

School District of Philadelphia

Department of Transportation Services Routing Guidelines

Purpose

The Department of Transportation Services developed these Routing Guidelines in order to provide safe transportation and superior customer service in a timely and efficient manner.

1. Definitions

The following words and phrases, when used in these guidelines, shall have the meaning given to them in this section:

- 1.1. *Approved Private School (APS)* - Approved by the Secretary of Education, licensed by the Private Academic Schools office, and with funding by state appropriation and Local Education Authorities (LEAs), APSs provide students whose complexity of education needs cannot appropriately be served in the typical public school education program with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).
- 1.2. *Bus transportation* – Transportation to eligible students by school bus or school vehicle.
- 1.3. *Charter School* - Charter schools and regional charter schools (collectively referred to as "charter schools") are independent public schools established and operated under a charter from the local school board and in which students are enrolled or attend.
- 1.4. *Eligible Student* - A school-aged child who is entitled to transportation services from the District in accordance with the District's eligibility guidelines.
- 1.5. *Feeder run* – A single pick up or drop off to or from a transportation hub consisting of students from multiple schools.
- 1.6. *Hazardous walking* - An unacceptable condition caused by potential incompatibility between vehicles and school students during the time students are walking between their home and school or bus stop.
- 1.7. *Non-Public School* - Licensed and regulated by the State Board of Private Academic Schools, whose rules, regulations, and standards are concerned with quality education, teacher certification, attendance and courses of study, which closely parallel public school requirements or schools sponsored by bona fide religious institutions.
- 1.8. *Paired run* – Two (2) or more schools transported on a single run at the same time.
- 1.9. *Primary Student Boarding Accommodation (PSBA)* – Primary student school bus accommodation requirement.
- 1.10. *Public School* - A school recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education as one that meets the Compulsory School Attendance Law operated by the School District.
- 1.11. *Route* – A group of runs assigned to an individual vehicle.
- 1.12. *Run* – An individual pick-up or drop off of students.
- 1.13. *Secondary Student Boarding Accommodation (SSBA)* - Secondary student school bus accommodation requirement.
- 1.14. *School bus* - A motor vehicle that is designed to carry eleven (11) passengers or more, including the driver, and is used for the transportation of preprimary, primary or secondary school students to or from public, private or parochial schools or events related to such schools or school-related activities.

- 1.15. *School of origin* - The school in which a child is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care or is designated under the McKinney Vento Act. Note, if a child's foster care placement changes, the school of origin would then be considered the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of the placement change.
- 1.16. *School run* – A single run to or from a transportation hub transporting a single school's students to or from school.
- 1.17. *School vehicle* - A motor vehicle, except a motorcycle, designed for carrying no more than ten (10) passengers, including the driver, and used for the transportation of preprimary, primary or secondary school students while registered by or under contract to the school district.
- 1.18. *Shuttle run* – A run transporting students to or from one school to another school.
- 1.19. *Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) Student TransPass (STP)* - Transportation provided to eligible students by issuance of a weekly SEPTA STP. A STP is valid for all bus, trolley, or subway trips from 5:30 am to 7:00 pm, on days when school is in session. STPs are not valid on Regional Rail Lines, on weekends, or between 7:00 pm and 5:30 am; however, families may upgrade TransPasses to include Regional Rail at any SEPTA sales location at their own expense. Additionally, TransPass stickers, issued through the school, may be added to the STP extending the hours to 8:00 pm for after school activities.
- 1.20. *Student walking route* - The system of streets, shoulders, sidewalks and crosswalks used by school students when walking between their home and school or school bus stop used by school students because of the unavailability of an alternate route.
- 1.21. *Transportation hub* – A central location used to load or unload students from feeder runs or school runs.

2. Transportation Eligibility

Eligibility shall be determined based upon the following criteria:

- 2.1. *Distance* - Any student in grades 1-12 whose student walking route is equal to or exceeds one and one-half (1.50) miles to or from their assigned school. All such distances shall be computed by the public highway from the nearest point where private roadway meets public highway to where public highway meets school property. Mileage shall be computed utilizing the District's routing software.
- 2.2. *English Language Learners (ELL)* - ELL students in grades 1-6 whose student walking route is equal to or exceeds one and one-half (1.50) miles to or from their assigned school may receive bus transportation if space is available. Mileage shall be computed utilizing the District's routing software.

