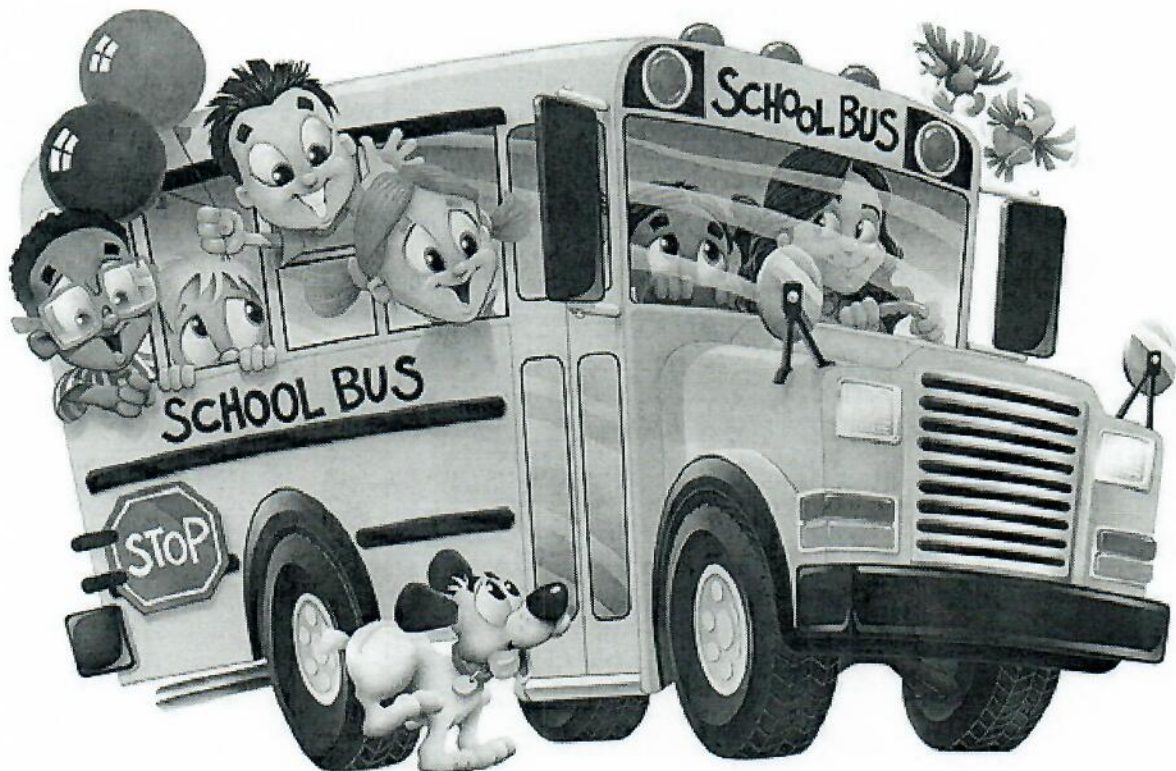


# MARIN PUPIL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

## Transportation Policies & Procedures Handbook for Students with Special Needs

(Updated: February 2019)



MARIN PUPIL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY  
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**A. Special Education Transportation Statement of Service:**

