

Transportation

It is the aim of the Weston Board of Education (hereafter, the "Board of Education" or the "Administration") to provide the Weston Public Schools with a safe transportation system, one which will enable all qualified children of school age to attend public school by school bus wherever transportation is reasonable and desirable. The transportation system shall be planned and operated in compliance with the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut and all regulations of the State Department of Education and the State Department of Motor Vehicles governing the operation of school buses. The Board of Education shall further attempt to maintain transportation schedules which shall provide equal opportunity for all qualified students consistent with efficient and economic operations.

(Legal Reference: Ct. General Statutes: 10-220; 10-220(c); 10-221(c); 10-186; 10-76d; 10-97; 10-273a; 10-280a; 10-281; 14-275a; 14-275b; 14-275c; 14-280; and P.A. 90-112) (See STUDENTS, Student Behavior on School Buses, 5310)

Key Provisions of the Policy

School	Elementary/Intermediate	Middle/High
Grade Level	K - 5	6 - 12
Eligibility for Transportation (Minimum Distance to School)	0.25 miles	0.50 miles
Maximum Walking Distance to Bus Stop	0.25 miles	0.50 miles
Length of Cul-de-sac for Bus to Enter	>0.25 miles	> 0.50 miles

Policy adopted: February 5, 1990

*Policy Revised: **May 18, 2009***

Weston Board of Education

Weston Public Schools - Weston, CT

Eligibility for Transportation

It is the policy of the Weston Board of Education to consider eligible for transportation to and from school:

- All pupils in grades K-5 who live more than 0.25 miles from the school to which they attend.
- All pupils in grades 6-12 who live more than 0.50 miles from the school to which they attend.

Distance measurements will be based on the most direct route from the pupil's home beginning at a point at the curb or edge of a public road or highway nearest the home to the edge of the school property or bus pickup areas.

Exceptions: The Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee, may waive the distance requirement for the following reasons:

- for children who for physical conditions or health reasons certified by a physician, are unable to walk to school; or
- if it is deemed that "hazardous conditions" exist (as defined in this document).

Students living within the stated distance limits will receive transportation when, in the opinion of the Board, it is in the best interests of the district to provide transportation.

All exceptions are subject to annual review for continuation.

Vocational Schools

The Board of Education shall perform the following services for any student under twenty-one years of age who resides with his/her parents or guardian in Weston, and who attends a state or state-approved vocational school as a regular, all-day student or as a high school cooperative student:

- The Board of Education shall provide reasonable and necessary transportation.
- If the student attends any such school in a town other than Weston, provided that the cost of such transportation out of town would exceed the sum specified in the General Statutes, the Board of Education may elect to maintain such student in the town where they attend such vocational school.
- In no case shall the Board of Education be required to expend for transportation or maintenance of any student more than the amount specified by General Statutes in any one school year.

Special Education Students

When a student eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires specialized transportation and/or transportation to public or private special education schools located out of town, appropriate transportation shall be provided.

Hazardous Conditions

1. A street or road having an adjacent or parallel sidewalk or raised walk area shall be deemed hazardous when the following conditions exist:
 - For all pupils, any street, road, or highway with speed limits in excess of forty miles per hour which does not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where pupils must cross or walk when going to or from school or the bus stop.
 - The usual or frequent presence of any nuisance, such as open manholes, construction sites, loading zones and commercial entrances/exits, which are dangerous and/or attractive to children.
 - For students in grades K-5, any location where three or more streets intersect, which does not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where pupils must cross or walk when going to or from school or the bus stop.
 - For students in grades K-5, street crossings where there are no stop signs or crossing guards and the traffic count during the time those pupils are walking to or from school exceed sixty (60) vehicles per hour at the intersection.
 - For students in grades 6-12, any location where three or more streets intersect, which has an average traffic count which exceeds ninety (90) vehicles per hour, which does not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where pupils must cross or walk when going to or from school or the bus stop.
2. Any street, road, or highway which has no sidewalks or raised walk areas shall be deemed hazardous when the line-of-sight visibility together with posted speed limits do not permit vehicular braking/stopping in accordance with the Connecticut Drivers' Manual or the Connecticut Department of Transportation, Highway Design Manual.
3. Any street, road, walkway, sidewalk, or path designated as a walking route for pupils that pass through an area with a history of aggressive acts of molestation resulting in actual or threatened physical harm or moral degradation during the hours when pupils ordinarily walk to or from school shall be deemed hazardous.
4. Walking to or from school or the bus stop at any time prior to one-half hour before sunrise or any time one-half hour after sunset shall be deemed hazardous for pupils in grades K-5.

