistent with District policies and regulations annually to the parents/guardians of special needs students. Topics to be covered shall include transportation planning, pick-up and drop off procedures, handling of medications and personal items, handling of wheel chairs and other required assistive equipment and general safety rules.

Adopted June 22, 2011
Reviewed May 27, 2015
Revised February 13, 2019

LEGAL REFS.: 20 U.S.C. §1232g (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)
20 U.S.C. §§1400-1415 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
29 U.S.C. §794 (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended)
42 U.S.C. §126 and 47 U.S.C. §5 (American with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended)

CROSS REFS.: Policy EEAB, Special Needs Student Transportation
Policy IHBA, Special Education Programs for Students with Disabilities
Policy JKD/JKE-2, Disciplining Students with Disabilities