

Edition

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DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Exceptional Children's Transportation Division

# Policies and Procedures

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN'S TRANSPORTATION

# Policies and Procedures

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Exceptional Children's Transportation Division  
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## Defining Boundaries

*The laws and regulations that govern who, what and why.....*

### Our Mission

**T**o provide safe and dependable transportation in a professional manner. To achieve our mission, we are committed to:

- Understand and respect others
- Maintain a positive attitude and professional demeanor
- Possess sincere listening abilities and honest feedback
- Create an environment that fosters teamwork and cooperation
- Lead by example
- Recognize and appreciate the contributions of all

### Board Policy

Transportation shall be provided from the student's home to and from school for those "children with special needs", as defined by G.S.S. 115C-109.

- Where the student is unable to remain alone safely, a parent or guardian or other responsible adult must be home in the morning and afternoon to present and receive the student.
  - If a parent or guardian is not at home at the appointed afternoon drop off, the student will be taken to Social Services. (Proposed alternate: the driver will
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contact EC Transportation base, who will make arrangements for the student's supervision, which may include contacting the Department of Social Services.

- The bus driver will wait a maximum of two (2) minutes for the student to board the bus. After this time, the bus may proceed to the next stop.
- Bus drivers make stops only on the established route.

## EC Transportation Policies

**Medication**-The transportation of medication must be approved in writing through the EC Transportation office. All medication must be in a prescription labeled plastic bottle and placed in a sealed envelope. Transportation personnel will not administer any medication during transport, unless there is an emergency situation. In the event of an emergency, the bus driver will radio EC Transportation base where further direction will be given.

**NOAH/P**-No One's At Home/with permission-To leave a student alone at the designated afternoon drop-off, the driver must have written permission from the parent or guardian. Please turn in the permission slip to the EC Transportation office. The original will be placed in the student office file and a copy in your student bus notebook.

**NOAH**-No One's At Home-When a student is taken to their designated stop in the afternoon and no one is there to receive him/her, the driver shall radio transportation base with the student name and address. Transportation base will then exhaust all resources to reach the student's emergency contacts. If all efforts fail, the driver will be instructed to take the student to Social Services.

**Alternative Student Drop-Off**-A permanent, afternoon drop-off transportation address that is different from the morning pick-up address must be approved by the Transportation office. The alternative address must fall within one mile of an established bus route that presently serves the school. In the event of an emergency, EC Transportation will reasonably assist the parent/guardian.

**Confidentiality**-The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act insures confidentiality of all student information. A notebook is provided to the bus drivers to secure all student information. The EC Transportation office also maintains a secure file.

**Discipline**-The bus driver and monitor are responsible for maintaining a safe environment on the school bus. When a situation presents serious safety concerns, the school principal or designee is responsible for discipline.

**Suspension**-More than 10 days requires alternative transportation arrangements and reconvening of the IEP committee.

## State Laws

### **115C-109 North Carolina Public School Law Definition of Children with Special Needs**

The term “children with special needs” includes, without limitations, all children from age 3 through age 21 who because of permanent or temporary mental, physical or emotional handicaps need special education, are unable to have all their needs met in a regular class without special education or related services, or are unable to be adequately educated in the public schools. It includes those who are mentally retarded, epileptic, learning disabled, cerebral palsied, seriously emotionally handicapped, orthopedically impaired, autistic, multi-handicapped, hearing impaired, speech impaired, visually impaired, other health impaired, and academically gifted.

### **115C-250. Authority to Expend Funds for Transportation of Children with Special Needs**

The State Board of Education and local boards of education may expend public funds for transportation of handicapped children with special needs who are unable because of their handicap to ride the regular school buses and who have been placed in programs by a local school board as part of its duty to provide such children with a free appropriate education, including its duty under 115C-115.

### **143-300. Tort Claims**

The state Tort Claims Act (STCA) covers the local board of education from all claims of negligent operations or maintenance of public school buses or school transportation service vehicles. For example, driver negligence is insured for such claims as hitting another car, destroying property (e.g. mailbox), or an accident causing students to be injured.

For additional information:  
[www.ncbussafety.org](http://www.ncbussafety.org)

## Federal Laws and Regulations

### **U.S. Constitution-Fourteenth Amendment**

The U.S. Constitution provides that no state may deny any person within its jurisdiction equal protection of the laws. A state must treat all persons alike. Therefore, disabled individuals are provided the “equal protection” of access to school bus transportation services.

## **Individual with Disabilities Education Act 1990 (formerly The Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975)**

This law guaranteed that a “free appropriate public education”, including special education and related services, be provided to all handicapped children. It (1) detailed steps that must be taken in identifying and evaluating handicapped children, (2) provided that handicapped students must be educated with other non handicapped students to the maximum extent appropriate in the least restrictive environment (LRE), and (3) establish an elaborate system of procedural safeguards to ensure parental participation in the development and approval of the individualized education program (IEP). Transportation is especially important because it is the service that provides access to all other special education and related services.

### **The IDEA-20 U.S.C. 1401 (22)**

The IDEA groups transportation under its related services provisions. In the area of related services, the IDEA’s basic mandate provides, “The term ‘related services’ means transportation, and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services (including speech language pathology and audiology services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, social work services, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services, except that such medical services shall be for diagnostic and evaluation purposes only) as may be required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes the early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in children.

### **The IDEA Part B Regulations at 34 C.F.R.300.16(b)(14):**

The accompanying regulations further specify that transportation is to include: “travel to and from school and between schools, travel in and around school buildings,” and “specialized equipment (such as special or adapted buses, lifts, ramps) if required to provide a special education for a student with a disability.

### **The Sections 504 Regulations at 34C.F.R.104.37 and 34C.F.R. 104.43:**

The Sections 504 regulations also include transportation as among the package of nonacademic services which school districts are required to supply to eligible students and add that students should not be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against with respect to transportation provisions.