5. A lake, pond, stream, culvert, waterway or bridge shall be deemed a hazard in the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier fixed between the pupil and the water for pupils in grades K through 5.
6. Any area adjacent to a roadway, walkway, sidewalk or bridge having a drop of three or more feet per four feet of travel length on either side of the established lanes, the absence of a fence or other suitable barrier shall be deemed hazardous for pupils in grades K through 4.
7. Any street, road, or highway which has no sidewalks or raised walk areas shall be deemed hazardous if any one of the following conditions exists:
 - For pupils enrolled in grades K-5, any street, road, or highway possessing a speed limit of 30 miles per hour or higher.
 - For pupils enrolled in grades 6-12, any street, road, or highway possessing a speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour or higher.
 - For all pupils, any arterial or collector type roadway available to vehicles that does not have a minimum width of twenty-two feet along the path for which a pupil is expected to walk and/or when plowed free of snow accumulations, does not have a minimum width of twenty feet along the path for which a pupil is expected to walk.
 - For all pupils, any local type roadway that does not have a minimum width of eighteen feet along the path for which a pupil is expected to walk.
 - The usual or frequent presence of any nuisance, such as open manholes, construction sites, loading zones and commercial entrances/exits, which are dangerous and/or attractive to children.

The Administration of Weston Public Schools as designated by the Superintendent of Schools may grant an exception to any provision of the rules and regulations of this policy wherein a peculiar condition or combination of conditions renders such condition(s) a hazard based upon the reasonable judgment of the Administration, after consultation with the Weston Police Department and/or the bus company Safety Officer. All exceptions are subject to annual review for continuation.

Appeals on Rulings

Initial identification of hazardous conditions and the need for special transportation shall be the responsibility of the Administration of Weston Public Schools as designated by the Superintendent of Schools. All complaints concerning school transportation safety shall be made in writing to the responsible administration of the Weston Public Schools as designated by the Superintendent of Schools. The administrative designee shall maintain a written record of all such complaints, and shall conduct appropriate investigations of the allegations in a timely manner.

A request for reconsideration of a transportation decision and/or a hearing to appeal any administrative ruling on school transportation may be made by any parent, guardian, emancipated minor or adult student as follows:

- Submit a Bus Transportation Change Request form to the Director of Finance and Operations for Weston Public Schools, or his/her designee, who will consult with the parent, guardian, emancipated minor or adult student, the Weston Police Department and the bus company Safety Officer and render a decision.
- If no resolution is reached under section 1 above, discuss the matter with the Superintendent of Schools for Weston Public Schools.
- If no resolution is reached under section 2 above, the Superintendent shall inform parent or guardian, or an emancipated minor or a pupil eighteen years of age or older, of his or her right to request a hearing regarding the complaint, and shall provide the parent/guardian or adult pupil a copy of Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General statutes, and this regulation.
- The parent, guardian, emancipated minor or adult student who wishes to request a hearing under Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes and this regulation shall petition the Weston Board of Education in writing. The petition should contain a request for a hearing, a description of the transportation issue (ex., substantiation of a claim of a hazardous condition or variance from the Board policy), and an explanation of the requested transportation change.

After the Board of Education receives the petition, the following steps shall occur:

- The Board of Education may immediately grant the relief sought in the petition.
- If the petition is not immediately approved, the Board of Education shall grant a hearing within ten days, unless an extension of time is requested by the parent, guardian, emancipated minor or adult student. Such a hearing shall be held in accordance with the provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes, Sections 4-177 to 4-180, inclusive, of the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act, and Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as it may be amended from time to time.
- The Board of Education shall make a stenographic record or tape recording of such hearing.
- The Board of Education shall make a finding within ten days after such hearing.

