

HOPKINTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Student Transportation

The School Committee provides safe, efficient, and economical student transportation that meets the requirements of Massachusetts' laws and regulations.

Eligibility

Massachusetts' law requires districts to provide transportation to kindergarten through grade six students if the distance between the child's residence and the school exceeds two miles. The School Committee may also provide transportation for extracurricular activities or late buses when that is warranted.

Eligibility for transportation services is determined by the location of the student's home in relation to the school to which the student is assigned, and does not entitle students to door-to-door service. If a student is not eligible for transportation as provided for by this policy, the parent/guardian is responsible for assuring that the student gets safely to and from school.

Students who require accommodations under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) or §504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are provided transportation in accordance with current statute and regulation and the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or §504 plan. Special Education transportation arrangements are made directly through the Special Education department, and §504 accommodations are made through the building principal. Students who are receiving transportation services from a private vendor according to the students' IEP or §504 plan should consult the vendor's handbook for their busing rules.

Hopkinton students who attend Joseph P. Keefe Technical School are provided transportation under the funding arrangement between the Town of Hopkinton and the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District.

Hopkinton students who attend approved regional schools for programs other than those offered by Joseph P. Keefe Technical School under Chapter 74 section 7C (Non-resident Students) are provided transportation by the Hopkinton Public Schools. Transportation is arranged by the Hopkinton Transportation Coordinator to and from the school.

Bus Routes and Stops

School bus stops will be at centralized locations. Students are not entitled to street-by-street or door-to-door pickup and /or delivery. The Transportation Coordinator establishes all routes and stops using these guidelines:

- Bus capacity.
- Length of bus routes and travel time.
- Distance that an eligible student would be required to walk to a bus stop, which will not exceed the statutory limit of one mile.

- Student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or §504 plan.
- The approval of the Transportation Safety Review Committee, as necessary.

A parent/guardian or an adult designated by the parent/guardian must be at the bus stop for the drop-off of all kindergarten students or the student will be transported back to the school.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure safe passage of his/her child over roadways to an established bus stop. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure the safety of his/her child at the established bus stop. The district's responsibility begins when the child boards the bus at the pickup location and ends when the child disembarks at the drop off location after school.

Fees

Massachusetts' law requires districts to provide transportation to kindergarten through grade six students if the distance between the child's residence and the school exceeds two miles. The School Committee may make bus transportation available on a fee-for service basis to students who do not qualify for free busing under state law, **on a space-available basis**.

The following process will occur annually:

- The School Committee will establish the level of service and fees for the next school year.
- Fees will be due during the month of May and the District will notify parents and guardians of the specific due date each year.
- All fees will be due on or before the annually established due date.

Fee Grace Period: Payments received (or postmarked) between the due date and the last business day of June will be subject to late fees, but students will be guaranteed an assignment to a bus that serves their residential area with a standard bus stop.

Given that students do not qualify for free busing, the transportation department needs to know if students will be riding the bus in order to plan their routes. Therefore, payments received (or postmarked) after the last business day in June will have the following apply:

1. A late fee will be charged, and
2. Students will be wait-listed and will not be guaranteed assignment to a bus for the first two weeks of school.
3. If space is not available on a bus that serves their residential area, students will be offered an alternative bus at the next closest bus stop to their home.
4. New bus stops will not be created to accommodate late applicants.

Bus Switching

For safety and efficiency, students should arrive at school and leave school on the same bus as determined by their residence. In situations where parents live separately in Hopkinton and there is shared physical custody or the non-custodial parent is qualified under Mass. General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 34H*, students may be picked up from and discharged at two residences.

Grades K-5

- No day-to-day bus switching will be allowed.
- Starting on the Monday of the third full week of school, students may be dropped off at an approved stop on the student's regular bus route with a note to the school from their parents.

Grades 6-12

- Starting on the Monday of the third full week of school, bus switching will be allowed at dismissal time for those students with a bus pass, subject to available space on the bus, and for approved stops on the route;
- Bus switching will not be allowed on early release or early dismissal days;
- No large groups (three or more additional students going to one location) will be allowed.

Transportation to and from Childcare Locations

Parents/guardians may request one additional pickup location and/or one additional drop-off location in addition to their home address. The additional pickup and drop-off addresses do not need to be the same and can occur on as many days as necessary.

(1) Licensed Childcare Locations

All students eligible for busing (including those who attend childcare) will have a pickup and drop-off stop established in their residential areas. This will provide for the occasional parental request to ride to or from home. In addition, the District will plan routes to include stops at all licensed childcare operators in Hopkinton. The Transportation Department will coordinate with the Elementary Schools so that the required buses are deployed. All childcare transportation arrangements for the following year will be submitted to the individual schools by May 15th using the Childcare Transportation Arrangement Form found on the District's website under Transportation. By August 1st, the schools will provide the Transportation Department with a summary of licensed childcare operators requiring bus services to their location(s).

(2) Familial Sitters

In the case of familial sitters, parents must register those locations with the Transportation Department by the **last business day in June** so that bus stops can be established on routes.

Once established, any changes to childcare arrangements will be managed by the individual school principals.

Request/Complaint Procedure

Requests/complaints regarding bus stops must be submitted in writing to the Transportation Coordinator. Requests/complaints received before September 16th will be responded to by September 30th. Requests/complaints received between September 16th and October 1st will be responded to by within ten (10) school days. Requests/complaints received after October 1st will be responded to within five (5) school days. A response will be provided within fifteen (15) school days of receipt. In accordance with Massachusetts General Law, a complaint concerning the district's compliance with law may be made to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906.

First Reading	November 1, 2007; September 1, 2011; January 16, 2014; November 20, 2014
Second Reading	January 3, 2008; September 15, 2011; February 6, 2014; December 11, 2014
Third Reading	March 20, 2008; October 6, 2011; February 27, 2014; December 18, 2014
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Policy Amended	June 18, 2009; October 6, 2011; February 27, 2014; December 18, 2014
Legal References	M.G.L. 40:5; 71:7A, B, and C; 71:48A; 71:68; 71:71A; 71B:5; 71B:8; 74:8A; 76:1;
Policy Cross Reference	EEAE Bus Safety, EEAEC Student Conduct on School Buses, KBBA Non-Custodial Parents' Rights JLB; JLB-R1; JLB-R2 Financial Assistance Policies