### **The Civil Rights Act of 1994 and The Education Amendments of 1972 (Title VI, Title VII, Title IX):**

These laws protect the civil rights and equal opportunities of all individuals regardless of race, religion, sex, or national origin. Harassment is a discriminatory behavior that denies civil rights or access to equal educational opportunities include comments, name calling,

physical conduct or other expressive behavior directed at an individual or group that intentionally demeans the race, color, religion, sex, or national origin of the individual(s) or creates an intimidating, hostile, or demeaning environment for education.

**The Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA):**

The privacy rights of students extend to education records maintained by a school district and by a person acting for the school district. Personal notes made by a driver concerning a student for their own use and not available to other persons, except a substitute driver, are not subject to FERPA. Disclosure of “personally identifiable information” about a student to persons other than professional personnel employed in the school district is prohibited without parental consent. Parental consent is the guiding principle regarding the release or exchange of student records and information in those records. Emergency information should be carried on the bus at all times to provide appropriate identification for students in emergency situations.



## Division Standards

*Our professional success is determined by our ability to communicate effectively and deliver what we promise....*

### Who are our customers?

- Students
- Parents
- Administrators
- Teachers

### What are we promising?

- Professionalism-appropriate dress, attitude and competence
- Safety-follow assigned routes, rules, policies, and procedures
- Dependability-present and punctual

### What are we communicating?

- We must be consistently courteous, motivated, respectful, and professional
- We must be sensitive to our customers needs and dedicated to their satisfaction
- We must recognize that we have the power to create our customer's perception of the transportation department and Durham Public Schools by our attitude and performance. You are the first and last person that our customers see every school day. Make a positive impression.

## Bus Driver

The bus driver is the most important person in school transportation. The safety of the students is in your hands. Your dedication and commitment are essential to the success of the students we serve. **The main duty of a school bus driver is to transport students to and from school safely and on time. All policies, guidelines and training are designed to promote your success.**

- Establish a professional rapport
- Be safe and on time
- Communicate student pick-up and drop-off time to parent/guardian and any future changes in their time (provide a 10 minute window of time)
- Understand the exceptionality as well as the student
- Communicate with parents and teachers to assist you with behavior modification plans
- Dress appropriately
- Operate and assist students with special equipment
- Appropriately secure wheelchairs, lap trays, car seats, STARS, integrated seatbelts and safety vests
- Follow the inspection method for your pre-trip before each route
- Perform a post-trip inspection insuring all students have disembarked the bus
- Design and implement an evacuation plan for each bus route
- Report all mechanical concerns on the daily sign-in sheet
- Keep your bus clean inside and out
- Maintain your driver packet and have it on the bus at all times
- Return your key to the appropriate mailbox after each trip
- Check your mailbox each time you enter/leave the office
- Report stop arm violations
- Use your 2-way radio when you need immediate assistance

- Take initiative and be a team player
- Follow directives with a professional attitude

## Safety Assistant

As a safety assistant, you are the most important person insuring student safety. Your role is vital in assisting the bus driver and attending to the needs of the students who ride your bus. **The main duty of the school bus safety assistant is to assist the bus driver with the safety, movement, management, and care of the children boarding the bus, riding the bus and disembarking the bus. All policies, guidelines and training are designed to promote your success.**

- Establish a professional rapport
- Understand the exceptionality as well as the student
- Dress appropriately
- Be safe and on time
- Assist students in manipulating equipment
- Operate and adjust special equipment
- Secure wheelchairs, lap trays, car seats, seat belts, STARS, integrated seatbelts and safety vests
- Assist bus driver when backing, etc
- Provide a seating chart when necessary
- Report inappropriate student behavior or safety concerns to school designee
- Diffuse student conflict
- Know the bus route for each school you serve
- Perform a post-trip inspection to insure all students have disembarked the bus
- Assist the driver with the design and implementation of an evacuation plan for each bus route
- Take every initiative and be a team player
- Follow directives with a professional attitude

## Mentor Program

All new bus drivers and monitors will be paired with a veteran driver or monitor for the first week of employment. A staff member will be available to review the EC Handbook and answer questions concerning the daily operations and responsibilities of the position.

## Bonus Programs

**Bus Driver Recruitment**-Employees who recruit a bus driver who drives for thirty school days will receive a \$200 bonus. Have the new driver submit a letter to your supervisor verifying that you recruited him/her.

**New Driver Bonus**-New bus drivers will receive a \$100 bonus after thirty days of employment.

**Perfect Attendance Bonus**-Bus drivers and monitors will receive a bonus for every sixty school days of perfect attendance. You must be present and on time. The sums are as follows: First sixty days of perfect attendance=\$150, second consecutive sixty days=\$175, and third consecutive sixty days=\$200.

\*Only military and jury duty will be accepted as an excused absence with regard to this bonus.

## Professional Growth and Development

The following training is mandatory for all Exceptional Children's Division bus drivers and monitors. Each year, certifications and re-certifications will be available.

- Blood Borne Pathogens
- First Aid
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention-CPI
- Student Management
- Sure-Lok Wheelchair Tie-Downs and Occupant Restraint Systems
- Securing car seats, lap trays, walkers and medical equipment
- Pre-K Child Passenger Safety
- Risk Management-Emergency Preparedness

## Procedures and Operations

*Daily practices....*

### Office Procedures

**Absenteeism**-If you cannot report to work at your scheduled time, call the office to report your absence by 5:45 AM at 560-3824.

**Compensation Forms**-A compensation form is completed for each employee at the beginning of the year and throughout the year, as changes occur in route time. Employees should see an Assistant Area Manager if there is a time change.

**Connect Ed**-A DPS notification program enables administrators to record, schedule, send and track emergency communication controlled by a web interface.

**Dress Code**-Board Policy 5105 states that all faculty and employees of the Durham Public Schools serve as role models for students with whom they work and as leaders in the community. Consistent with these roles, all faculty and employees will dress in a manner and have an appearance that is appropriate and professional in light of their job duties and work environment.

