

## Contact Us

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# Berkeley Unified School District Transportation School Bus Guidelines for General Ed Students



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# School Bus Driver Training & Safety

California state law requires a high level of competency of individuals who drive a school bus. State law requires each driver to have a valid commercial class A or B driver's license, school bus special certificate, first aid training, a physical examination, finger printing, and criminal and DMV record clearances. In addition, the Berkeley Unified School District Transportation Department requires all drivers to attend regularly scheduled safety and in-service training sessions to improve their skills with special education students. School bus drivers are certified by the California Highway Patrol. All drivers must also complete ten (10) hours of in-service training each year and shall renew their CDL and certificate at least every five (5) years.



## Two-Way Communication

For student safety and route control each bus is equipped with a two-way radio. The Transportation Department is in communication with each bus on its scheduled runs.

If there is a problem such as a late bus or perhaps a student riding the wrong bus, the Transportation Department will be able to contact the bus and make the necessary corrections.

## School Bus Equipment

To assure use of safe equipment, all school buses are inspected daily by the driver, at scheduled intervals by our maintenance shop, and annually by the California Highway Patrol. All district school buses are also equipped with a Child Check Mate System, ensuring bus drivers check for sleeping children after each run and before leaving the bus yard after morning and afternoon shifts.



## BUSD Transportation Dept Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Berkeley Unified School District Transportation Department to support the academic achievement of our students by providing for the safe operation of a school transportation service. We believe that pupil transportation enhances the educational opportunities of our children.

We are dedicated to providing courteous, respectable and professional service to our customers when addressing all of your transportation needs.

**Students are our priority. The safety of our students is our primary concern.**

## Message to Parents

The Berkeley Unified School District Transportation Department has prepared this information package to acquaint you with the procedures covering your child's school bus transportation. We need your assistance and cooperation to maintain a timely, reliable and safe service. Your familiarization with, and adherence to these procedures will aid considerably in transporting your child safely.

## Successful Bus Route Scheduling

The successful scheduling of individualized bus routing for our Special or General Education students is dependent upon the students being ready at their designated bus stop location. We request that all students be present five (5) minutes before their pick-up time. Minor delays at individual pick-up points by as little as two minutes at additional bus stops can cause a delay equal to as much as twenty minutes late to final destination points. For maximum efficiency, we attempt to not deliver our students at the school of attendance earlier than necessary. Drivers are not permitted to honk the horn or leave the bus to get a student. It is imperative that we maintain a prompt and efficient bus routing schedule. With your help, we will have a safe, efficient and educationally productive school year.



## Discipline Process

- Parents and Drivers can partner to teach students the bus rules and other safe riding practices, including required emergency procedures instruction.
- When discipline problems occur on the bus, drivers will discuss these issues with a Supervisor and when possible, attempts will be made to call the parent or guardian.
- Drivers will then document unsafe behavior on the “Bus Conduct Form”.
- The Operations Supervisor will review all Bus Conduct Forms, and we will send copies to the parents and schools. In some cases, student’s behavior and recommended actions will be noted on this form.
- Three written reports in one school year may result in a suspension from bus riding privileges. The Transportation Supervisor will determine the length of the suspension for unruly behavior.

Any serious offenses, including fighting, sexual harassment, bullying, intimidating, injury to others, serious disregard for safety, disrespect of bus driver, destruction of district property, etc. may result in an automatic suspension or expulsion after one incident.



## Bus Riding Rules, (continued)

### Be Safe

- Follow driver's instructions.
- Stay in your seat.
- Keep arms, hands and heads inside the windows.
- Keep the aisles and exits clear at all times.
- No fighting or hurting others.

### Be Respectful

- Be respectful to each other and to the driver.
- Enter and exit the bus in an orderly fashion.
- Keep your hands to yourself.
- No littering on the bus, or out the windows.
- No eating on the bus.

### Be Responsible

- Do not damage or tamper with bus equipment.
- Help keep the bus clean.
- Do not bring any weapon such as a knife or gun.
- Do not bring any animals on the bus.
- Do not bring any items such as scooters, skateboards, skates on board the bus. These items can become projectile and cause injury to other students.
- No tobacco products on the bus.

## Bus Assignment

Transportation of students in the special education program is arranged between the Special Education department and Transportation. In order to ensure that we can provide the necessary service and support, the Special Education program consults with us regarding the need for service. They then send us documents with all of the relevant student data. When we have the required Transportation Request Form (TRF) and IEP information regarding a student's abilities, medical information, and emergency contacts, and any relevant bus information, including special equipment needs, we place the student on a bus route and make the appropriate contacts to begin the service.