- 2.3. *Foster Program* - Any student living in foster care within Philadelphia city limits whose student walking route is equal to or exceeds one and one-half (1.50) miles to or from the school of origin. Mileage shall be computed utilizing the District's routing software. When the foster student is placed at a residence outside the city, the student may receive transportation to the school of origin of which the cost is split between The Department of Transportation Services and Department of Human Services (DHS). When requesting Transportation, the school is required to include the [Education Stability Form](#), or a State issued Department of Human Services (DHS) placement notification letter.
- 2.4. *Hazardous walking* - Any student whose walking route to or from school or school bus stop has been determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to be a hazardous walking.
- 2.5. *Individual Education Program (IEP)* - Any student requiring specialized transportation, Curb-to-curb, Closest Corner, Free TransPass, as documented in their IEP.
- 2.6. *McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act* - Any student who meets the criteria set forth in the McKinney-Vento Act whose student walking route is equal to or exceeds one (1.00) mile from the school of origin shall receive appropriate transportation to the school of origin. Procedures for requesting transportation for McKinney Vento students may be found [here](#).
- 2.7. *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973* - Any student may qualify to receive specialized transportation due to a 504 plan. In order to qualify, the attending school is required to submit a [M-152A](#), [M-152B](#) & a [Section 504 Plan](#).

3. Routing Plans

How students are routed to their school is determined by the students' grade and program enrollment as described in Section 3.4 below:

- 3.1. *Bus transportation* - Shall be provided for eligible students as indicated in the Method Table via school bus or school vehicle.
- 3.2. *Free TransPass* - Shall be provided for eligible students, through the school, as indicated in the Method Table.
- 3.3. *Parental reimbursement* – The Superintendent is authorized to disburse funds for reimbursement to parents/guardians of students who are eligible for school bus transportation, but for whom bus transportation is not economically feasible due to isolation from the assigned school, and when parents/guardians are approved to provide transportation through private means. When a parent or guardian inquire into mileage reimbursement, the steps for school staff are as follows:
 - 3.3.1. The parent or guardian must fill out a [Mileage Reimbursement Form](#) and submit monthly.
 - 3.3.2. If a student is new to the program, the parent or guardian must submit a [W-9 Form](#) with the [Mileage Reimbursement Form](#), or if the student address has changed, a [W-9 form](#) must be submitted for updates.
 - 3.3.3. Each school must submit completed forms before the second week of the month to the Department of Transportation Services to receive reimbursement in a timely manner.

3.3.3.1. If the District receives any forms after the second week of the month, the reimbursement will be processed at the end of the month.

3.4. Method Table

School	Student Service Levels	Site Grades	Transportation Method
Approved Private School (APS)	Elementary & Secondary	01-12	Only students with an IEP or 504 = Bus Transportation or TransPass based on the student's IEP or 504
Charter / Regional Charter / Public / Non-Public	Elementary	01-06	Bus Transportation
Charter / Regional Charter / Public / Non-Public	Secondary	07-12	TransPass
Charter / Regional Charter / Public / Non-Public	Elementary & Secondary	05-12	TransPass
Charter / Regional Charter / Public / Non-Public	Elementary & Secondary	01-12 (Site must service 01, 02, 03 or 04 grade)	1-6 = Bus Transportation / 7-12 = TransPass

4. Requesting/Changing Transportation

4.1. School principals and staff do not have the authority to make changes to runs and/or bus stops. Parents/Guardians who need to change their student's transportation assignment should contact the school principal or their designee who will submit the request to Transportation Services as outlined in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 below.

4.1.1. *Alternate address* - If a student is eligible for bus transportation, then the student may be picked up or dropped off based on an alternate address upon joint approval of the school and the Transportation Routing office.

4.1.2. *Joint custody* - Transportation may be provided to multiple addresses depending on the language of the Custody Agreement. The school is required to submit a copy of the legal Custody Agreement when requesting Transportation.

4.1.3. *Sibling Ridership* - Any student that qualifies for bus transportation per Section 3.4 above and has a sibling receiving transportation via TransPass may opt to choose TransPass instead of a bus transportation in order to travel with their sibling.

4.2. School Principals or their designee, representatives of the Office of Specialized Services (OSS), or a District Special Education Compliance Monitor (SPECM) must submit requests for transportation changes via a [Transportation Action Request](#) (TAR). The school will be notified whether the TAR request was approved/denied and the effective date of any change.

4.3. Transportation Action Requests are reviewed and/or completed in the order they are received. Transportation Services strives to process TAR requests to be effective within five to ten (5-10) business days from date of entry into the system.

5. School Bus/Vehicle Ridership Capacity

- 5.1. School runs shall be planned and adjusted based on the capacities of available equipment. School bus/vehicles should be chosen and assigned to runs, so that, as practicable, the full capacity of each bus/vehicle will be utilized, without standees, to serve students who are deemed eligible. Passengers, when seated in school buses shall not encroach the minimum aisle clearance.
- 5.2. Buses transporting elementary school students exclusively shall be assigned at an average ridership rate of no more than three (3) students per bench.
- 5.3. Buses transporting elementary and secondary school students concurrently shall be assigned at an average ridership rate of no more than two and a half (2.5) students per bench.
- 5.4. Buses transporting secondary school students exclusively shall be assigned at an average ridership rate of no more than two (2) students per bench.

