



Lake
Orion
Community
Schools

Lake Orion Community Schools
Transportation Department

3620 Giddings Road

Orion, MI 48359

248.391.5455

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Transportation Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide students, parents, school and transportation staff departmental operating guidelines and general transportation information. It is our belief that this is an important component of providing quality transportation services.

It is important to recognize that the law does not mandate transportation services. While the District sees the importance of providing transportation, these services should be considered a privilege not an entitlement.

Information in this document is subject to change based on needs outlined in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

The policies and procedures set forth in this handbook are subject to change without notice.

For additional information regarding the laws in respect to school bus operations and school bus stops, please see <http://www.michiganlegislature.org>. In the Full Text Search area, type: School Bus. The top link selected will be PA 187 of 1990, commonly referred to as the Pupil Transportation Act.

General Information

Office Location: The Transportation Department is located at 3620 Giddings Road, Orion, MI 48359

Office Hours: Normal business hours are Monday through Friday (excluding holidays) from 6:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. during the traditional school year. Summer hours are adjusted based on the times our buses are on the road.

Phone Number: 248.391.5455

Fax Number: 248.391.5481

Transportation Administration: Pam King
Director of Transportation

Email: Pamela.King@lok12.org

TRANSPORTATION BOARD POLICY - 8600

It is the policy of the Board of Education to provide transportation for those students, of any age, whose distance from their school makes this service necessary within the limitations established by State law and the regulations of the State Board of Education.

School buses and student-transportation vehicles shall be purchased, housed, and maintained by the District for the transportation of resident students between their home areas and the schools of the District to which they are assigned. However, no vehicle shall be purchased or used to transport students for which there is no applicable, passenger-protection, Federal motor-vehicle safety standards.

All school buses and student-transportation vehicles, whether purchased, leased, or contracted for shall comply with specifications defined in State law. Each operator of a school vehicle used by the District shall be licensed for the purpose for which the vehicle is being used and shall operate the vehicles in accordance with Federal and State laws.

Transportation of eligible vocational or special education children between their home areas and schools outside the District shall be arranged through the use of District-owned vehicles, through cooperation with other districts, through commercial carriers, and/or by other means in the most efficient and economical manner.

The Board reserves the right to terminate transportation based on financial, legal, or other considerations. It is a privilege for students to ride a District vehicle and this privilege may be revoked if the student's conduct is in violation of the Superintendent's administrative guidelines or the Code of Conduct pertaining to student transportation.

Transportation shall be provided to a State-approved, nonpublic school inside or outside the District on the same basis that the District transports any District students who attend a public school inside or outside the District.

The Superintendent shall establish administrative guidelines to ensure proper implementation of this policy.

M.C.L.A. 380.1321, 1322, 1323, 1324, 1756

Public Acts 187, 188, 189

A.C. Rule 340.281, 282

TRANSPORTATION ELIGIBILITY

Eligible for Transportation

All students are eligible for transportation except for those who live in a designated walk area.

Schools with Designated Walk Areas

Students who live within the designated walking area boundaries are ineligible for transportation. School buildings with walk areas are listed below.

- Blanche Sims Elementary
- Carpenter Elementary
- Webber Elementary
- Scripps Middle School
- Waldon Middle School
- Lake Orion High School

All elementary students are expected to walk to school if their assigned elementary school building has a designated walk area and they live within it. In general, elementary students will not be expected to walk more than three-quarters ($3/4$) of a mile.

All secondary students are expected to walk to school if their assigned secondary school building has a designated walk area and they live within it. In general, secondary students will not be expected to walk more than one and a half (1.5) miles.

TRANSPORTATION ROUTING

General Guidelines

Bus routes are planned with student safety and the logistical operating efficiency as the goals. Elementary students may be expected to walk up to three-quarters (3/4) of a mile to a bus stop and secondary students may be expected to walk up to one and a half (1-1/2) miles to a bus stop. Distances may extend beyond these distances due to other bus stop standards. Bus routes are designed to limit student riding distance and time on the bus to a practical minimum going to or from school.

Most school bus riders will find it necessary to walk some distance to their designated bus stop. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure student safety while walking, arriving and waiting at the bus stop and returning home from the bus stop after drop off.

In establishing bus schedules, it is the District's objective that buses arrive at school with sufficient time to allow students to access their lockers and that they leave within approximately seven (7) to ten (10) minutes after the scheduled dismissal time.

Bus Stop Standards

The summary below identifies some of the best practices we use in locating school bus stops. The Transportation Department reviews bus stop placement annually. No bus stop shall be established or added without a physical inspection by supervisory personnel from the Transportation Department.