**Employee Mailbox**-Employees should check their respective mailbox each time when signing in or out.

**I.D. Badge**-All DPS employees are required to wear a DPS identification badge while on duty.

**Office Assistance**-The supervisors are available to you at all times. Please ask for assistance and wait in the meeting room. Your cooperation is appreciated as we work to maintain a professional environment.

**Parking**-Due to safety concerns, all personal vehicles should be parked in designated spaces and buses should stay online. Cars are not allowed inside the bus compound.

**Radios**-The two-way radios should be used only in extreme situations to report an accident involving your bus, a breakdown involving your bus, no one at home for an

afternoon student drop-off, or emergency assistance. When you use the radio, both hands are not on the wheel and your attention is not 100% on the road.

**Sign-in sheet**-All employees must sign in and out as they come in to begin their route and when they complete their route. You can only sign in and out for yourself. If you need assistance, please ask an assistant supervisor. Signing in or out for another employee is not allowed.

**Tobacco Policy**-Board policy 2210.2 prohibits the use of tobacco products on all DPS property by all students, employees and visitors.

**Traffic Flow**-Buses should travel out the rear compound gate (Industrial Dr) and enter through the front gate (Hamlin Rd). Please observe the 10 mph speed limit.

**Time Sheets**-Payroll sheets must be signed by the last day of the reporting period (see payroll schedule). Failure to do so may delay your check. Also, validate your time sheet for accuracy before signing. Your signature signifies that all information is true to the best of your knowledge.

**Unauthorized Riders**-State law prohibits anyone to ride your bus that is not a DPS employee or a student enrolled in DPS. All riders must be assigned to your bus through the transportation office.

## Emergency Evacuation Plan

An evacuation will be necessary if the students are in eminent danger due to a fire or possibility of a fire, smoke, fuel leak, flooding, bus stalled on railroad tracks, accident, etc. Generally, the students are safest on the bus, but the decision to evacuate or not, is the bus driver's. An evacuation should not be an automatic response after every collision or incident. In most "fender bender" bus crashes, children are usually safer inside the bus until emergency assistance arrives.

**Plan**-The driver and monitor are responsible for designing a written emergency evacuation plan for their bus. A copy of the plan for each school you serve should be in the Driver Packet (on the bus) and on file in the transportation office. To plan for an evacuation the driver and safety assistant need to know the following:

- The location and procedure to open every exit on the bus with their eyes closed
- How to safely exit from a rear emergency door (sit and slide method)
- Specific responsibilities during an evacuation
- The location and procedure for use of a belt cutter
- The names and assigned seats for every student

- General knowledge of students' cognitive ability that may affect their response in an emergency situation
- Method of communication of each student
- Which students can be removed from a wheelchair and how to properly remove a student from a wheelchair
- How to properly lift, carry or drag a student
- How to determine which exit should be used (can door be opened and is it safe to exit?)
- How to determine a safety zone for students-100 feet of distance (approximately 3 bus lengths)

\*While an adult or responsible student may need to guide students or stay with them in a safety zone, the bus driver should remain on the bus to maintain order and ensure that all students disembark.

On a bus diagram: (use seating chart)

- Write the students' names to indicate their assigned seat
- Next to the student's name include the following:
  - Student is in a car seat or safety vest
  - Student is hearing or visually impaired
  - Student has physical limitations or disabilities
- Next to the student's name indicate the method of evacuation: Use input from the school physical therapist, teacher and parent, when necessary.
  - Student walks with/without assistance
  - Student is removed from wheelchair/car seat and should be carried or dragged
  - Student remains in wheelchair/car seat

\*Some students with serious deformities or medical conditions may be more easily evacuated in their wheelchairs. Deformities and/or stiffness from high muscle tone may make lifting them out of the wheelchair precarious. Some students may spasm when quickly taken out of the wheelchair. The spasm could throw the assisting adult off

balance. The school physical therapist can help determine which students should remain in their chairs.

- Indicate the order in which students will be evacuated (usually ambulatory students are evacuated first unless behavior problems would create additional hazards; then, evacuate students nearest to the source of danger, followed by those next closest, etc)

**Practice**-The driver and monitor should talk with the students often and practice an evacuation simulation at the school, utilizing students, teachers and physical therapists as resources. Evacuations are required by Federal Highway Safety Standard 17 during the first 5 days of school and twice throughout the year. An Emergency Evacuation Report should be filled out and filed in the transportation office for each occurrence.

### **In the event of an emergency**

- Secure the bus
- Notify base
- Evacuate the bus
- Place children in a safe location
- Provide first aid, if necessary
- Remain calm and wait for assistance

**Durham Public Schools  
Transportation Services**

**Emergency Evacuation Documentation**

*Federal Highway Standard 17* requires that school bus emergency evacuation drills be conducted within the first 5 days of school and at least twice each year. Students transported in a school vehicle should be instructed in safe riding practices and participate in emergency evacuation drills.

This form serves to document such action and is to be signed by the bus driver and school designee responsible for observing this procedure.

Bus # \_\_\_\_\_

Driver: \_\_\_\_\_

First tier school: \_\_\_\_\_

School  
Designee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> tier school: \_\_\_\_\_

School  
Designee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup> tier school: \_\_\_\_\_

School  
Designee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional  
comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Field Trips/Transitional Travel

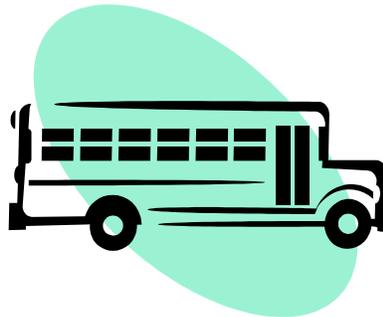
- All trips are assigned through the Transportation Office
- Drivers are expected to cover field trips for their assigned schools
- All driving time must be paid time to insure insurance coverage
- Stay with the class or the bus
- Make only authorized stops
- Return to school on time
- Fill out a trip sheet upon completion of the trip and turn into the office

### **DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

#### **EC TRANSPORTATION DIVISION TRIP SHEET**

Bus no: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_



Odometer Readings: Ending \_\_\_\_\_ Time Trip Ended \_\_\_\_\_AM \_\_\_\_\_PM

Starting \_\_\_\_\_ Time Trip Began \_\_\_\_\_AM \_\_\_\_\_PM

Miles Traveled \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time \_\_\_\_\_Hours

I certify the above information is correct:

Driver Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor/Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Transportation Information Management System (TIMSnt)

TIMS provides computer generated bus runs and reports as required by the state. Monies coming into the local system are directly related to efficiency based on these reports.

