

Special Needs



Transportation Information

**BIRDVILLE INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

6205 Broadway Ave • Fort Worth • Texas • 76137 • 817-547-5830

Welcome to the Birdville Independent School District. We are pleased to provide quality educational services for your children. Our mission in Special Needs Transportation is to ensure ***“your child arrives at school and returns home safely with care and thought given to his/her individual needs.”*** Our success is a result of our commitment, skill, knowledge, understanding, and ability to communicate. All drivers and assistants participate in frequent in-services training to expand and improve their driving skills and upgrade their knowledge of helping children with special needs.

There are currently about 38 buses transporting Special Needs Students. In our department, everyone works hard to communicate needs and changes. When changes occur, routes must be revised and time changes communicated to all parents.

The following procedures were put together by the Special Needs Transportation Department to facilitate safe, effective and efficient transportation for students riding special needs busses. On occasion, transportation receives requests from parents/guardians to deviate from these procedures. Transportation reserves the right to authorize or deny deviations from these procedures based on the need to provide an acceptable level of safety for all students on the bus, and an acceptable level of service for those entitled to Special Needs Transportation.

AS A PARENT, YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT OUR MISSION BY:

- ◆ Attending your child's ARD committee meeting and annual reviews.
- ◆ Completing the Special Needs Transportation Information Sheet.
- ◆ Ensuring a parent or guardian is home when your child is picked up in the morning and brought home in the afternoon.

If your student is to be left with anyone other than a parent or legal guardian, that person(s) name must be on the Transportation Application, otherwise, the student will be taken back to the school.

- ◆ Make sure that all emergency contact addresses and phone numbers are valid.
- ◆ Having your child ready to board the bus within five (5) minutes of the scheduled time each morning.
- ◆ Notifying the Transportation Office at **817-547-5831** as early as possible when your child will not be attending school. An answering machine is provided so that you may leave a message after hours if necessary. **Failure to ride three (3) consecutive days will result in termination of service until the parent/guardian calls the Transportation Office and reinstates the service**



1. PICK-UP / DROP-OFF

A. Curb-to-Curb Service

Under most conditions, special needs transportation provides curb-to-curb service. This means that the bus will pick-up and drop-off at the curb in front of the student's home or day care. The following are some of the exceptions to this procedure:

- ◆ Due to road conditions (i.e., dead end, dirt / gravel or narrow roadways), there may be a requirement to place the pick-up/drop-off site at a safe location away from the home or day care. Every effort will be made to locate the stop as close as possible to the home or day care. The bus driver or attendant is not responsible to escort the student to or from the home or day care.

B. Pick-up and Drop-off Times

- ◆ Assigned route pick-up and drop-off times at the beginning of the school year reflect the transportation operation's best estimate based on a number of variables. These are estimated times only. During the school year, as students are added or deleted from the routes, the actual pick-up and drop-off times will change. Either transportation or the bus drivers should notify the parents/guardians before these changes occur.
- ◆ Bus routes are scheduled to accommodate the arrival and dismissal times for each school, and to maximize efficiency of transportation for all students transported to and from school.
- ◆ Students should be ready to board the bus at the scheduled time. In order to maintain our schedule, bus drivers have been instructed to only wait at the pick-up locations for 3 minutes past the regularly scheduled time before leaving.

C. Alternate Drop-off

Drivers are authorized to drop-off students only at the school or designated drop-off. If there is no authorized person(s) to accept the student at the primary drop-off location other than the school, the following steps will be taken:

- ◆ **All Students:** The driver will attempt to drop-off the student at the alternate drop-off location designated on the transportation request form. If there is no authorized person at the alternate drop-off or no designated alternate drop-off location on the transportation request form, the driver will attempt to drop-off the student at least twice. If no one is still at the designated drop-off, then we will take the student back to school. If it's late and we can't take the student back to school then we will proceed with the route until all students are delivered and make one more attempt. If contact has not been made with the parent/guardian by Transportation the student will be brought back to the Transportation Department. If there still has been no contact from the parent/guardian or arrangements been made for parent/guardian to come pick-up the student by 5:30 p.m., the Haltom City Police Department will be contacted to take custody of the student.

2. LOADING AND UNLOADING

A. At Pick-Up/Drop-Off Location

- ◆ The driver and/or attendant will load and unload students at the pick-up/drop-off location. Under certain circumstances, the parent/guardian may be requested to assist with his/her student, only. Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to communicate to the driver and/ or attendant any information about the student that would help facilitate safe loading and unloading.
- ◆ Parents/Guardians should not send students to the bus with food or drink to be consumed on the bus.