- In general, elementary students may walk up to three-quarters (3/4) of a mile to a bus stop. In general, Secondary students may walk up to one and a half (1-1/2) miles to a bus stop.
- Bus stops will be limited whenever possible; students from several homes shall meet at a central point for group pick up.
- The school bus at the stop location should be clearly visible for at least four hundred (400) feet from any direction that a vehicle might approach.
- When required, students should walk at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus before crossing the roadway.
- Generally, stops are located at the entrance of subdivisions and residential intersections.

Please understand that lack of sidewalks, poor lighting conditions, weather conditions, a stop not being visible from home or another bus already traveling past the student's house do not have any bearing on the placement of bus stops.

Typically, buses will not go into subdivisions for student loading and unloading.

Buses will not enter cul-de-sacs, non-through streets, or private property.

Bus stops are designed to avoid the use of turnarounds at stop locations and avoid the need to back up.

Timing of Bus Stops

Student Pick Up – Students should be at the bus stop at least five (5) minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. Students running late to their bus stop experience greater physical safety risk rushing to the bus before it leaves. Dangers include, but are not limited to, crossing the street behind the bus, entering the danger zone (see Danger Zone section of this handbook) around a school bus or chasing a bus thinking the driver can stop a second time before leaving the area. Please reinforce with your student the need to be at the bus stop before the bus arrives.

Late Buses - The Transportation Department cannot guarantee that students will be picked up or dropped off every day at the same time as we are impacted by road construction, traffic conditions, weather and other outside influences. Your patience is appreciated.

Student Visibility – Students must be visible to the bus driver. If a driver does not see students, he/she will not activate the alternating flasher to stop traffic. Instead, the driver will proceed with the route.

School Start Up

Buses may be late for drop off times during the first few weeks of school. This is due to our drivers following special procedures to ensure the safe delivery of our youngest students. Your patience is appreciated.

Application for Alternate Bus Stop or Bus Stop Evaluation

Bus transportation is primarily designed for the transport of students from home to school and school to home. Stops must be at the same location every morning and every afternoon.

If parents wish to request an alternate bus-stop they must submit an Alternate Bus Stop Request Form to the Transportation Department. If parents wish to have a

specific stop evaluated (considering criteria in the "Bus Stop Standards" section), a Bus Stop Evaluation Request Form must be submitted. Both forms are located on the District website at www.lakeorion.k12.mi.us. Forms may be submitted electronically, dropped off at a school building, or mailed to:

LOCS Transportation Department
3620 Giddings Road
Orion, MI 48359

At the start of the school year, the priority is to establish a bus stop for all current and newly eligible students. The Transportation Department uses this time to monitor routes and make necessary changes to provide safe and timely transportation for all eligible students. Applications for an alternate bus stop or a bus stop evaluation are of a lower priority at this time.

Requests, whether approved or denied, will be responded to either in writing or with a phone call within 30 days. However, at the beginning of the school year, requests will not be reviewed and considered until at least three (3) weeks after the start of school. Please understand that requests are not guaranteed to be approved.

Kindergarteners

During the first two (2) weeks of school, drivers follow special procedures to ensure that kindergarteners are safely delivered to their correct PM stops. To aid in this endeavor, the District will provide a tag that includes afternoon route information. We ask that you attach the tag in a visible spot on the outside of your student's backpack for at least the first two (2) weeks of school.

Kindergarteners are seated in the first few rows of the bus. Their names and stops are noted when they get on the bus. At each stop, the driver reviews his/her student stop list and verifies whether any kindergarteners should be dropped off.

New Students and Address Changes

New students and students relocating within the District must register at Central Enrollment. Central Enrollment notifies the Transportation Department of address changes. Within five (5) days of notification, the Transportation Department will schedule transportation for eligible pupils.

Notification of Transportation Services

Prior to the start of school, notification will be sent to the parents at the student's residence of record. The notification will indicate student pick up and drop off times and the location of the designated bus stop. Please understand that these times are an estimate based on the best information we have at the time of notification. It is often necessary to make adjustments on drop off or pick up times as we add new students or eliminate unnecessary bus stops based on lack of student ridership.

Students not using buses will affect bus arrival times to the stop locations. If students do not use a bus stop the first two weeks of school, the stop will be eliminated. The bus stop may be reinstated by contacting the Transportation Department if the eligible students need for transportation change during the school year.

If minor route adjustments are made that cause a ten-minute or less change in the pick-up or drop off window, notification to parents will not be made. If the route adjustment causes a pick up or drop off time change beyond a ten (10) minute window from the published times, notification will be provided by the Transportation Department with new bus stop pick up and/or drop off times.