School buses are routed to safely and efficiently serve students eligible for transportation.

A student roster and route description, including street name and stop location is provided and should remain on the bus at all times.

All passenger stops must be approved as safe- including turnaround, backing, loading, and unloading procedures.

Service to day care centers and alternate afternoon locations will be provided when the following criteria are met:

- The request must be submitted to and approved by the EC Transportation Division
- There must be ample seating on the bus
- The bus must not deviate from an established route currently assigned to a school
- There must be no additional cost in driver time or bus miles

Only students who are assigned to your bus and who are at the designated stop should be provided transportation. This is an insurance and liability issue.

Follow the established run directions unless changes are approved by TIMS personnel.

When you receive an updated route, review the information for accuracy. If you have questions, see office personnel. (Be sure to notify parents/guardians of new pickup time.)

If you are arriving to school later than the established bell times, notify the EC office immediately.



## Exceptional Children

*The students we serve...*

### Abbreviations and Procedures Governing Programs and Services for Children with Special Needs (Section.1500)

To be identified disabled under Public Law 94-142, a student must have certain characteristics that adversely affect educational performance. The following categories dictate special education and related services. Related services are required when determined necessary to assist a disabled student to benefit from special education. Transportation is a related service defined as:

- Travel to and from school and between schools
- Travel in and around school buildings
- Providing specialized equipment to meet the needs of the student

### .01501 Definitions

**Academically Gifted-(AG)** Academically gifted students are defined as those who demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate outstanding intellectual aptitude and specific academic ability. In order to develop their abilities, these students may require differentiated educational service beyond those ordinarily provided by their regular school program.

**Autistic-(AU)** Autism is a developmental disability, which significantly affects verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, and adversely affects educational performance. Characteristics of autism include: irregularities and impairments in communication, engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

**Behaviorally-Emotionally Disabled-(BED)** School age students who exhibit patterns of situationally inappropriate interpersonal and intra-personal behavior of such frequency, duration, and intensity to disrupt the student's own learning process.

**Educable-Mentally Disabled-(EMD)** School-age students, who are significantly subaverage (intelligence quotient range 50-69) cognitive functioning and a reduced rate of learning. This condition exists concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior, is manifested during the developmental period, and adversely affects the student's educational performance.

**Hearing Impaired-(HI)** Hearing impaired children are those with hearing losses which are disabling educationally and developmentally and who, with or without amplification, may require various instructional modifications and related services in order to make full use of their learning opportunities.

**Learning Disabled-(LD)** Students whom, after receiving instructional intervention in the regular educational setting, have a substantial discrepancy between ability and achievement. The disability is manifested by substantial difficulties in the acquisition and use of skills in listening comprehension, written expression, reading, and/or mathematics.

**Multihandicapped -(MU)** Multihandicapped students have a pervasive primary disability that is cognitive and/or behavioral in combination with one of more other disabilities, the combination of which causes such developmentally and educational problems that the children cannot be accommodated in special programs that primarily serve one area of disability.

**Orthopedically Impaired-(OI)** Students who possess a severe orthopedic impairment, which adversely affects their performance. The term includes impairments cause by congenital abnormalities and impairments from other causes.

**Pregnant Students-(PREG)** Pregnant students with special educational needs are those who, because of their pregnancy, require special education and/or related services other than that which can be provided through regular services.

**Speech-Language Impaired-(SI)** A student who has speech-language impairment has a disorder in articulation, language, voice, and /or fluency. This impairment may range in severity from mild to severe.

**Severely-Profoundly Disabled-(SP)** Students who have a wide variety of disabling conditions. The combination of these disabilities causes developmental and educational challenges that re diverse and unique.

**Traumatic Brain Injured-(TBI)** An acquired open or closed head injury caused by an external physical force that impairs a student's cognitive, communicative, perceptual, behavioral, social-emotional and/or physical abilities to the extent that the student requires special education.

**Trainable Mentally Disabled-(TMD)** for school age students, mentally disabled refers to significantly sub average cognitive functioning and a reduced rate of learning. The intelligence quotient range for placement in programs for trainable mentally disabled is 30-40. This condition exists concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior, effecting develop and educational performance.

**Visually Impaired-(VI)** Students who are functionally partially and legally blind.

**Developmentally Delayed-(DD)** Preschool students (ages 3-5) whose development and/or behavior are so significantly delayed or atypical that special education and related service are required.

## Student Management

- Model the behavior you desire
- Be positive and praise often
- Keep bus rules simple, reasonable and enforceable
- Set positive expectations early
- Give clear directions-one or two steps
- Ignore attention-seeking behaviors
- Redirect, redirect, redirect
- Be consistent
- Know your students and their disability
- Choose a seating arrangement that will promote positive outcomes
- Each day is a new day
- Do not take behavior as a personal affront
- Avoid power struggles
- Handle discipline issues calmly and professionally
- Consult with teacher to extend behavior management program from the classroom to the school bus



## Preschool Children

*The pre-k populations consist of developmentally delayed three and four year olds and four year olds enrolled in Montessori, Title I or More at Four.*

- Preschoolers and preschoolers with disabilities are the most vulnerable passengers transported on a school bus.
- Transporters should be knowledgeable about the child's disability, medical condition and cognitive ability.
- **ALL** preschoolers must be secured in a child safety restraint system appropriate for the child's height, weight and age and secured and used properly.
- Some preschoolers may need assistance getting on and off the bus.
- All preschoolers will need direct supervision after disembarking the bus-always wait for school staff members to receive the children.