1. Special Education students shall be encouraged to walk to/from school when the student is physically able to do so.
2. Transportation services shall be provided as mandated by Federal and State law, when determined, as required by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team. It is the goal for purposes of transportation to place the child in the least restrictive setting closest to their home school whenever possible. To be eligible for transportation service, the IEP Team must review the eligibility criteria per the Marin Pupil Transportation Agency (MPTA) and use a Marin Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) form to document their discussion. The establishment of the eligibility and the authorization for transportation services shall be provided to the MPTA by the IEP Team in writing before transportation begins. Transportation will start as soon as possible thereafter.
3. No more than one (1) pick-up and drop-off location shall be allowed unless required otherwise by the IEP Team or an emergency.
4. The MPTA contracts with a school bus company – First Student – (hereafter referred to as “school bus contractor”), to transport special education students whose transportation has been authorized as described above and who reside in one (1) of the following MPTA member school districts:
  - Kentfield Elementary School District
  - Larkspur-Corte Madera Elementary School District
  - Mill Valley Elementary School District
  - Reed Union School District
  - Ross Elementary School District
  - Ross Valley Elementary School District
  - San Rafael Elementary School District
  - San Rafael High School District
  - Sausalito-Marín City Elementary School District
  - Tamalpais Union High School District
5. Bus attendants may be employed at the MPTA’s sole discretion to assist with the loading and unloading of children and the supervision of the students being transported. School bus drivers and bus attendants are under the supervision of the school bus contractor and the MPTA’s Executive Director.

## **B. Requirements for Special Education Transportation:**

### **Seat Belts:**

1. Special education students are required to use seat belts when provided. School bus drivers will ensure that seat belts are secured properly at all times.
2. Each child must wear a seat belt. If any child continually unfastens the restraint, the student will be reported pursuant to the bus conduct report procedures.

### **Car Seats or other Securement Devices for Early Intervention Students:**

3. The school bus contractor shall arrange for an approved, properly equipped car seat, or other securement device – such as a Star Vest – as needed. Such car seats, or other securement devices, shall meet Federal standards.

### **Special Authorization or Notification:**

4. A permission slip authorizing a school bus driver to release a special education student without a responsible adult at home to receive the child must be submitted in advance to the MPTA for consideration. Parents or guardians will be notified of the action taken on their request as soon as possible.
5. When significant delays in bus route times occur, attempts will be made to notify affected students' parents or guardians.

## **C. Medication:**

1. Parents must have all necessary supplies, materials or medications in a pouch or a packet labeled with the child's name. Parents may be required to obtain approval from the school prior to the school bus driver transporting medication.
2. Medication, in a fully labeled bottle, contained in a pouch or packet, must be handed directly to the school bus driver by the parent and/or teacher and must not be placed among the student's personal belongings. Medication must be received by a responsible adult at the school or home.
3. School bus drivers are not allowed to administer medication at any time.

## **D. Adaptive Devices:**

### **Wheelchair Operation:**

1. School bus drivers are specially trained in wheelchair operations. Although parental assistance in loading and unloading is appreciated, it is the policy of the MPTA that only the school bus driver loads and unloads the student as well as operates the wheelchair lift controls.

### **Wheelchairs – Tires, Batteries, Brakes and Restraining Belts:**

2. Wheelchairs shall be equipped with brakes and seat belts that are secured to the chair and properly maintained by the owner of the wheelchair. Wheelchairs shall be kept clean and sanitary. Electric wheelchairs transported on school buses shall be capable of being locked in gear when placed in a school bus or shall have an independent braking system capable of holding the wheelchair in place.
3. All wheelchairs, tires, batteries, and brakes must be properly maintained by the owner so as to prevent the wheels from moving when the brakes are applied. Tires must be properly inflated. Restraining belts on wheelchairs are also the owner's responsibility. Any wheelchair, which does not have a seat belt with a safety buckle, shall not be transported. This is the minimum safety securement.
4. Velcro seat restraints do not meet minimum State requirements and shall not be the sole source of seat belt restraint. It is the parent's responsibility to provide a seat belt that meets the minimum safety requirements.
5. Batteries used to propel electric wheelchairs transported on school buses, shall be both leak resistant and spill resistant, or shall be placed in a leak resistant container. Batteries should be secured to the wheelchair frame in such a manner as to prevent separation in the event of an accident.
6. School bus drivers may refuse to transport any wheelchair that does not meet the minimum safety standards required by law.