Any parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student 18 years of age or older, aggrieved by the finding of the Board of Education shall, upon request, be provided with a transcript of the hearing within thirty days of such request, and may take appeal to the State Board of Education.

The findings of the Board of Education shall be upheld by the State Board of Education unless it is determined that such finding was illegal, arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable.

Requirements for Bus Operations

The Weston Board of Education places safety as its primary concern in the operation of its school buses. While efficiency in service and punctuality in the operation of buses are important and expected from the contractor and bus operators, the safety of school children must always take precedence.

State roadways: For bus stops on minor arterial type roadways such as state roads #53 and #57, buses will stop only at locations where the bus stop is on the right side of the bus in the direction that the bus is traveling. Students will not be expected nor permitted to cross these state roads.

Heavy traffic area crossings: For bus stops on collectors and local roadways, the Board of Education may exercise its discretion to authorize buses to stop only at locations where the bus stop is on the right side of the bus in the direction that the bus is traveling. Students will not be expected nor permitted to cross these roadways.

Crossing roadways: When children cross a roadway, the bus must remain stationary with its stop lights flashing until the children safely reach the opposite side of the road. Children must cross the road in front of the bus.

Maximum speed: Weston school buses shall be operated at a safe rate of speed consistent with the volume of traffic, intersections, curbs and any other condition requiring special caution. The maximum speed when carrying passengers shall not exceed speed limits for the roads traveled.

Passengers: No passengers or other persons other than pupils, teachers and school administrators, supervisory personnel, emergency service personnel, drivers in training, or individuals granted written permission of the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee are allowed to board the bus during periods when pupils are present.

Cul-de-sac roadways:

1. School buses will not enter a cul-de-sac that is shorter than 0.25 miles for Grades K-5 and .50 miles for Grades 6-12, as measured from the closest point of intersection with the main road from which the bus must turn into the cul-de-sac to the furthest point at the turning area of the cul-de-sac, unless one of the following conditions exists:
 - a. The bus stop or roadway on which the student must walk to the bus stop or school has been deemed a hazardous condition as defined by this policy; and
 - i. there is sufficient turning room to permit the bus to safely navigate the cul-de-sac and make a U-turn and head in the opposite direction; and
 - ii. the bus can safely enter and exit the cul-de-sac roadway.
 - b. Entering the cul-de-sac is necessary for the bus to make a direction change and proceed in the opposite direction from which it approached the cul-de-sac.

- c. There are 10 or more students who would be assigned to the bus stop at the intersection of the cul-de-sac and the main road.
 - d. The walking distance from a roadway extending off of the cul-de-sac turning area creates walking distances for students in excess of the maximum walking distance to a bus stop.
2. Where a cul-de-sac is not entered, the bus stop will be on the main road at the safest location closest to the point of intersection of the cul-de-sac with the main road.
3. For a cul-de-sac to be entered there must be sufficient turning room to permit the bus to safely navigate the cul-de-sac and make a U-turn and head in the opposite direction.
4. Where a bus enters a cul-de-sac shorter than 0.50 miles, the bus will stop only twice. The first stop will be at the last safe area prior to or within the turning area of the cul-de-sac. The second stop will be after completing the turn at the last safe area prior to exiting the straight portion of the cul-de-sac as the bus turns back onto the main road. A third stop may be added in certain circumstances if road and walking conditions make it reasonably necessary. Students must be waiting outside dwellings and in full view of the bus driver as the bus approaches the end of the cul-de-sac. Student pick up on AM routes shall occur prior to entering the cul-de-sac U-turn. Student drop off on PM routes shall occur after the cul-de-sac U-turn.
5. Where a cul-de-sac is longer than 0.50 miles, the bus will typically stop three times. The first stop will be at the last safe area prior to or within the turning area of the cul-de-sac. The second stop will be after completing the turn at a point approximately one-half the distance from the main road to the turning point of the cul-de-sac. The final stop will be at the last safe area prior to exiting the straight portion of the cul-de-sac as the bus turns back onto the main road. A fourth stop may be added in certain circumstances if road and walking conditions make it reasonably necessary. Students must be waiting outside dwellings and in full view of the bus driver as the bus approaches the end of the cul-de-sac.
6. Where a cul-de-sac is scheduled to be entered, bus drivers will have the sole discretion not to enter when there is an obstruction or when inclement weather prevents a safe entry/turnaround of the bus. Drivers will notify the bus dispatcher of their decision and the dispatcher shall call the parents of the children affected by the decision.