Childcare Considerations/Transportation To Daycare Facilities

Transportation may be provided to students attending childcare facilities located in the student's assigned school attendance area. Bus stops will be located near the childcare center where the bus can safely pick up and drop off students and where the childcare centers can assist in loading and unloading students.

Transportation may only have one pick up location and one drop off location for each student. If your day care arrangements vary from day to day, it will become the parent's responsibility to provide transportation on those alternating days.

Private/Parochial School Transportation

As mandated by law, the District transports private and parochial students living within our boundaries. Students are typically transported using a hub and shuttle system. Hub and shuttle is a system where students are bused to one school (called a hub) and then shuttled to their final destination.

DISTRICT, PARENT and STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

District Responsibilities

1. Establish safe bus stops, routes and schedules.
2. Provide school buses that meet or exceed State operating requirements.
3. Provide certified and qualified staff.
4. Provide for student safety while on the school bus.

Parent Responsibilities

1. Provide for your students' safety to, from, and while at the bus stop.
2. Have your student at the bus stop for pick up at least five (5) minutes ahead of the scheduled stop time.
3. Arrive at your student's bus stop at least 5 minutes before scheduled drop off time.

Student Responsibilities

1. Behave appropriately at all times as detailed in the student code of conduct found in the student handbook.
2. Ride your assigned bus, and use your assigned bus stops.
3. Obey the driver at all times.
4. Stay in your seat and face forward while the bus is in motion.
5. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
6. Place all carry-on items on your lap.
7. Refrain from bringing animals or glass containers on the bus, as mandated by State law.
8. Refrain from eating or drinking on the bus.
9. Leave the bus only with the consent of the driver.
10. Enter or leave the bus only at the front door after the bus has come to a complete stop, except in case of emergency

Guidelines - Student Consequences

In general, if student behavior is inappropriate, bus referral forms will be issued by the bus driver or other adult. The principal will assign appropriate consequences, based on but not limited to the guidelines that follow:

1. First Written Form: Student/Administrator conference and warning. Parents will be notified.
2. Second Written Form: Suspension from bus for no more than five (5) days and/or suspension from school for no more than two (2) days at the discretion of the principal. Parents will be notified.
3. Third Written Form: Parent Conference. Student suspended from the bus for no less than five (5) days or for no more than the balance of the school year.

In cases of severe misconduct, steps 1 and/or 2 may be omitted at the discretion of the principal.

On occasion, a bus may return to the building because of misbehavior that endangers students. The students acting inappropriately will be removed, and their parents will be expected to pick them up at school and transport them home. The principal will then assign consequences.

SAFETY

Bus Stop Safety

AM Loading Procedure:

1. All students should be at the bus stop five (5) minutes before the scheduled arrival of the bus.
2. Students must stay a minimum of ten (10) feet away from the bus stop.
3. All students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop.
4. Students crossing the roadway to load must:
 - a. Check for the red alternating lights to be on.
 - b. Wait until the driver has given the safety signal.



- c. Check for traffic in all directions before proceeding.
- d. Cross a minimum of ten (10) feet in front of the bus.

PM Unloading Procedures:

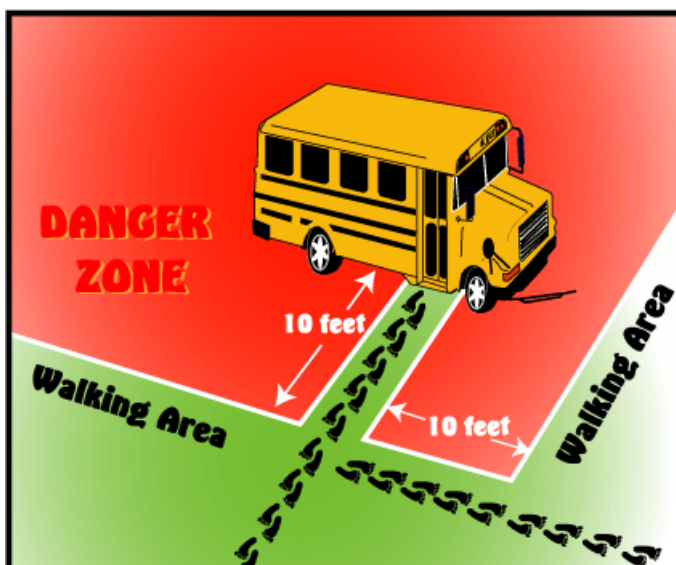
- 1. Students crossing the roadway after unloading must:
 - a. Walk ten (10) feet in front of the bus.
 - b. Check for the red alternating lights to be on and move to the traffic side of the bus.
 - c. Wait until the driver has given the safety signal.



