

<u>Section E:</u>  <b>Business Management</b>	<b>Knox County Board of Education Policy</b>		
	Descriptor Term:  <b>Scheduling and Routing</b>	Descriptor Code:	Issued:
		<b>E-171</b>	<b>7/95</b>
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		<b>1/23</b>	<b>3/23</b>

## GENERAL

This policy establishes the parameters for scheduling and routing for all scheduled transportation services provided by the Board of Education. It is the expectation of the Board that all eligible students will have equal access to these services. The Board understands that scheduling and routing may be constrained by geography as well as the condition and location of streets and roads. These parameters may be reasonably and minimally adjusted in individual cases by transportation planning personnel to address student safety and security.

## ELIGIBILITY FOR TRANSPORTATION

All students living outside of the Parent Responsibility Zone for their zoned school are eligible for transportation services to their zoned school.

## PARENT RESPONSIBILITY ZONE

### Elementary Schools

Students who live within one (1) mile of their zoned school, by the shortest road route, are not eligible for transportation services provided by Knox County Schools. Parents are responsible for determining the safest and most appropriate manner for their children to get to and from school.

### Middle and High Schools

Students who live within one and one-half (1 1/2) miles of their zoned school, by the shortest road route, are not eligible for transportation services provided by Knox County Schools. Parents are responsible for determining the safest and most appropriate manner for their children to get to and from school.

## DISTANCE MEASUREMENT

Distance measurements for transportation purposes shall include only publicly maintained roads.

## BUS STOPS

Bus stops shall be determined by the Transportation Department and assigned based on the proximity from a student's primary residential address. Transportation services shall be provided to eligible students to and from their assigned bus stop and school and such services will be free of charge.<sup>1</sup>

Eligible elementary school students should have a designated bus stop located no further than one-fourth (1/4) of a mile from their home unless there is not a safe location within that range to place a bus stop. In that case, a bus stop will be located as close to one-fourth (1/4) of a mile from their home as possible. Similarly, bus stops for elementary school students should be no closer than one-fourth (1/4) mile to one

another on bus routes, but the need for adequate visibility between the bus driver and other motorists at bus stops may alter these distances.

Eligible middle and high school students should have a designated bus stop located no further than one-half (1/2) of a mile from their home unless there is not a safe location within that range to place a bus stop. In that case, a bus stop will be located as close to one-half (1/2) of a mile from their home as possible. Bus stops for middle and high school students should be no closer than one-half (1/2) mile to one another on bus routes, but the need for adequate visibility between the bus driver and other motorists at bus stops may alter these distances.

Eligible students who live in a development, subdivision, apartment complex, etc. without a continuous route of travel or who live on a dead-end road will have a designated bus stop located near the development entrance or the nearest intersection with a traversable road. Stops may be added within a development if there is a suitable turnaround location for the bus and one of the following conditions is met:

1. the distance from the entrance to the last residence along the shortest road route exceeds three-fourths (3/4) of a mile, or
2. fifteen (15) or more students ride the bus on a regular basis.

If any portion of a development, subdivision, apartment complex, etc. extends outside of the Parent Responsibility Zone but the only entrance(s) to that development are inside the Parent Responsibility Zone, all students residing in that development are eligible for transportation services.

The principal or their designee have the discretion to grant permission for a student to ride a non-assigned bus or utilize a non-assigned bus stop on a temporary basis by sending a signed note to the bus driver.

A parent or legal guardian may request for their child to exit a school bus at a destination other than their assigned bus stop on the student's return bus route after dismissal of school. The parent or legal guardian shall provide the building level administrator, or their designee, with a signed note from the parent or legal guardian requesting the change for that specific day. If the building level administrator, or their designee, approves the request, that person should also sign the note and provide the driver a copy bearing both signatures.<sup>2</sup>

Knox County Schools shall not provide transportation services to a location for the purpose of providing care to students prior to or immediately following the instructional day unless all of the following criteria are met:

1. A request is submitted by the child's parent/legal guardian.
2. School buses are not required to deviate from an established route.
3. No additional buses or other costs are incurred and seating is available.
4. The service facility's location and the school of the student's enrollment are located within the same attendance zone.
5. The student's primary residential address does not lie within the parent responsibility zone.
6. The program provider shall provide supervision when students board or leave the school bus at their facility.

In all other cases, parents/legal guardians who choose to enter into a joint agreement with a childcare provider shall assume all responsibility for transporting the child to and from the provider's location. Each school will establish a procedure for parents/legal guardians to designate and provide permission for another party to transport their child.

## **BUS ROUTES**

The Transportation Department is responsible for surveying all bus and shuttle routes and scheduling all bus and shuttle transportation, including the determination of stops and the assignment of students.

In all cases, except where it is deemed not possible by the transportation supervisor, buses will be routed so that drivers will not have to back up in order to complete a route.

Once the official route is begun, stops shall only be made to take on, discharge or transfer students or staff. Buses are not to make any non-designated stops except for emergencies when transporting students.

If a parent chooses to send a child to another school on an approved general transfer, that student is not eligible and shall not receive transportation services.

## **TRANSIT TIME**

Every effort shall be made to avoid scheduling students to be in transit more than one hour each way. At no time shall a student be in transit to or from school more than one and one-half hours each way.<sup>3</sup>

## **SCHEDULING AND ROUTING APPEALS**

Appeals of all matters related to school bus scheduling or routing shall be made to:

- 1) Transportation Department Staff
- 2) Transportation Lead Router
- 3) Director of Transportation
- 4) Assistant Superintendent of Operations
- 5) Director of Schools

The Director of Schools shall have the latitude to adjust bus scheduling and routing as needed in cases where there are extraordinary or exigent circumstances and when such a change is in the best interest of the student.

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENTS AT BUS STOPS**

It is a parent or legal guardian's responsibility to determine the means and the path their children use between their residence and their assigned bus stop. The parent shall monitor the child's safety and security at the bus stop and the path to and from the residence. The principal or the principal's designee shall apply school behavior procedures at bus stops when a student's misconduct was initiated at school or on the school bus.

## **PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TRANSPORTATION**

In cases where transportation cannot be furnished to a child because of the condition of roads or remoteness of the child's residence, the Director of Schools may direct the transportation department to pay<sup>4</sup> the child's parent or legal guardian an amount equal to the average per capita cost of transporting one (1) pupil during the previous school year if the following requirements are met:

1. Maintain regular attendance
2. Residence is more than one and one-fourth (1 1/4) miles from the school

3. Attends the school in their official school zone
4. Residence is more than one and one-fourth (1 1/4) miles from the nearest established bus stop

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Legal References:

1. T.C.A. § 49-6-2103.
2. T.C.A. § 49-6-2118.
3. T.C.A. § 49-6-2105.
4. T.C.A. § 49-6-2104.

Approved as to Legal Form  
By Knox County Law Director 1/20/2023  
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