Private roadways: A Weston school bus shall not travel into a private road except under the following conditions:

1. To pick up and/or discharge student(s) whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP) requires such transportation, subject to the conditions below concerning standards for road construction and maintenance;
2. To pick up and/or discharge students residing on private roads, subject to the following criteria:
 - a) The road must meet the conditions set forth in Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-220c, *i.e.* such road must be constructed and maintained in accordance with the standards for construction and maintenance of similar roads of the Town of Weston, as determined by the First Selectman, and
 - b) All owners of the road on which the Weston Public Schools vehicle(s) will travel must execute a waiver releasing the Weston Public Schools from any liability for damages to property that is not caused by the negligent acts of the Weston Public Schools and/or its agents;
 - c) The road must provide sufficient space to permit a standard size bus to pass oncoming vehicles and to circumnavigate the route without having to back up;
 - d) The road must be clear of snow and ice; and
 - e) The distance the student would otherwise have to walk exceeds the maximum walking distances set forth in this document.

No Travel roadways: Based on periodic studies conducted by the transportation function of the Administration, certain roadways in Weston may be deemed unsuitable for bus travel. A listing, which is subject to change, will be made available in the Business Office of the Board of Education.

Bus Stops and Schedules

Establishing Stop Locations and Route Schedules

- A. The establishment of bus stops will be the responsibility of the Weston Public Schools. Bus operators must adhere to the schedules and to the designated bus stops established.
- B. In developing designated stop locations, the transportation function is to consider various factors. These include but are not limited to; the safety of a stop location and/or the route along which the student must walk to and from the bus stop, including sight distance afforded the student or oncoming vehicles; the number, speed and stopping distance of such vehicles; the topography of the area including the availability of a shoulder area along the roadway; the existence and type of foliage along the pathway; the proximity of water; the existence of steep slopes

- C. adjacent to the pathway; the possible requirement or limitation for the student to cross a road; and the age or special needs of each student.
- D. In developing designated route schedules, the transportation function is to consider various factors. These include but are not limited to: the time available for routes, stop and load times, bus capacity, geographic location of residences, anticipated speed of travel, distances between stops, equity of ride times for all riders, efficient use of equipment, and risk management practices.
- E. Bus stop locations and route schedules shall be created in accordance with the following guidelines:
1. The goal of the school district is to plan bus routes in which students shall be in transit on their bus shall not typically exceed 40 minutes. However, there may be exceptions due to unique circumstances.
 2. The goal of the school district is to have buses arrive at school approximately 10-15 minutes prior to the school start time for middle school and high school and approximately 5-10 minutes prior to the school start time for intermediate and elementary school.
 3. The goal of the school district is to have no single bus stop or set of bus stops in a particular residential area scheduled so that the students assigned therein shall be in transit for the longest length of time on both the AM and PM bus trips.
 4. The goal of the school district is to have, in most instances, the PM bus trips identical to the AM bus trips, thus reversing the length of time each student is in transit on the bus. However, if it makes reasonable sense based on the direction of travel for a particular bus trip, without sacrificing student safety, the sequence of a single bus stop or set of bus stops in a particular residential area may be changed on the PM bus trip.
 5. A door-to-door stop may be assigned to a student when the roadway on which the student must walk to any other bus stop has been deemed a hazardous condition as defined by this policy.
 6. A joint stop may be assigned to several students where no hazardous conditions exist from a student's home to the assigned pool stop. The exact location of a joint stop shall be determined by considering (a) the relative safety of the stop and (b) the respective grades of the students assigned to the stop.

