

HUDSONVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PUPIL TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES
Information for a Safe and Orderly Transportation System

Important Contacts

Transportation Office.....	(616) 669-7757
Administrative Office.....	(616) 669-1740
Hudsonville Public Schools Web Site.....	www.hudsonvillepublicschools.org

Elementary Schools

Alward.....	(616) 669-6700
Bauer.....	(616) 669-6824
Forest Grove.....	(616) 896-9429
Georgetown.....	(616) 797-9797
Jamestown.....	(616) 896-9375
Park.....	(616) 669-1970
South.....	(616) 669-9362

Secondary Schools

Baldwin Street Middle.....	(616) 669-7750
Riley Street Middle.....	(616) 896-1920
Freshman Campus.....	(616) 669-1510
High School.....	(616) 669-1500

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide students and parents/guardians with general information about the Hudsonville Public Schools (HPS) pupil transportation system. State of Michigan Public Act 187 of 1990, the Public Transportation Act outlines the laws that all school districts must follow. A copy of P.A. 187, HPS transportation policy, regulations, and safety rules are available for review during regular office hours in the Transportation Office.

HPS operates a fleet of over 70 regular and special education busses. We travel almost a million miles a year and transport over 5,000 pre-primary through twelfth grade and special education students on a daily basis. HPS also provides transportation services for over 1,000 field trips and athletic events each school year. Each day Hudsonville busses shuttle students to and from district schools and many special education programs in surrounding districts.

HPS is proud of its fleet of busses. There are two full time technicians who provide preventative maintenance and general repairs. The Michigan State Police inspects the fleet on an annual basis. HPS has accumulated numerous consecutive 100% Pass Rate inspections.

At HPS, we strive for excellence in transportation services.

Law does not require transportation of regular education students to and from school. Please take time to read the following pages and review them with your children in order to protect your transportation privileges. It is the mutual responsibility of the parent/guardian and school district personnel to make an effort to understand and cooperate with each other regarding safe and orderly pupil transportation.

School bus transportation is provided only for eligible students and shall be considered a **PRIVILEGE** to be enjoyed only as long as the students accept responsibility for their own personal conduct and carefully follow all rules and regulations.

Thank you for your support and cooperation. Together we will have a great school year.

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Bus Routes and Bus Stops

Safety is the most important factor in transporting Hudsonville students. The following information is offered to help make pupil transportation safe and successful.

1. Bus stops and bus routes are established on the basis of safety, efficiency, the age of students, as well as the State of Michigan guidelines. Bus stop locations must avoid as much traffic as possible. Busses shall be visible in both directions when stopped.
2. Students should arrive at the bus stop five minutes prior to the scheduled arrival of the bus. This should allow time to catch the bus but not enough time for problems among students to arise.
PARENTS/GUARDIANS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR STUDENTS UNTIL THE BUS ARRIVES.
3. By state law, students **MUST** cross in front of the school bus. They will receive instruction on proper crossing procedures from bus drivers and their classroom teachers. **PARENTS/GUARDIANS WHO MEET STUDENTS AT THE STOP SHOULD SET THE EXAMPLE AND ALSO FOLLOW THIS IMPORTANT SAFETY RULE.**

The district reserves the right to change stops and routes when necessary. Parent cooperation is required to make sure students ride the busses to which they are assigned. This ensures that the school will know who is actually on a bus, that a student can be located in an emergency, that overcrowding is controlled, and that other possible problems can be prevented. Walking distances and bus routes may be adjusted temporarily if necessary by reason of unsafe or impassable roads.

Transportation Committee

When appropriate, a committee will review special transportation requests regarding bus stops and routes, evaluate the circumstances, and make a determination. Requests for committee review must be in writing and sent to the Transportation Director. The request should include detailed information describing the situation and the desired remedy, whenever possible. If circumstances change, special requests may be reevaluated.

Child Care Arrangements

It is not possible to provide transportation to childcare facilities located outside of the attendance boundaries of the school.

Because routes are established based upon residence and/or childcare, changes of pick up or drop off during the year are difficult to accommodate. Requests for change must be made in advance and in writing.

Procedures for Changing Busses

At Hudsonville Public Schools we are responsible for the safe and orderly transportation of your children. Parents/Guardians are requested to identify one (1) pick up and one (1) drop off location for the school year. The bus stop may or may not be located at the home address. However, students will be assigned within the prescribed walking distance.

Permanent changes to the scheduled transportation for a student may be made upon **written request in advance** from the parent/guardian. Changes may be made through the bus pass form on our website or directed to the transportation office.