## Parent Responsibilities

- Parents are required to receive their student at the door of the bus when students need assistance from the bus into the home.
- Children will NOT be dropped at any other location than the designated address, unless a revised Transportation Request Form has been received.
- Unless indicated in the student's IEP, students other than Kindergarten are NOT required to be met by a parent or adult guardian.
- If your student 'Must Be Met', it must be clearly stated on the Transportation Request Form issued by the District's Special Education Dept.

The procedure to be followed in the event that an authorized adult is not at home will be as follows:

1. Driver will notify Transportation of the problem.
2. Transportation will call the home or emergency phone number. (Note: Will use current information on hand. It is the parent's responsibility to provide us with updated information.)
3. Driver will continue on route while awaiting instruction from Transportation.
4. After completion of their route, if unable to return to the home, the driver will take the child to his/her school of attendance where the parent will be required to pick up the child.
5. If the child has not been picked up by 5:00 p.m., the local law enforcement agency will be contacted to hold the child until parents are contacted.

## Bus Riding Rules and Regulations

All transportation shall be subject to the appropriate provisions and policies of the California Education Code, California Administrative Code and policies of the Berkeley Unified School District.

(Title 5 C.A.C. Section 14103) "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."

### **SCHOOL BUS RULES:**

**(Please discuss these rules with your child.)**

Each child on a school bus must behave in a satisfactory manner in order for the driver to be alert to the many hazards of driving. Since the safety of all children on the bus is of prime importance, a child who behaves in an unsatisfactory manner may be denied the use of transportation. Your reinforcement of these regulations and occasional communication with your child's bus driver will help considerably in maintaining a low level of disciplinary problems. Parents, guardians may be responsible for any damage to vehicles caused directly by their child.

## When The Bus Is Late

If you are reasonably sure that the delay is not due to weather conditions, please allow at least 15 minutes before leaving the bus stop. School buses have to endure the same rush hour traffic conditions that plague commuters. A traffic snarl, traffic accident, minimum days, or a longer than scheduled loading at a previous school bus stop can easily throw your bus 10-15 minutes off schedule.

If, at the end of 15 minutes, your bus still has not arrived, you may wish to call the Transportation Department at 510-644-6182.

On extremely foggy or rainy days the buses will run late. Please be patient and don't worry; the school will be notified of the late arrival.



## Parent Responsibilities, (cont.)

CONTINUED PROBLEMS WITH DELIVERY OF YOUR CHILD MAY RESULT IN SUSPENSION OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES.

## Parking

Drivers are instructed not to pull in and out of private driveways. It is extremely helpful if room can be left at the curb in front of your home for loading and unloading passengers.

## Wheelchair Lift Operation

Drivers are specially trained on all our wheelchair lifts and their proper operation and controls. Although your assistance in loading and unloading is appreciated, we ask that only the driver operate the lift controls and secure the student's chair.



## Wheelchairs/Strollers, Car Seats, And Other Transportation Devices; Restraints (Seat Belts)

The safest possible lifts and tie-down equipment have been purchased to accommodate the typical variety and sizes of chairs we transport. Periodically, an unusual style chair is used by a student which may have limitations for transportation purposes. Your help is also needed to maintain safe transportation of wheelchairs and travel chairs. Section 1293G California Administrative Code:

**“Wheelchairs shall be equipped with brakes and a restraining belt properly maintained by the owner of the chair”.**

Transportation may be discontinued unless these devices are properly maintained by the owners. All wheelchairs, travel chairs, etc. will be inspected by a member of the transportation staff at least once a year or as necessary. A record will be kept on file in the transportation office.

Effective on July 1, 2018 (SB 20) Buses and Seat Belts. This law requires passengers in a bus equipped with seat belts to be properly restrained. Children between the ages of 8 and 15 traveling in a school bus must wear a seat belt or be in appropriate restraint that meets federal safety standards. Title 13 Code of Regulations recommends all Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> thru 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students be properly restrained in a seat belt at all times in a school bus.

## Student Illness

Should students become ill occasionally or cannot attend school for other reasons on a particular day or days it would be appreciated if the parent/guardian would call the Transportation Department. Listed below is the procedure to use to provide a more efficient and practical school bus transportation service for your student.

1. In the event a student is to be absent, the parent, guardian should call the Transportation Dept. at 510-644-6182 prior to the absence:
  - a. any time before 5:00 p.m. the day before the absence;
  - b. before 6:00 a.m. the day of the absence.
2. If a student is absent for the morning bus pickup without prior notification, we will not dispatch a bus for the afternoon return without notice from the parent/guardian stating that a ride is necessary.

In the event a student is absent without prior notification to the Transportation Department for three (3) consecutive days, the bus will not be routed to the student's home again until such notification has been given by a phone call from the parent/guardian. This must be done no later than 6:00 a.m. the day of return. You must notify the Transportation Department. This information is not to be relayed by the driver.