Pick-Up Time: AM pick-up times are expected to be within ± 5 minutes of established schedules. Within this window period, bus drivers are not required nor expected to wait for students assigned to the stop.

High traffic area stops: The operator shall not stop his/her bus on the main traveled portion of the roadway when existing shoulders or adequate roadway width is available

or when curbs, bus stops or special facilities exist. When a bus is traveling on a minor arterial or collector type roadway and by its several stops causes a line of traffic to form behind it, in a safe place the operator should drive his/her bus to the side of the road and stop until the line of traffic has passed. Doors should be kept closed and lights should not be flashing during this time.

Children Seated: The bus operator shall not put his/her bus in motion until the door of the bus has been closed and all children have been seated.

Requirement for Compliance

Motor vehicles used to transport school children eligible for Board of Education transportation services shall comply with all regulations established by the State of Connecticut and/or the United States Department of Transportation and all other legal requirements as may apply.

Drivers used by the contractor to provide transportation services to Weston Public Schools must meet all the specifications required by the Connecticut DOT/DMV and be in accordance with the regulations of the Connecticut State Board of Education concerning the transportation of public school children.

Drivers used by the contractor to provide transportation services to Weston Public Schools shall be subject to limited criminal background checks by the Weston Police Department and are required to have their fingerprints on record with the State of Connecticut and the Federal Bureau of Investigation as required by Commercial Drivers License regulations and the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles.

Drivers used by the contractor to provide transportation services to Weston Public Schools shall be subject to periodic drug and/or alcohol screening as mandated by State and/or Federal regulations. Identified legal, illegal or prescribed substance abuse incidents shall be immediately reported in writing to the bus company, who shall immediately report such incident to the Administration. A cause and determination hearing may be called to determine a bus company employees suitability as a school bus driver for the Weston School System when it is determined that such persons actions has already or may in the future, substantially effect the safety of the students. Any driver arrested, whether on or off duty, for operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of an intoxicating liquor and or drug, who is an employee of the bus company and holds a public service operators license, and in the course or their employment transports Weston school children, shall immediately notify the Bus company in writing, of such arrest as well as any conditions set by a State of local authority restricting the operation of their public service vehicle. The bus company shall immediately report such incident to the Administration.

Maintenance: The transportation/bus contractor is responsible for maintaining vehicles used to transport students in full compliance with all applicable requirements, including but not limited to DOT and DMV requirements. The Superintendent of Schools and/or his/her designee may require the contractor to provide written record of maintenance efforts and inspections performed to verify compliance. The school district also has the right to conduct, or to require the contractor to conduct, inspections of the contractor's equipment and to require changes, repairs or additions to the equipment as necessary to comply with all applicable requirements to ensure the safe transportation of students.

Bus Lists: The contractor will, upon request, submit an updated list of buses to be used for Weston Public School transportation. The list of buses shall include the name of the manufacturer, the date of manufacture and the pupil seating capacity.

Accidents: The contractor shall make the trips on the time schedule required by the Board of Education and should a bus accident breakdown or other delay occur, it shall provide a substitute bus for the immediate transportation of the pupils, to the end that as little time as possible be lost, and safety assured. The Superintendent of Schools or his designee shall be notified of all accidents and all delays which prevent the buses from operating on schedule. The notification is to be given as soon as possible after the accident; breakdown or other delay is known.

Driver conduct: A driver, in the course of his/her duties as a representative of Weston Public Schools, is required to act with the highest level of personal, moral and ethical integrity and must exhibit a personal concern for the welfare of the children and families serviced by the organization. Weston Public Schools expects drivers and related personnel to conduct themselves in a manner that exemplifies leadership and that protects the interests and safety of children, parents, employees and the Weston Public Schools organization.