- d. Check for traffic in all directions before proceeding.

These procedures are to be followed by all students loading/unloading, crossing or staying on the right side of the school bus.

Danger Zone



Parents... please teach your student the Bus Safety procedures and to stay out of the danger zone. When the bus arrives, stay away from the wheels.

Annual School Bus Inspection

During the school year, our school bus vehicles are subject to a comprehensive school bus inspection conducted by the Michigan State Police. This annual inspection ensures that school districts maintain their fleet in safe operating condition. In order to pass the inspection, all maintenance and repairs of school bus vehicles must be performed to meet or exceed the applicable Federal Motor Carrier Safety Standards. School bus safety standards exceed the safety standards for passenger cars.

MISCELLANEOUS

Emergency Bus Pass

Emergency bus passes are authorized by principals only. Please see the student handbook for details and procedures.

Bus Accident Procedure

The Transportation Department is very proud of our excellent safety record. We are committed to maintaining our safety record and providing safe transportation service for all students.

Our bus drivers are thoroughly trained in defensive driving techniques, and our buses are carefully maintained. Given the thousands of miles traveled annually and the traffic conditions, accidents can happen.

When a school bus is involved in an accident, the scene of the accident falls under the jurisdiction of public safety officials. The District will contact parents in the event of an accident. Students must remain until a public safety official releases them. Our public safety officials work well with parents and provide a great service in making a bus accident with students on board a high priority.

School Closings

Inclement weather, hazardous road conditions, power outages, or other incidents may require the closing of school. With student safety as our first priority, every effort is made to avoid school closings when possible. In bad weather, the decision to close school is made after:

- ☞ Road conditions are tested by the District Transportation Department.
- ☞ Weather conditions are examined (weather advisories, storm patterns, temperature, etc.).
- ☞ Oakland County Road Commission's ability to plow area roads is determined.
- ☞ The condition of school driveways and parking lots is assessed.

The Superintendent closes school based on the severity of these items coupled with our ability to transport students safely.

For the latest information on school closings and emergency events as they happen, check:

- ☞ Information Hotline: 248•693•5300
- ☞ Educational Access Channel 22 Comcast Cable
- ☞ www.cancellations.com
- ☞ Radio Stations: WWJ & WJR
- ☞ TV Stations: Channel 2, 4, 7 & 50

Please do not call your student's school or the Transportation Department.

Building Evacuations

Power outages, gas leaks, and even storms may require evacuation during the school day to ensure the safety of students. An evacuation may involve moving students to another building. Under these conditions, Michigan law allows districts the authority to move students to a place of safety without parental permission.

- ☞ Students will be transported by District bus drivers to an alternate location with their teachers.
- ☞ If possible, students will be transported back to their school for the remainder of the day and regular dismissal.
- ☞ If students cannot be returned to their building:
 - ☞ Parents who choose to pick up their student(s) must come to the alternate location.

- 🚌 If safe to do so, walkers will be transported back to their school to walk home at the end of the day or their parents may pick them up at the alternate location.
- 🚌 Bus riders will be taken from the alternate location directly to their route home at the end of the day.

For specific building evacuation procedures and additional information regarding evacuation procedures, please contact the principal of your student's school.

Overloaded Buses

Students are assigned three (3) to a seat at all age levels. The term "overloaded" indicates a bus filled beyond rated capacity. In compliance with State law, overloads will be corrected as soon as possible, but no later than the fourth Wednesday following Labor Day.

Parents Entering Bus

Parents should **never** enter a school bus. If there is an issue or concern, please contact the Transportation Department. PH: 248-391-5455

Frequently Asked Questions

Are the bus stops the same every year?

No. While stops are consistent from year to year, changes may be made based on student enrollment and residence.

My student's bus is crowded and overloaded. How will this be corrected?

It is our goal to fully utilize all the space on all the buses in our fleet. The term "overload" indicates a bus filled beyond its rated capacity. An overloaded bus will be corrected by the fourth Wednesday after Labor Day. Students are assigned three (3) to a seat. We appreciate that this may feel crowded to your student; however, it is not a situation which would necessitate correction.

My student left something on the bus. How do we get it back?

Items left by students will be held on the bus and may be claimed by the student.

If you need the item prior to your student riding the same bus again, please contact the Transportation Department to make pick up arrangements. Unclaimed items will be kept for two (2) weeks.