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School District Responsibilities

The School District is responsible for:

1. Establishing the policies and procedures by which the pupil transportation program functions.
2. Establishing pupil regulations governing the behavior and safety of students while on the bus.
3. Instituting and administering an instructional program that teaches students proper conduct and safety procedures.
4. Conducting a training program for school bus drivers to ensure that all policies, procedures, regulations, and their enforcement are understood.
5. Ensuring that parents receive transportation safety rules and regulations and clearly establishing their roles and obligations with respect to student promptness, attitude, and behavior.
6. Initiating procedures to open lines of communication and cooperation between school administrators, transportation staff, and state agencies.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

1. Supporting safe riding and discipline practices.
2. Making certain that their student arrives at the bus stop on time and being responsible for their student's behavior until the bus arrives.
3. Providing alternative transportation for their student if oversized objects or live animals must be transported to or from school, or when a student's bus riding privileges are suspended for cause.
4. Ensuring that payment is made for damages resulting from vandalism to the bus.
5. Having a family emergency plan if the student arrives home early or if parents/guardians are not present at the time of their arrival.
6. Supporting emergency evacuations drills and other emergency procedures as set by the school district.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

1. Observing appropriate behavior in order to protect their riding privileges.
2. Being courteous to others. Demonstrate responsible citizenship through positive social interactions while on the bus. Use no profanity or verbally abusive language.
3. Remembering that eating, drinking, smoking, and possessing illegal substances, weapons or obscene materials are not allowed on the bus.
4. Cooperating with the bus driver and following the bus driver's instructions the first time they are given.
5. Remaining seated while the bus is in motion.
6. Extending nothing, including head, hands, and feet out of the bus windows. Open windows only with permission.
7. Maintaining the condition of the bus.
8. Displaying proper respect for the rights and comfort of others on the bus.
9. Being on time at bus stops and staying off roadways while waiting. Busses cannot wait for tardy students.
10. Crossing in front of the bus at all times.
11. Limiting objects that are brought on the bus to those items that can be safely held by the student. Do not bring or use any items on the bus that could affect the health, safety, and security of any passengers. Examples: Scooters, skateboards, sleds, large band instruments, and live animals may not be transported on the bus.
12. Realizing that ANY driver distraction is potentially hazardous to the safety of all passengers.

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Bus Driver Responsibilities

The Bus Driver is responsible for:

1. Providing safe and orderly transportation for students.
2. Ensuring proper conduct and communications with students, parents/guardians, and building administrators.
3. Establishing and enforcing bus rules in accordance with district policy and procedures. This includes teaching students the rules for safe bus riding and street crossing and enforcing these rules.
4. Following the scheduled route and time each day providing conditions allow.
5. Picking up and discharging students only at their designated stops except with permission to do otherwise.
6. Assigning seats as necessary.
7. Notifying the Transportation Office if the bus will be late in arriving.
8. Checking the bus by walking from front to back to make certain it is empty at an appropriate location after the last child exits the bus and between all runs before parking the bus.
9. Making direct contact with parents/guardians, Transportation Director, and the Building Principal regarding student behavior issues.
10. Making every effort not to leave the bus unattended with students on board.
11. Providing for school bus emergency evacuation drills on a regular basis as required.

Student Crossing Procedures

Please review these important safety procedures with all of your children. Parents, who escort their children to and from the bus when crossing, must set the example for their children and also adhere to these important safety procedures. Everyone needs to know that not all cars stop as required by state law, even when the red lights are flashing on school busses.

When crossing the street to board the bus:

1. Students wait in a group at the designated bus stop at least 10 feet away from the edge of the roadway.
2. The bus driver gives one instruction to cross. Drivers will hold a paddle, red/orange side out to indicate "STOP" and will turn the paddle to the smile face when it is safe to cross the street.
3. Students proceed directly across the road always staying well in front of the bus and board the bus. Stay out of the DANGER ZONE!
4. Do not stop in the middle of the street or cross behind the bus.

When crossing the street after leaving the bus:

1. Students exit the bus and take 10 giant steps in front of the bus staying on the side of the street. Stay out of the DANGER ZONE!
2. Students stand in a group and look to the driver for instruction to cross.
3. Drivers will hold the paddle, red/orange side out to indicate "STOP" and will turn the paddle to the smile face when it is safe to cross the street.
4. Students proceed to a point even with the left side of the bus and STOP.
5. Students look left and right for passing cars.
6. Students look to the driver for instruction to complete the crossing.
7. Do not cross behind the bus.
8. If a paper goes under the bus, always ask the driver for help.
9. Do not get mail from roadside mailboxes until after the bus leaves the stop.

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Inclement Weather

School Cancellation

Every effort is made to inform parents/guardians of a sudden unscheduled need to close the schools. A heavier than predicted snowfall in winter or severe rainstorm in spring or fall may result in an early dismissal from school. School personnel make every effort to avoid sending students home outside the normal schedule.

During periods of inclement weather, parents/guardians and students will be notified via School Messenger (phone call/email). In addition, the media are contacted as soon as a decision is made to vary from the regular school schedule in order to notify parents/guardians as quickly as possible. If the weather looks threatening, parents/guardians are encouraged to stay tuned to the local news media for updates.

Family Emergency Plans

Students and parents/guardians should develop family emergency plans. Does your child have a house key or know where to find one? Does your child have a neighbor to go to in case no one is home? Have you discussed several possibilities so your child knows what to do? Do a drill or at least a periodic verbal check to be sure your child knows what steps to take. Keep the procedure updated as personal circumstances change.

Severe Weather Procedures

When the U.S. Weather Bureau issues tornado watches or warnings, Hudsonville students will be retained in school until dismissal time or until such time that, in the judgment of the Superintendent or designee, they may be safely dismissed.