Student conduct: Transportation of students is considered an extension of the school day. Pupils riding the buses are to demonstrate behavior consistent with that expected during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, being thoughtful of others, acting in a manner that supports safe operation of the vehicle, and contributes to the safe transport of those on the bus or those in the area in which the bus is operating. Please refer to the Weston Board of Education policy concerning Student Conduct for a more detailed description of expectations, and the consequences for violating such expectations, regarding student conduct on buses.

Parental expectations: Parents/Guardians should be familiar with bus rules intended to support the safe transportation of students. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to review these rules with their children and reinforce their expectation that children should act accordingly. This includes behavior during AM and PM travel between the home and the bus stop, any waiting time for the bus to arrive in the morning as well as time spent on the bus.

Parents/Guardians of Kindergarten students, or another person aged fourteen or above and designated in advance by the parent/guardian, MUST accompany each Kindergarten student to his/her designated bus stop in the morning and MUST meet each at his/her designated bus stop on return trips home. Bus drivers will not pick up or drop off a Kindergarten student unless that student is accompanied by such a person as described above.

Information confidentiality: Individuals may learn of or be entrusted with sensitive information of a confidential nature during the course of conducting Weston Public Schools business. Individuals shall not, at any time during or after his/her service to Weston Public Schools disclose, disseminate, convey, utilize, or otherwise profit from the use or sharing of confidential information.

Compliance with Connecticut General Statutes: The contractor will work with the Administration on compliance with Connecticut General Statute section 10-221(c) "*Development of policy for reporting complaints re school transportation safety. Reporting of accidents at school bus stops*".

Glossary of Terms

Definitions listed below are words or terms as they are used in the context of the transportation policy:

"Grade K" or "K" means kindergarten pupils.

"Grades K-2" or "K-2" means pupils attending Hurlbutt Elementary School.

"Grades K-5" or "K-5" refers to pupils attending Hurlbutt Elementary School or Weston Intermediate School.

"Grades 6-12" or "6-12" refers to pupils attending Weston Middle School or Weston High School.

"Hazard" means a thing or condition, as prescribed in this policy, affecting the safety of pupils walking to and from school, or to and from a designated bus pickup area.

"0.25 miles" means a reasonable measurement of a route to be traversed extending from the point of measurement 1,320 feet.

"0.50 miles" means a reasonable measurement of a route to be traversed extending from the point of measurement 2,640 feet.

"Pupil" or "Student" means any individual of school age enrolled in a public or private school located within the school district or contiguous school district as the case may be.

"Raised walk area 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, distinguished by some elevation above the street pavement level and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area, fencing, apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement.

"School Transportation" means the procedure, program, or fully effective and implemented plan by which a pupil is conveyed to and/or from school from his/her residence or the bus stop at public expense, whether by use of publicly-owned equipment or by contract.

Types of Roadways

"Minor Arterials" mean a type of roadway in rural areas that provide a mix of interstate and interregional travel service. Minor Arterials provide lower travel speeds than Principle Arterials, accommodate shorter trips and distances and lower traffic volumes but provide more access to properties. State roads in Weston are considered minor arterials.

"Collectors" mean a type of roadway characterized by a roughly even distribution of their access and mobility functions. Traffic volumes and speeds will typically be somewhat lower than those of arterials. For school transportation purposes, most two-way through roads in Weston are to be considered collector type roadways.

"Local Roads" mean roadways not classified as arterials or collectors and are characterized by their many points of direct access to adjacent properties and their relatively minor value in accommodating mobility. On these residential roads, speeds and volumes are usually low and trip distances are short. Through traffic is often discouraged. Residential dead-end roads including all cul-de-sacs are considered local roads.

"Walking distance" means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the pupil's residence and his school from a point at the curb or edge of a public road nearest the pupil's residence to a point at the entrance of the school, or a safe entrance to the school grounds located within one hundred feet of the school building entrance or the bus pick-up area, or the route from the point on the public thoroughfare nearest the residence to the school bus or vehicle embarkation point established by the Board of Education.

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WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Weston, Connecticut

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