## N.C. General Statutes

### **115C-146.1 Handicapped Children, Ages Three to Five Definitions**

The term "preschool handicapped children" means all handicapped children:

- Who have reached their third birthday and whose parents have requested services from the public schools, which services shall start no later than the beginning of the school year immediately following the children's third birthday.
- Who are not eligible to enroll in public kindergarten; and
- Who, because of permanent or temporary mental, physical, or emotional handicaps, need special education and related services in order to prepare them to benefit from the educational programs provided by the public schools, beginning with kindergarten. This term includes children who are mentally retarded, learning disabled, seriously emotionally disturbed, autistic, cerebral palsied,

orthopedically impaired, hearing impaired, speech impaired, blind or visually impaired, multiply handicapped, or other health impaired. All evaluations performed pursuant to this part shall be appropriate to the individual child's age and development.

### **114C-146.2 Handicapped Children, Ages Three to Five Entitlement to Services**

Preschool handicapped children are entitled, at no cost to their parents or guardians, to individualized programs specifically designed to meet their unique needs for special education and related services.

### **115C-242 Summary of Tort Claims as it relates to Five and Under Population**

The STCA provided coverage in the following provided the driver is employed and paid by the LEA and is operating a bus as allowed under G.S. 115C-242.

- Transporting children with special needs (preschool handicapped program, ages three, four, and five), receiving education and local education agencies and transported on school buses.
- Transporting Chapter 1 Pre-Kindergarten pupils receiving education in local education agencies and transported on school buses.
- Transporting Head Start pupils receiving education housed in a building owned and operated by local education agencies and transported by school bus.
- Transporting students participating in Smart Start Program.

## **Federal Laws**

### **The Education of All Handicapped Children's Act Amendments of 1986 Part H**

Part H addressed the need for early intervention for infants and toddlers. States were offered financial incentives to establish an extensive, statewide service among numerous agencies that would be provided to children from birth through two years of age. In addition, it lowered the age of eligibility for special education and related services for all children with disabilities to age three and required that all eligible children receive early intervention services. This law also required that services are defined as the cost of travel that is necessary to enable an eligible child and the child's family to receive early intervention services.

## National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Based on research, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommends that all preschool age children are safest when transported in Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) that meet the Federal motor vehicle safety standards (FMVSS 213). Each child should be properly secured in a CSRS. The CSRS should be properly secured to the bus seat, using anchorages that meet FMVSSs. Each child should be secured in a CSRS appropriate to a child's with, height and age.

For additional information:  
[www.nhtsa.com](http://www.nhtsa.com)

## EC Transportation Pre-K Drop-off Policy

When a student pick-up or drop-off is at a daycare location, the daycare staff is responsible for escorting the student to the bus. When returning the student to the daycare, the safety assistant may escort the student to the door to release the child to a daycare staff member.

## EC Pre-K Change of Address Policy

In general, Pre-K student changes of address are approved by the Pre-K Department. Parents should confer with their child's teacher, who will forward the information to the Pre-K Coordinator. The Pre-K Department will notify the Transportation Customer Service Center and the EC Transportation Office as to whether transportation will be provided, schools changed, etc.



## Equipment

*Car seats, integrated seats, lifts, safety vests, STARS, wheelchairs...*

### Car Seats

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recommends that all preschool age children are safest when transported in Child Safety Restraint Systems (CSRS) which meet the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS 213). Each child should be properly secured in a CSRS that is properly secured to the bus seat (FMVSS 210), using anchorages that meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS 225).

- The school district should provide the car seat
- Drivers and Safety Assistants should be trained to install and use a CSRS before transporting preschool students
- Standard 39 inch bus seats will accommodate 2 car seats
- A single car seat should be placed by the window
- **Car seats should never be placed in emergency exit seats**
- Car seats should be placed in the forward seats of the bus
- Students weighing less than 20 pounds should be in a rear facing seat with a full harness
- Students weighing between 20 and 40 pounds should be in a forward facing seat with a full harness
- A properly installed car seat does not move more than one inch when pulled at the belt path. Place your knee in the seat while pulling the lap belt to ensure a tight fit when fastening the latch plate

- Harness straps should remain flat, straight and snug
- Retainer clips must be locked at armpit level
- Some buses are equipped with the Mobile Occupant Mini-Seat Systems (MOMS) which have special anchorages installed
- Specialized car seats may be required for students with special medical needs

## Integrated Child Safety Restraint System

An integrated bus seat (CE White seat) has a built in child restraint system. The back of the seat flips down to reveal the integrated system. These seats usually accommodate students weighing 20-50 pounds. When not in use the seat can be flipped back up for use as a regular bus seat.



- To open the child restraint: Grasp the upper portion (leg rest pad) and lower the child seat cushion.
- Before placing the child in the seat, add slack to the shoulder belts. Release the seat belts by pulling up on the shoulder belt adjustment strap located at the seat, then pull on the seat belts.
- Place the child into the child seat and put a shoulder belt over each shoulder. Insert both seat belt latch plates into the buckle and pull up on them to make sure they are firmly latched. Be sure that the buckle is free of foreign objects that may prevent you from properly latching the latch plates.
- Fasten the two halves of the belt shoulder clip together and put it 2-3 inches below the child's chin. The purpose of the clip is to keep the shoulder belts positioned correctly on the shoulders.
- Pull the shoulder belt adjustment strap firmly until the shoulder belts are tight against the child's shoulders. You should not be able to put more than two fingers between the shoulder belts and the child's chest (two finger rule). Once properly adjusted there is no need to release the seat belts until a change in clothing or height occurs.

**WARNING:** A frayed or torn child restraint belt could rip apart in a collision and leave the child with no protection. Inspect the belt system periodically, checking for cuts, frays, or loose parts. Damaged parts must be replaced immediately. Do not disassemble or modify the system. Child restraint belt systems must be replaced after a collision if they

have been damaged (bent buckle or 5-point connector, torn webbing, etc). Similarly, the child restraint-equipped bench seat must be replaced after a collision if it is damaged (bent or broken seat frame, etc.).