B. At The School

- ◆ To facilitate a smoother student transition on and off the bus, designated school personnel are encouraged to help load and unload ambulatory students.
- ◆ School administrators and teachers should not send students to the bus with food or drink to be consumed on the bus. Some exceptions may apply on a case by case basis.



C. Wheelchairs With & Without Students

- ◆ As a general rule, wheelchairs are not left on the bus during the day when the student is not being transported. Only under unique circumstances would transportation entertain this arrangement. Transporting a wheelchair without the student often affects the driver's ability to properly serve other wheelchair students on subsequent bus routes, or interferes with shuttles being conducted during the day.
- ◆ It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to make sure the device is safe and in proper working order for use on the wheelchair lift and the bus. Every piece of the equipment must be properly attached and in good working condition.



3. STUDENT BEHAVIOR

A. Policies And Procedures

- ◆ BISD Special Needs Transportation is responsible to provide safe transportation for all students who ride school buses to and from school and on school-related activity trips. The bus driver is responsible for ensuring that students behave in a safe and responsible manner. While on the bus, any behavior that interferes with the safe transportation of students must be reported. This policy applies to all students, for whom bus transportation service is provided. Behavior problems involving special needs students are dealt with in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws, policies and procedures. Any inappropriate behavior on the school bus will be reported by the driver to the director of transportation or designee and school administration.

B. Behavior On The School Bus

- ◆ Any unsafe behavior should be reported to the director of transportation or designee and a school administrator as soon as possible.
- ◆ When the behavior of a student on a special needs bus creates a potential danger to other students or adults on the bus, the driver will immediately call transportation and/or school administration.
- ◆ When the behavior of a students on a special needs bus creates an imminent serious danger to other students or adults on the bus, the driver should immediately call the office and transportation and we will call 911 if warranted.

4. RESTRAINT DEVICES

A. Car Seats

- ◆ Most small students with disabilities can be comfortable and securely restrained in a conventional car seat. Many larger students with disabilities that affect their ability to sit upright without support can use regular restraint belts or a safety vest. BISD Transportation provides all conventional car seats required to transport small students.
- ◆ Students who weigh under 20 pounds should be placed in a rear-facing infant car seat.
- ◆ Students who weigh from 20 to 40 lbs pounds and are 26" – 40" in height should ride in a forward-facing car seat.

B. Safety Vests

- ◆ Transportation will place the safety vest on a student only after the school administrator and parent/guardian have provided written permission.
- ◆ A safety vest is designed for students with behavioral or emotional disabilities who need to be restrained because of safety concerns while on the school bus. The vest is equipped with a zipper in the back that, when properly attached, is not accessible to the student. This safety vest is also designed to provide upper body support for students with physical disabilities.

5. BOWEL AND BLADDER ACCIDENTS

- ◆ This is an issue where the developed procedures are designed to protect the health and dignity of all individuals riding the bus. Bus drivers and attendants are instructed by transportation to not accept students for transport with soiled clothes from bowel or bladder accidents.
- ◆ If a bowel or bladder accident occurs during the bus trip, drivers and attendants are instructed not to attempt cleaning up the accident in route, but to proceed to the scheduled stop at school or home. After unloading the student at the stop, the driver and/or attendant will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting any affected surfaces on the bus utilizing the body fluid cleanup kit.

6. MEDICATION AND OTHER ITEMS

- ◆ The driver and/or attendant is not authorized to handle any type of medication, note or other papers. These items should be provided to the school directly by the parent or guardian. If these items are placed in the student's back pack or other carrying device, the driver and/or attendant will not be held responsible for safe keeping during the bus ride.

7. EXTENDED YEAR SERVICE (EYS)

- ◆ If your student is involved in EYS (summer school), the routes will be developed as soon as transportation as a full listing of students attending EYS. Parents/guardians will be notified of pick-up and drop-off times after the routes have been run by the driver for effectiveness and efficiency.

This handbook has been put together to provide parents/guardians information that addresses responsibilities and procedures within special needs transportation. Our sincere hope is that this handbook will contribute to a clearer understanding of special needs transportation services. The handbook is not intended to be all inclusive, but rather an avenue to share important information. Should you have any questions, please feel to contact us at **817-547-5830**.