1. If a tornado watch is announced during the day, students will be dismissed at the regular time.
2. If a tornado warning is in effect, students will not be dismissed and will be moved to designated areas within each school.

Bus Conduct Reporting Process

Parents/guardians will be notified of inappropriate behavior on the school bus. Please help us provide safe transportation for all students by discussing appropriate bus behavior with your child and stress the importance of good conduct while on the school bus. To assist the bus driver, a video camera may be used to monitor student behavior while riding on Hudsonville school busses.

All students need to attend school regularly to receive the best possible education. Riding the school bus is a privilege. Suspension of riding privileges does not mean a suspension from school. Parents/guardians are responsible for transportation to and from school.

Bus discipline is progressive and cumulative and will normally begin with a verbal warning from the bus driver to the student. Hudsonville Public Schools uses a report of misconduct that is sent to parents/guardians and school authorities. Penalty points are accumulated for the current school year. Immediate suspension may occur for any infraction involving fighting or possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons, and contraband. The school district reserves the right to implement alternative discipline options based on individual circumstances. An attempt will be made to notify parents/guardians prior to suspension of riding privileges.

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Bus Rules () Penalty points in parenthesis

1. Students must obey the instruction and directions of the school bus driver. Driver is authorized to assign seats. (1-7)
2. Students must be on time to ride the school bus, board and depart at their scheduled stop location, stay off the roadway, and maintain proper conduct while waiting to board or upon leaving a school bus. They must cross the street in front of, not behind, the bus and must not hit the sides or windows. (1-7)
3. Students may lift the emergency exit handle or use the emergency exits only during an emergency or with the permission of the bus driver. (1-7)
4. Students must keep hands and head inside the bus and may not throw any object, including snowballs, on, at, or out of the bus windows. (1-7)
5. Students must not move about or change seats on the bus without the permission of the driver, nor may they speak loudly, shout, or create any other disturbing noise. Students must not tease, scuffle with, or fight with fellow passengers. (1-7)
6. Students must not litter the bus. No eating or drinking on the bus without permission. (1-3)
7. Students must not use profane, vulgar, or abusive language, or make obscene gestures. (1-7)
8. Students must not damage or vandalize the school bus. Students will be required to pay for repair of damage. (1-7)
9. Possession or use of laser lights, firecrackers, smoke bombs, or other incendiary devices is strictly forbidden. Use of various substances (alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or illegal drugs) as well as possession and/or being under the influence of these substances is forbidden. (1-7)
10. Students must comply with the rules and regulations of the student handbook of the Hudsonville Public Schools adopted by the Board of Education. This handbook provides for a hearing for a student accused of violations listed above.

Suspensions

Suspension from riding any school bus for five school days shall occur after a student accumulates seven penalty points.

Suspension from riding any school bus for an additional ten school days shall occur after a student accumulates ten penalty points.

Suspension from riding any school bus for the remainder of the school year shall occur after a student accumulates thirteen penalty points.

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Hudsonville Public Schools School Board Transportation Policy

- I. Hudsonville Public School recognizes that the responsibility for safety and supervision of students going to and from school is a shared responsibility of the students, parents, transportation, and school staff.
- II. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide for the child's safety to and from the bus stop and to ensure that the child arrives at the bus stop on time. Students must show respect for citizens and for private property while waiting at a bus stop. In the event that bus service is delayed, parents/guardians should be prepared to assume responsibility for the child's welfare until the bus arrives.
- III. It is the responsibility of every student who rides a school bus to be ready at the assigned stop five minutes prior to the scheduled pickup time. If a student is not ready at the stop on time, the driver will continue the route. The driver will not return for a student who is not at the bus stop on time. The parent/guardian is responsible for providing alternative transportation.
- IV. Pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and certain special education students may require a family member or guardian to receive them at the end of their ride home at the scheduled drop off time. If in the judgment of the driver the student's safety is in question, the student will remain on the bus while the driver initiates the following procedure:
- A. The driver contacts dispatch and dispatch telephones the parent, guardian or emergency contact.
 - B. If there is no emergency contact made, the student is taken to a prearranged location.
 - C. If no family member is present to receive the student, the principal will contact the parent or guardian for a conference to discuss future safety arrangements.
- V. The walking distances to a bus stop shall be as follows:
- | <u>Student Group</u> | <u>Expected to Walk No More Than</u> |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Secondary students | 1/2 Mile |
| Elementary students | 1/4 Mile |

Exceptions may be legal and budgetary requirements, shuttle services, and where dead end roads prevent 180 degree turn around of the bus.

VI. Each student is eligible for transportation and will be assigned a bus stop within the established bus route. Parents may request on a limited basis a regularly scheduled alternate bus stop (i.e. day care) which may be approved by the Transportation Director. This request must be written and received by the Director no later than one week prior to the change. Bus routes will not be changed to encompass an alternate bus stop.

VII. Notes requesting a change in bus transportation will not be accepted from pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students. Elementary students above kindergarten level shall not be permitted to use any other bus or bus stop without prior written permission from the Transportation Director or designee.

Adopted 1/8/98
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