- To remove the child: Separate the halves of the shoulder belt clip, push the red release button in the buckle, move the shoulder belts to the side and remove the child from the seat. Return the buckle assembly to its lowered position for storage after each use. This will allow the child seat to be neatly folded when not in use.

## Safety Vests

Safety vest are restraint devices used on school buses to aide students in maintaining an upright position on the bus seat. They have also been used for preschoolers weighing more than 40 pounds or that do not fit in a CSRS. Safety vests are permitted only for use on school buses and where the seat behind the restrained student is left unoccupied or is occupied by other restrained students. There are a variety of types and sizes of safety vest to fit students weighing 20-164 pounds. They may fasten in the front by Velcro or buckles or zip in the back. It is important to choose the right size for the student.

### Installation of the Seat Mount

- Locate and identify the push button strap (Strap A), the connector strap (Strap B), and the inside strap (Strap C). **See Diagram B.**
- Place Strap A over the top of the seat.
- Place Strap B between the seat cushions, and attach to the D-Rings on the hip strap of the E-Z-ON Vest™. The snap hooks should portrude just enough to attach to the D-Rings.
- Strap C should be flat against the inside of the seat **See Diagram A**
- Attach the snap hooks on Strap A to the D-Rings on the shoulder straps of the E-Z-ON VEST™
- Attach the buckle of Strap A and the connector of Strap B together.
- After securing both ends, pull the loose end of Strap B as **tightly** as possible.
- The push button of the buckle should face the back of the seat to help prevent accidental release. **See Diagram B.**



Diagram A  
Seat Mount - Front View

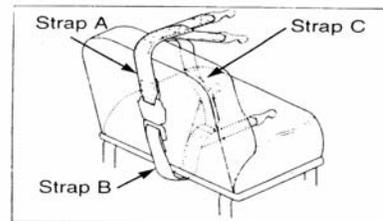


Diagram B  
Seat Mount - Back view

### Positioning the Passenger and Connecting the Vest to the Seat Mount

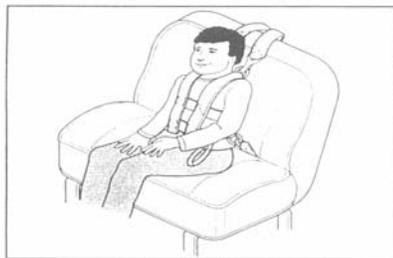


Diagram C  
Correctly installed seat mount  
and properly sized E-Z-ON™ Vest

- Place the E-Z-ON™ Vest on the child according to the instructions found on page 4, "Placing the E-Z-ON Vest on the Child".
- Position the person wearing the E-Z-ON™ Vest on the vehicle seat with buttocks and shoulders touching the seat back.
- Locate the two snap hooks of Strap A. Attach each to a shoulder D-ring.
- Locate the two snap hooks of Strap B. Attach each to a hip D-ring.
- If there is an existing lap belt in the vehicle: thread the vehicle's lap belt through the loops located on each side of the vest. Secure the seat belt snugly around the child's hip area.
- If the seat mount is correctly installed and the E-Z-ON™ Vest is properly sized, the torso will be securely supported in an upright position. **See Diagram C.** Check to make sure that all hooks and buckles are secure.

# STARs

## Installing the STAR on the Bus Seat

- Place the STAR restraint on the bus seat. Place the three (gray, tan and black) cam wrap straps around the school bus seat back. Insert the short gray and tan straps connected to the rear of the STAR flexible seat base through the opening in the seat cushion. (If the opening between the top and bottom cushion is blocked, open the rear seat clops on bottom of seat cushion and lift. Thread the gray and tan straps connected to the rear of the STAR flexible seat base through the opening, then lower the seat cushion to its original position, pull the two straps tight and close the seat clips.)

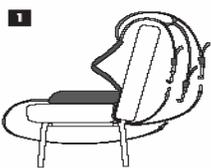
**CAUTION:** Do not connect the middle black strap until the gray and tan straps are secured and tight.

- Connect the gray cam wrap strap to the gray seat base strap. Connect the tan cam wrap strap to the tan seat base strap. Pull the adjuster straps to tighten the gray and tan cam wrap straps.
- Once the gray and tan cam wrap straps are tight, use the two Velcro strips on each strap to secure the free ends of each strap
- You are now ready to connect the black strap in the middle to the black strap from the seat base. Once the black strap is connected, pull tight and use the two Velcro strips to secure the free ends of the black strap. The black strap will tighten down the base to the front of the cushion.

**IMPORTANT:** The free ends of each strap must be secured with Velcro.

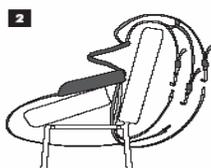
**Installing STAR on the School Bus Seat**

**1**



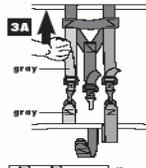
Place the STAR restraint on the bus seat. Place the three (gray, tan and black) cam wrap straps around the school bus seat back. Insert the short gray and tan straps connected to the rear of the STAR flexible seat base through the opening in the seat cushion (See Figure 1).

**2**



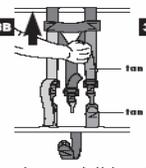
If the opening between the top and bottom cushion is blocked, open the rear seat clips on bottom of seat cushion and lift. Thread the gray and tan straps connected to the rear of the STAR flexible seat base through the opening (See Figure 2), then lower the seat cushion to its original position, pull the two straps tight and close the seat clips.