6. Routing Principles

- 6.1. Prior to completing new bus runs, the Transportation Routing Analyst will review each school's bus stops; deleting, creating, and relocating stops, as needed to accommodate eligible students.
- 6.2. Transportation hubs, shuttle systems and pairing of schools may be established to promote efficient and cost-effective runs for school students.
- 6.3. Bus stop and run assignment shall be determined and assigned by the staff of Transportation Service's routing office using the transportation routing system.
- 6.4. School bus stops shall be placed at locations based on safety, convenience, and efficiency considerations for most of the students living in the immediate area using the legal residential address of the eligible student(s). Stops will generally not be placed any closer than one half (1/2) of a mile apart unless there is a legitimate safety concern. The total number of stops serving a neighborhood or zone will be kept to a minimum to develop the most efficient routes possible.
- 6.5. The Transportation Routing Analyst will consider the following for run building:
 - 6.5.1. *Safety* – Road conditions, traffic control devices, direction of travel, right-side pick up, dead-ends, gated communities, etc.
 - 6.5.2. *Efficiency* – Runs must be built in an organized manner, considering time, student load, geographical constraints and student equipment needs.
 - 6.5.3. *Student Counts* – The total number of students riding the bus/vehicle will not exceed the bus/vehicle's legal seating capacity.
 - 6.5.4. *Student ride time* – Student ride time shall generally not exceed one hundred twenty (120) minutes.
- 6.6. AM runs are generally configured starting at the furthest stop from the school for the ride to school.
- 6.7. PM runs are generally configured starting at the nearest stop to the school for the ride home.
- 6.8. Routing Analysts must receive prior approval to add a run by submitting a Request for Run Adjustment form.

7. Naming Conventions

The following naming conventions shall be utilized in the Department's routing software to organize, standardize and ensure consistency:

7.1. *Route Number*

0001 – 0999 SDP Broad Street Garage

0001 – 0499 Regular Bus

0500 – 0799 Lift Bus

0800 – 0999 Other

1000 – 1999 SDP Passyunk Garage

1000 – 1499 Regular Bus

1500 – 1799 Lift Bus

1800 – 1999 Other

2000 – 2999 SDP Shallcross Garage

2000 – 2499 Regular Bus

2500 – 2799 Lift Bus

2800 – 2999 Other

3000 – 3999 To Be Determined (TBD)

4000 – 5999 Vendor Regular Bus

4000 – 4299 Durham

4300 – 4599 First Student

4600 – 4999 Philly Trans

5000 – 5299 Total

5300 – 5599 Yellowbird

5600 – 5999 Other

6000 – 7999 Vendor Lift Bus

6000 – 6299 Durham

6300 – 6599 First Student

6600 – 6999 Philly Trans

7000 – 7299 Total

7300 – 7599 Yellowbird

7600 – 7999 Other

8000 – 8999 Vendor Van

8000 – 8499 Regular Van

8500 – 8799 Lift Van

8800 – 8999 Other

9000 – 9999 Vendor Sedan

9000 – 9099 (215) Get a Cab

9100 – 9199 ALC

9200 – 9499 City Cab

9500 – 9799 Germantown Cab

9800 – 9999 Other

7.2. Run Number

0001 – 0099	Public Special Education
0100 – 0799	To Be Determined (TBD)
0800 – 0899	Public Distance
0900 – 0999	Public Hazard
1000 – 1099	Public Overcrowded
1100 – 1999	Public Special Education
2000 – 2099	Public Exception to Policy
2100 – 2999	Public Special Education
3000 – 3099	Public Cabs Special Education
3100 – 3899	Public Desegregation
3900 – 3999	Public Cabs Special Education
4000 – 4499	Non-Public Hazard
4500 – 4999	Non-Public Distance
5000 – 5099	Non-Public Special Education
5100 – 5799	APS Special Education
5800 – 5849	APS Special Education (Own Busing)
5850 – 5874	Non-Public Hazard (Own Busing)
5875 – 5899	Non-Public Distance (Own Busing)
5900 – 5999	To Be Determined (TBD)
6000 – 6029	Non-Public Exception
6030 – 6059	Non-Public Cabs Distance
6060 – 6099	Non-Public Cabs Hazard
6100 – 6499	APS Cabs Special Education
6500 – 6599	Non-Public Cabs Special Education (A)
6600 – 6699	Non-Public Cabs Exception (Homeless / Foster)
6700 – 6799	To Be Determined (TBD)
6800 – 6899	Early Intervention
6900 – 6999	Early Intervention Cabs
7000 – 7011	Charter School Hazard (Own Busing)
7012 – 7399	Charter School Hazard
7400 – 7489	Charter School Special Education
7490 – 7499	Charter School Special Education (Own Busing)
7500 – 7899	Charter School Distance
7900 – 8099	Charter School Cabs Special Education
8100 – 8999	To Be Determined (TBD)
9000 – 9999	Extended School Year (ESY)