## **E. Pick-Up & Drop-Off at Home, and Undeliverable Students:**

### **Pick-up:**

1. Parents must have their child ready ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. Due to bus schedules, school bus drivers can only wait three (3) minutes past the scheduled pick-up time. Each child must be supervised by the parent until the school bus has picked-up the child. If the child is not ready, the school bus driver will assume he/she is not going to school and will leave. Please note

that bus schedules may change throughout the school year and especially during the first several weeks of school.

**Absences:**

2. If a student is not going to school, parents should call the school bus contractor or MPTA at least one (1) hour prior to the scheduled pick-up time and also let the school know. When the student is going to resume transportation after an absence, the parents must call the school bus contractor or MPTA at least one (1) hour before the scheduled pick-up time. However, parents are requested to notify the school bus contractor or MPTA sooner if possible.

**Drop-off:**

3. A parent or other authorized adult is expected to be home to receive the pupil. This person must be seen by the school bus driver so that the child can be discharged from the school bus. For an unattended student drop-off, the parent or guardian must submit a written request to the MPTA for consideration. Parents or guardians will be notified of action taken on their request as soon as possible after receiving the written request.
4. Student return times can vary greatly depending on the number of students riding the school bus on any given day. Therefore, the authorized person should be at home any time after the school dismissal time. No students will be delivered to any address other than the regularly scheduled bus stop except in an emergency situation. Only regularly assigned pupils may ride the school bus routes. Temporary schedule changes necessitated as a result of an emergency may be agreed upon between the parents and the MPTA. Transportation changes are not the responsibility of the student's teacher. Therefore, the parents should contact the MPTA directly regarding any permanent schedule changes.

**Emergency:**

5. Parents must call the MPTA and make arrangements for an alternate drop-off location when they have an emergency. If an MPTA representative is not available, parents should call the school bus contractor directly. Otherwise, the undeliverable policy (below) will be followed.

**Undeliverable Policy:**

6. In the event that a responsible adult is not present to receive a child and no emergency arrangements have been made in advance, the following procedures will be followed:
  - a. The school bus driver will notify the dispatcher by radio immediately and, if other students are on board, continue the bus route. This can take up to

two (2) hours or more. The dispatcher will notify the MPTA office immediately. The MPTA will make every attempt to locate a parent/guardian or an alternate drop-off point using the information provided on the "Transportation Emergency Information" form. At the completion of the bus route, if no responsible adult has been located, the student will be delivered to the local Police Department or the Sheriff's Office. The student's School District and Child Protective Services will be contacted as well.

- b. Parents or guardians will make their own arrangements for the student to be picked-up at the police or sheriff's office.
- c. Continued absence of a responsible adult to receive a child may result in loss of school bus transportation.

**Change of Residence:**

- 7. In the event that the residence of a student is changed, his/her parent or guardian shall notify the Program Manager or School District Director of Special Education at least two (2) weeks prior to such residence change. Further, the Program Manager shall notify the MPTA.

**F. School Bus Danger Zones:**

- 1. The areas closest to the perimeter of the school bus are called the danger zones. Students are directed to be no closer than twelve (12) feet to the school bus, except when loading and unloading. The vast majority of school bus accidents and injury to students occur outside of the school bus in this danger zone.
- 2. If a student drops papers, lunch boxes, or other objects while loading or unloading from the school bus, the student must get the attention of the school bus driver. Students should **NEVER GO UNDER OR NEAR THE SCHOOL BUS TO RETRIEVE PAPERS OR OTHER OBJECTS** as the school bus driver may not be able to see a student in one of these locations.