**3A**



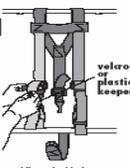
gray

**3B**



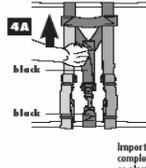
tan

**3C**



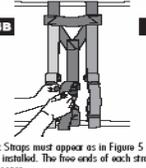
velcro or plastic keeper

**4A**

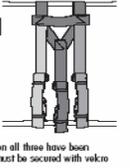


black

**4B**



**5**



**Caution:** Do not connect the middle black strap until the gray and tan straps are secured and tight.  
Connect the gray cam wrap strap to the gray seat base strap. Connect the tan cam wrap strap to the tan seat base strap. Pull the adjuster straps to tighten the gray and tan cam wrap straps (See Figures 3 A&B).  
Once the gray and tan cam wrap straps are tight, use the two velcro strips or plastic keepers on each strap to secure the free ends of each strap (See Figure 3C).

**Plastic Keeper Options**

You are now ready to connect the black strap in the middle to the black strap from the seat base (See Figure 4A). Once the black strap is connected, pull tight and use the two velcro strips or plastic keepers to secure the free ends of the black strap (See Figure 4B). The black strap will tighten down the base to the front of the cushion.

**Important:** Straps must appear as in Figure 5 when all three have been completely installed. The free ends of each strap must be secured with velcro or plastic keeper.  
**The STAR restraint is now ready to use.**

**WARNING! DEATH or SERIOUS INJURY can occur if The Manufacturer's Instructions Are Not Followed**

- Installing the STAR restraint correctly is critical to the safety and performance of the product.
- Installation questions can be answered by calling IMMI SafeGuard Consumer Service at 877-447-2305.

The STAR restraint is now ready to use.

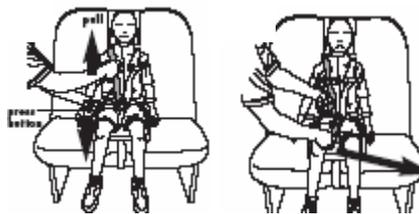
## Securing Students in the STAR Restraint

- Release the harness of clip and metal latches from the buckle, allowing the child to sit in the seat. (If additional length is needed in the restraint for a larger child or clothing, this can be accomplished using the following procedure: While holding the left shoulder strap, press the adjuster button located on the left side of the seat base. Pull up on the strap to lengthen. Repeat this step for the right shoulder strap.)
- Once the child is positioned in the seat, adjust the two comfort slides to the shoulder height of the child. **Be sure the child is sitting as far back in the seat as possible.**
- Make sure the shoulder straps are positioned over both shoulders of the child.
- Use the buckle loop to pull it away from the child before latching.
- Insert the two metal latches into the buckle. Be sure you hear the audible click.

**A snug strap should not allow any slack. It lies in a relatively straight line without sagging. It does not press on the child's flesh or push the child's body into an unnatural position.**

- Once the harness is snug around the child, fasten the harness clip and position at armpit level on the child.

## REMOVING THE STUDENT



- Release the harness clip. While holding the left shoulder strap, press the adjuster button located on the left side and pull the shoulder strap up. Repeat this step for the right shoulder strap.
- Use the buckle loop to pull the buckle away from the child and push button to release the metal latches.

**WARNING: DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY CAN OCCUR IF THE MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS ARE NOT FOLLOWED.**

- This restraint must be used on school bus seats. Do not use in automobiles or aircraft.
- The entire seat behind must be unoccupied or have restrained occupants.
- The STAR restraint must be replaced after any significant accident involving the bus.
- The STAR restraint life is 5 years and must be replaced 5 years from date of manufacture located on the product ID label.

## Lift Procedures

- Lower the lift onto a flat surface
- Back the wheelchair onto the lift
- Only a student seated in a wheelchair can ride the lift
- Always use the lift for non ambulatory students
- Apply the brakes on the wheelchair
- Power chairs should have the power turned off; gears disengaged and brake applied
- Parent should be outside the bus and the monitor should be operating the lift from inside the bus
- Never move the bus when the lift door is open

## Wheelchair Guidelines

- **All wheelchairs must be forward facing**
- When feasible, a student should be transferred from the wheelchair to the bus seat
- Remove lap trays and store securely on the bus
- A foam transportation tray may be used to provide upper body support

- The teacher/physical therapist should be notified immediately regarding wheelchair problems-see Child and Wheelchair Safety Concerns Checklist
- Standard wheelchairs use 2 tie downs in the front and 2 on the rear plus a lap/shoulder belt
- All power chairs , or a regular chair with student weighing more than 250 lbs., must be secured with 2 tie downs in the front and 4 on the rear plus a lap/shoulder belt
- Tilt n Space chairs- position child upright, if feasible
- Reclining wheelchair-tether strap the back of the seat. Student should have a vest with a crotch strap, if reclined, not a shoulder strap
- Never crisscross or twist the straps
- Rear tie downs are the main securement-do them last
- Attach tie downs to the welded junction of the rear vertical frame and the front horizontal upper frame
- Sure-Lok Occupant Restraint Lap Belts are designed to bear upon the bony structure of the body and should be worn low and snug across the pelvis, with the junction between the lap and shoulder belts located near the wearer's hip. The lap belt should not be worn across the abdominal area, over the armrests, or twisted. The shoulder belt should be properly extended over the shoulder and across the upper chest or torso when connecting it to the lap belt.



## Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Are students who are eligible to receive special education under the IDEA entitled to EC transportation as a related service?**

No, there must be a legitimate reason why special transportation is needed. The IEP team decides if a student needs EC transportation.

2. **Can a bus schedule be adjusted to accommodate a parent's personal schedule?**

Buses are scheduled to meet school bell times and to maximize the efficiency of transportation for all students.

3. **Are school districts required to share student confidential information with bus drivers and safety assistants?**

Yes, transportation personnel are entitled to information that would affect the safety and welfare of the student.

4. **Can an EC student be suspended from transportation services?**

Yes, for a maximum of 10 school days per year before a reconvening of the IEP committee to determine alternative transportation services.

5. **Where EC students should be picked up and dropped off?**

Neither IDEA nor Section 504 addresses this. EC Transportation makes every effort to pick up and drop off EC students in front of their homes.

