Sparta Area School District

Article 516 - Student Transportation

It shall be the policy of Sparta Area School District that all children attend the school designated for their enrollment by the official Sparta Area School District boundary map. Exceptions are governed by Article 414 – School Choice/Attendance Area.

Eligibility for Transportation:

Transportation shall be provided for students residing two miles or more from their school of attendance. Transportation less than two miles from school may be authorized for safety reasons as required by statute.

For students with special permission to attend a school outside their home attendance area boundaries, parents will be responsible for transportation, unless student qualifies for special transportation under Article 531- Homeless Education Program or Article 414 –School Choice/Attendance Area.

For students who do not qualify for transportation under DPI regulations or elsewhere in this policy, an in-town shuttle service is available for kindergarten through third grade students to ride to and from schools. The service is available to and from any school serving students in grades Kindergarten through third grade. It will operate between those schools and Sparta High School, the Administration and Education Center, St. John's/St. Pats. An additional shuttle service between Lakeview Montessori and the Community Learning Center (CLC) at Maplewood School will be offered after school. Shuttle service will be provided after school to students through eighth grade to the Boys and Girls' Club who are registered participants in the Boys and Girls' Club after-school program. Shuttle service will be provided before school from Sparta High School to Meadowview Schools and after school from Meadowview Schools to Sparta High School for students in fourth grade through eighth grade. In-town shuttle service is restricted to students with completed transportation requests processed. As with other stop locations, parents are encouraged to accompany younger children to the pick up and from the drop off.

All students eligible for transportation under this policy will be assigned to a route based on a written request submitted on a district transportation request form. Only students with a bus assignment are permitted to ride the bus to and from school.

Transportation requests for the school year must be submitted to school using the district form prior to August 1 to be effective the first day of school. Requests received after August 1 will be processed as quickly as possible, but may not be in effect at the start of the school year. Two full working days are required before the effective date for change in designations occurring during the school year.

Different AM pick up and PM drop off points are permitted, but must remain the same every day for the semester. Parents or guardians are responsible for transportation on days when the student's need vary from what is assigned. The school district assumes no responsibility for the operation of childcare or any after school program in the community.

The transportation provider will contact parents of students who do not ride the bus at least once during a calendar month and have not contacted the transportation provider. If no confirmation of intent to ride can be made, the student will be removed from the assigned bus list. Eligible students may resume transportation upon completion of a new transportation request form.

Special Needs Transportation:

Special needs transportation will be provided when specifically identified in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The Pupil Services office will initiate special needs transportation when the service is included as part of a student's IEP. When special needs transportation is necessary, the IEP team will determine if the student is to be picked up at their door and if they will only be released when a responsible adult is visible to the driver. If the latter applies, and an adult is not available to receive the student at the time of drop off, the child will be returned to the school and Monroe County Human Services will be contacted. After the second occasion in which an adult is not present to receive the student, the District may consider alternative transportation.

Child Care:

One change for childcare is allowed between the first day of each semester and the last day of each semester. One change is allowed between the first day of second semester and the last day of school. For Pre-K to 5th grade students a childcare location may be substituted for the residence for pick up or drop off. The location of childcare must meet the same distance used for determining eligibility if the home was used as a residence.

School Athletics:

When necessary, district administration will coordinate a procedure to allow students to ride established routes for participation in Sparta Area School District athletic regular practices when practice is not held at the student's school (i.e. a High Point Student in athletics at Meadowview Middle School or Sparta High School). Administration will establish a procedure to clearly identify participating students and scheduled dates of transportation.

Routes and Stop Locations:

As per Wisconsin statute a student who started school in Sparta but moves to another district may be allowed to continue to attend in Sparta. Transportation to the nearest regular bus stop is the parent or guardian's responsibility.

All 4-year-old kindergarten students will be picked up at their door and will only be released when an adult is visible to the driver. If an adult is not available to receive the student, the child will be returned to the school and Monroe County Human Services will be contacted. After the second occasion in which an adult is not present to receive the student, the District will suspend bus transportation for the student for the remainder of the semester.

Transportation to Private Schools:

Per Section 121.54(2)(b)1., Wis. Stats, resident students may be transported to private schools provided all the following criteria are met:

1. The pupil resides 2 miles or more from the private school he/she attends;
2. The pupil resides within the private school's approved attendance area; and
3. The private school is located within the boundaries of the pupil's resident school district or not more than 5 miles beyond the boundaries of the school district measured along the usually traveled route.

As per Wisconsin Statute 121.51(l), each year on or before April 1st, each private school in the Sparta Area School District shall submit its proposed attendance area for the following school year. It is requested that this be in a map form.

On or before May 15 under the same statute, each private school shall submit the names, grade levels and locations of all pupils if any are eligible to receive transportation. The School Board reserves the right under Wisconsin statutes to determine that there is not overlapping of attendance areas.

The Sparta Area School District may transport private school students utilizing any method authorized under Wis. Stats Section 121.55(1). The district recognizes safety as the primary determining factor for determining transportation method.

As Section 121.54 requires the district to transport students between the residence and school, the district recognizes that residence may be two locations consistent with the schedule of a dual custody agreement. Therefore, when residence is selected as the AM pick up or PM drop off point, transportation will be provided to or from both residences provided both meet all other criteria of this article.

Student Discipline Regulation:

Student discipline problems will be handled on a continuous basis. Previous year discipline issues can be used in determining action toward the rider. Students suspended/expelled from school will not be allowed to ride the busses for the term of the suspension/expulsion. The transportation office will be notified of a student suspension/expulsion by the administration. The transportation department will notify the bus driver.

Bus drivers are in complete charge, including student discipline, while operating their buses. No corporal punishment is permitted by the bus drivers.

Misconduct on the bus will be handled as follows:

Misconduct may result in suspension of riding privileges for up to five days on the first offense. All student offenders should be advised that serious or repeated incidents of misconduct may result in suspension or expulsion of riding privileges. Parents/guardians will be notified prior to revoking bus rider privileges.

Application of Regulations:

The regulations are to be applied as fair and as reasonable as can be expected. However, recognizing the dissimilarity of conditions in a school district, the School Board reserves for itself the right to make such deviations from these regulations as it may find necessary.

Legal Reference:	Wisconsin Statutes 121.51, 121.54, 121.545, 121.55, 121.555, and 121.56 Motor Vehicle Department 17.10(4)
Cross Reference:	Article 414 – School Choice/Attendance Area Article 531 – Homeless Education Program Administrative Rule 516 – Student Transportation Bus Conduct Report Form Request for Transportation Form Change of Residence Form Appendix H, Appendix I School Bus Discipline Policy
Approved:	
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