***Special note: At the end of this document is a diagram of the Danger Zones around a school bus. Please use this diagram as part your child's instruction on school bus riding safety.***

## **G. School Bus Riding Rules & Regulations:**

1. All transportation shall be subject to the appropriate provisions and policies of the Education Code, California Code of Regulations, and policies of the MPTA.
2. Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Section 14103 states that “Pupils transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of, and responsible to, the driver of the bus, and the driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street or highway”.
3. When appropriate, parents must discuss the following school bus rules with their child:
  - a. Sit down immediately after boarding the school bus and remain seated while the school bus is in motion.
  - b. Use seat belts at all times.
  - c. No profanity.
  - d. No eating, no drinking of any kind, no smoking, no alcohol drinking, or chewing gum. The danger of a student choking on food is a high risk factor.
  - e. No matches are allowed on the school bus.
  - f. No fighting, playing or loud conversations. Keep hands to oneself.
  - g. Keep all parts of the body inside the school bus at all times.
  - h. Remain quiet at railroad crossings.
  - i. Follow the school bus driver’s instructions at all times.
4. Each child on a school bus must behave in a satisfactory manner in order for the school bus driver to be alert to the many hazards of driving. Since the safety of all children on the school bus is of prime importance, a child who behaves in an unsatisfactory manner may be denied the use of transportation. The parent or guardian will be responsible for any damage to vehicles caused directly by their child, pursuant to State laws regarding special education students.

### **Discipline Procedures:**

5. According to the California Highway Patrol Handbook 82.7, Chapter 6, Section 1.1-3: “Authority of the Driver: Pupils transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of, and responsible directly to, the driver of the bus, and the driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street or highway. Continued misbehavior or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation. The driver of a school bus shall not eject any pupil unless the pupil is given into the custody of a parent or any person authorized by the parent or school.”
6. The school bus driver has the authority to recommend the suspension of students for disruptive and/or dangerous behavior, including, but not limited to infractions of the school bus rules. Any pupil may immediately receive the maximum suspension and/or denied school bus transportation if it is determined that he/she created a serious safety hazard on the school bus. The School Principal or Program Manager of the student’s program will make the determination of the suspension. Individual school districts may have their own suspension policies, which they may wish to incorporate into the following guidelines.
7. Citations will be issued for serious or chronic violations of the school bus rules. The consequences for school bus citations over a thirty (30) calendar day period are as follows:

**1<sup>st</sup> Violation:** Verbal notification, school bus driver informs the student’s teacher.

**1<sup>st</sup> Citation:** Student warned, citation presented to the teacher, copy to the School Principal, notice sent to parent/guardian.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Citation:** Notice presented to the teacher, copy to the School Principal, notice sent to parent/guardian. It is recommended that a behavior management plan be developed and/or reviewed.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Citation:** Student taken home that day, but suspended from the school bus for the next one (1) to five (5) school days; parent/guardian and IEP Manager notified by phone; notice of Bus Suspension and copies of citations mailed to parent/guardian and IEP Manager. Parents/guardians or the student’s school district of residence are responsible for providing transportation to and from school during the one (1) to five (5) day suspension.

**4<sup>th</sup> Citation:** Transportation may be suspended for a period of time to be determined by the School Principal with consultation with IEP Manager who will convene a special IEP Team meeting prior to such suspension.

The School Principal or Program Manager will notify the teacher, the MPTA, the parent/guardian, the IEP Manager, and the school bus contractor of any suspension and the reason for the suspension.

**MARIN PUPIL TRANSPORTATION AGENCY  
SCHOOL BUS CONDUCT REPORT**

\_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Date

To the parents/guardians of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ A. After warning your child for violation of transportation policies, he/she continues to do so. Please discuss this infraction with your child so that further warnings are unnecessary. Please sign parent's copy and return.

\_\_\_\_\_ B. Your child is suspended for \_\_\_\_\_ school days.

From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

Transportation privileges will resume on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ C. Please note that this citation has been issued for a serious violation of the school bus rules and issues as:

\_\_\_\_\_ Immediate Suspension

\_\_\_\_\_ 1<sup>st</sup> Citation

\_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> Citation

\_\_\_\_\_ 3<sup>rd</sup> Citation

\_\_\_\_\_ 4<sup>th</sup> Citation

Explanation of Misconduct:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Bus Driver

\_\_\_\_\_  
MPTA Official

(Copies to: Parents/Guardians, School Teacher & Principal, IEP Manager, MPTA)

# DANGER ZONES