Why aren't there seat belts on the school bus?

There is a passive restraint system on the school buses. Since 1977 the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards have been very stringent concerning school buses. The seat backs are higher; there is more padding around the metal seat frame; the padding is thicker; the seats are closer together; the steel ribs are of heavier gauge metal; and more. If there is a front or rear end collision, the full upper body of the student would move in to the back of the seat in front of them and then "bounce" back in their own seat. Any injuries to the student would not be as severe as if the student was wearing a seat belt.

With a seat belt, the student is strapped in at the pelvic area. Upon impact the student's upper body would move in to the back of the seat in front of him/her; but the lower body would stay in position. The student's head and neck would hit the seat first and then bounce back in to his/her own seat. That would cause major head and neck injuries... or worse.

As long as your student is sitting properly in the bus seat, "bottom to bottom and back to back," your student is safe on a school bus.

In catastrophic school bus accidents with trains, gravel haulers or other very large vehicles no type of seat restraint system would work.

The bus passes my house, why can't you stop and pick up my student?

We do pass most homes in the District. There are approximately 8,000 students. Each bus stop takes at least 30 seconds; imagine how long it would take to pick up 60 students on one bus, and still get them to school on time. That is why we have group stops.

Why can't my student bring his large band instrument onto the bus?

It is now a Michigan State law that all instruments must be held by the student. If it cannot fit on the student's lap, and be held by the student, we cannot transport it.

When MUST motorists STOP for the school bus?

In preparation for a school bus stop, the bus driver will activate YELLOW FLASHING LIGHTS approximately 200 feet prior to the stop. This is the indicator to other motorists to slow down and proceed with caution because there is a school bus stop ahead. When the bus comes to a complete stop at the bus stop, and opens the door, the RED FLASHING LIGHTS are activated.

When you see RED FLASHING lights, you MUST stop. This is the signal that the bus has stopped to pick up or to drop off students. Motorists must wait until the red flashing lights are turned off before they can resume driving.

The exception to this rule is a roadway which is separated by a median; then only the traffic following the bus MUST stop. An example would be M24/Lapeer Road.

The following questions were provided by the Michigan Department of Education:

Isn't the school district required to transport my child?

School districts are NOT required by law to transport regular education children. Michigan Compiled Law (MCL) 380.1321 outlines the obligations of the school district IF its board of education elects to provide transportation. Under Article 3 of the Revised School Code, the school district is obligated to provide for the transportation of a special education student if the Individualized Educational Planning Committee (IEPC) has determined that the transportation is a specialized service which is included within and necessary to carry out the student's IEP.

My child is starting kindergarten. Will the bus pick my child up in front of my house?

There are no special laws or regulations for transporting regular education students enrolled in kindergarten. If your district provides transportation, it will be provided in accordance with the requirement of MCL 380.1321, Section 55 of the Pupil Transportation Act, and local district policy with regard to the placement of the bus stop.

Is there a law about how far my child has to walk to the bus stop?

No law specifies the maximum distance a student may walk to the bus stop.

Is there a specified distance that must exist between school bus stops?

The lights on a school bus, which are used to notify other traffic of an upcoming stop, by law, are activated 200 feet from the stop. Thus, bus stops must be at least 200 feet apart.

What other factors are involved in establishing where the school bus stops?

There are many factors taken into consideration when school administrators establish the placement of school bus stops. The basic legal factors are identified in MCL 257.1855. The primary concern is visibility of the bus to other traffic and the consideration of stopping distances necessary for other motor vehicles in order to accomplish safe loading and unloading of the children. In general, state law requires 400 feet of clear and continuous visibility on a highway or roadway where the speed limit is more than 35 miles per hour, and 200 feet where the speed limit is less than 35 miles per hour. There is no state law that specifies a maximum distance between stops.

What about the safety of my child getting to and from the bus stop? There are no sidewalks where we live and it is not very safe walking on the busy road we live on.

It is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian to see that a child gets safely to and from the bus stop. The school district provides transportation as a non-mandated service and establishes placement of the bus stops in accordance with the requirements of the law.

Is there a law stating that an adult riding on a school bus for monitoring purposes be seated at a specific location on the bus?

There is no law pertaining to this issue. In most cases when adults are assigned to monitor students that are being transported on a bus, they are near the student or students who possess the greatest amount of supervisory need.

My child spends over two (2) hours a day just riding the bus to and from school. Is there a maximum riding time in the law?

There is no maximum riding time in the law for children in kindergarten through grade twelve. Childcare licensing regulations establish a maximum riding time of 60 continuous minutes for the transportation of preschool children.