7.3. *The following abbreviations may be used for student disability:*

AUT	Autism
DB	Deaf-Blindness
DD	Developmental Delay (3-5 in EI Program)
ED	Emotional Disturbance
HID	Hearing-Impaired including Deafness
ID	Intellectual Disability
MD	Multiple Disabilities
MG	Gifted without Disability
OHI	Other Health Impairment
OI	Orthopedic Impairment
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SLI	Speech or Language Impairment
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
VIB	Visual Impairment including Blindness

7.4. *The following equipment codes may be used in the PSBA field:*

1to1	One-to-One attendant
AAB	Assist and Belt
AAH	Assist and Harness
ACO	Airconditioning
AST	Assist
BLT	Belt
BST	Booster Seat
CBS	Carry/Belt/Seat
CHS	Carry/Harness/Seat
CNB	Carry and Belt
CNS	Carry and Seat
CNT	Carry/Transport Chair
CRY	Carry
EPI	Epi-Pen
HAR	Harness - Type 5 point etc.
HEL	Helmet
LFT	Lift Wheelchair
LTD	Lift to Board
NUR	Nurse
OXY	Oxygen
PRD	Personal Restraint Device
PST	Premium Car Seat
SST	Standard Car Seat
TNW	Tinted Windows
WLK	Walker

7.5. *The following equipment codes may be used in the SSBA field:*

ASM	Asthma
BLD	Bleeding Problem
BRE	Breathing Difficulty
BST	Bee Sting Allergy
CRD	Cardiac
DIA	Diabetes
DYS	Dysphagia/Swallowing
EQP	Equipment
HYP	Hypoglycemia
SCA	Sickle Cell Anemia
SZR	Seizure
TRC	Tracheotomy

7.6. *The following equipment codes may be used in the student notes field*

1to1	One-to-One attendant
FATT	Female Attendant
FDR	Female Driver
LSC	Limited Student Contact
MATT	Male Attendant
MDR	Male Driver

7.7. *The following abbreviations may be used in the student notes field:*

ALGY	Allergy
ALTDO	Alternate Drop Off
ALTNU	Alternate Number
ALTPU	Alternate Pick UP
AMO	AM Only
BATP	Bus and TransPass
CBVT	Community Based Vocational Training (CBVT) TransPass
DCR	Daycare
ESH	Emergency Shelter
HTH	Hand To Hand
IRA	IEP Ride Alone
JCA	Joint Custody Agreement
LRA	Legal Ride Alone
NOREP	Norep
PMO	PM Only
SBTP	Sibling TransPass
STLM	Settlement Student

7.8. *The following abbreviations may be used in the run notes field:*

ADD	Add Stop
ADJ	Adjust Times
AMRT	AM Route Number
DEL	Delete Stop
EQP	Equipment Change
MVE	Move Stop
ORD	Reorder
PMRT	PM Route Number
REL	Relocate Stop

8. Transportation Change Notifications

Parent Notification Letters (PNLs) are mailed to the address on file in the School District of Philadelphia's Student Information System (SIS) (XSIS):

- 8.1. 1-2 weeks before the start of each School Year (SY) and Extended School Year (ESY)
- 8.2. 3 times per week (Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays) when there is a change in route assignment, stop assignment, or any change in pickup time that is ten minutes or greater.

9. Maintenance Schedule

Department of Transportation Services shall review these routing guidelines annually.

10. Related References

[22 Pennsylvania Code § 23.6. Authorized passengers.](#)

[24 Pennsylvania Public School Code § 13-1361. When Provided.](#)

[24 Pennsylvania Public School Code § 13-1362. Kinds of Transportation.](#)

[24 Pennsylvania Public School Code § 13-1366. Computation of Distances.](#)

[24 Pennsylvania Public School Code § 17-1726-A. Transportation to Charter Schools.](#)

[67 Pennsylvania Code §171.2 Definitions.](#)

[67 Pennsylvania Code §171.42. Aisle.](#)

[67 Pennsylvania Code §447. Hazardous Walking Routes.](#)

[Pennsylvania Department of Transportation School Bus Driver's Manual.](#)

[Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Types of Schools](#)

[School District of Philadelphia Board Policy 218. Student Conduct and Discipline.](#)

[School District of Philadelphia Board Policy 224. Student Care of School Property.](#)

[School District of Philadelphia Board Policy 255. Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care.](#)

[School District of Philadelphia Board of School Directors' Code of Student Conduct.](#)

[School District of Philadelphia Transportation Services School Bus Behavior Guidelines.](#)

[School District of Philadelphia Transportation Services School Bus Safety Guidelines.](#)