6. **Do students assigned to EC buses have to be secured with seat belts, car seats, etc.?**

Currently, only pre-k students are required to be secured in child safety restraint systems.

**7. Can a student pick up and drop off location be different?**

As a courtesy, EC Transportation will transport a student to/from an alternative address that is within one mile of an established route. Temporary changes cannot be accommodated.

**8. When a student moves, can the student remain on the same bus?**

A change of address may result in a change of bus assignment and /or school placement.

**9. How long does it take to arrange transportation?**

The Transportation Customer Service Center (TSC) makes every effort to expedite transportation as soon as possible.

**10. Can the school bus return to a student stop?**

Students must be prepared to board the bus at their scheduled time. Returning or waiting for tardy students creates late buses at other stops and schools, which compromises the educational day.

**11. Why do student's pick up times change throughout the school year?**

As students are identified, change addresses, or change placement, transportation may or may not be needed as a related service. These changes impact bus routing.

**12. What happens when there is no one home and the parent has not given written permission for the student to stay home alone?**

EC Transportation will exhaust all emergency information to make alternative arrangements. If all efforts fail, the student will be taken to Social Services.

**13. In the event of early dismissal, due to inclement weather, what should a parent do if he/she can't get home in time to meet the bus?**

Call the school to make arrangements to pick the child up at school.

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# Glossary

**Anaphylactic Shock**-An extreme allergic reaction, most frequently due to bee stings, medicine, latex, etc

**Asthma**-A lung condition characterized by episodes of breathing difficulty

**Brittle Bone Disease**-Osteogenesis Imperfecta-A disease in which the bones are formed imperfectly resulting in frequent fractures

**Cam**-Webbing that secures a safety vest to the bus seat by wrapping around the seat, also referred to as a mounting strap

**CDL**-Commercial Drivers License

**Colostomy**-A surgical procedure that creates an opening on the abdomen for the drainage from the colon

**CSRS**-Child Safety Restraint System-a safety device designed for use in a motor vehicle to restrain, seat or position a child

**Emergency Action Guide**-Issued by DPS Risk Management Office, standard conduct and procedures for extreme emergency situations

**Epi-pen**-a medical device used to reduce an allergic reaction administered only by a trained person. In some cases this is the student

**Evacuate**-to leave, remove from

**FAPE**-Free Appropriate Public Education

**FERPA**-The Family Rights and Education and Privacy Act of 1973 which requires confidentiality of student records in public schools, but allows access to necessary information on a need to know basis

**Field Trip**-a class activity trip

**FMVSS**-Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards-standards developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that apply to all new motor vehicles and motor vehicle safety equipment

**G-Tube**-A tube that has been surgically placed into the stomach to help the student get adequate nutrition

**Hemophilia**-A blood disease characterized by the inability of the blood to clot

**IDEA**-The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990

**IEP**-Individualized Education Plan-a required written education plan developed for each student with disabilities

**IEP Team**-A group of individuals as described by IDEA responsible for the development, review and revision of the IEP

**Integrated seat**-A child safety restraint system for children 20-50 pounds manufactured within the body of a seat that folds up into the seat when not in use

**Lap Tray**-a removable Plexiglas or wooden table attached to a wheelchair which must be removed and secured for transport. A foam lap tray may be used for transportation.

**LEA**-Local Education Agency, the local school system

**LRE**-Least Restrictive Environment, requires that children with disabilities be integrated as fully as possible into situations and settings with their non-disabled peers

**More at Four**-An education program established for 4 year olds that meet a select criteria

**Muscular Dystrophy**-A disease of the muscles resulting in increased weakness over time

**NHTSA**-National Highway Safety Administration, develops standards for motor vehicles and motor vehicle safety equipment

**NOAH**-An EC acronym for “there is no one at home” to receive a child

**OCS**-Occupational Course of Study, a diploma program developing job skills requiring a specific number of work hours

**Pre-K**-Refers to children between 3 and 5 years old enrolled in a variety of federal and state programs-Title I, More at Four, Head Start....

**Preschoolers**-Refers to children between 3 and 5 years old

**Related Services**-Support services that are required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education

**Retainer Clip**-A plastic positioning device on a CSRS harness that is fastened at armpit level to keep the harness on the child’s shoulders

**Safety Assistant**-Formerly addressed as a bus monitor, also referred to as a Transportation Safety Assistant to TSA

**Safety vest**-An assistive device which enables a student weighing 20-164 pounds to sit upright on the bus seat

**Seizure**-a sudden change in how the brain works

**Shunt**-A tube located on one side of the student's head to drain fluid from the brain

**Spina Bifida**-A condition caused by a birth defect of the spine and spinal cord resulting in partial or complete paralysis below the spinal level involved

**Stroller**-A lightweight mobility aid

**Sure-lok**-A brand name for wheelchair securement devices

**TIMS**-Transportation Information Management System, our computer bus routing software

**Title I**-A federal education program established for select 4 year olds

**Tracheotomy**-A surgical opening created through the neck into the trachea (windpipe) to provide an airway

**Transitional Travel**-A work run; transportation of high school students enrolled in the OCS Program to job related activities

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**Durham Public Schools  
Transportation Services**

**EC Transportation Division**

**EMPLOYEE MANUAL RECEIPT ACKNOWLEDGMENT: form letter to be signed by employee to indicate he has received the employee policy and procedure manual and understands its effect**

I have received my copy of the *EC Transportation Division Manual*. It is my responsibility to read and understand the matters set forth in this Manual. It is a guide to policies and procedures.

I understand that no statement contained in this Manual creates any guarantee of continued employment or creates any obligation, contractual or otherwise, on the part of Durham Public Schools. I will rely on any promises, statements or representations to the contrary only if they are in writing and signed by an authorized supervisor.

I understand and acknowledge that the EC Transportation Division has the right, without prior notice, to modify, amend or terminate policies, practices, benefit plans, and other institutional programs within the limits and requirements imposed by law.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee name (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date