

Elmira Heights Central School District

Transportation Information Manual
2008-2009



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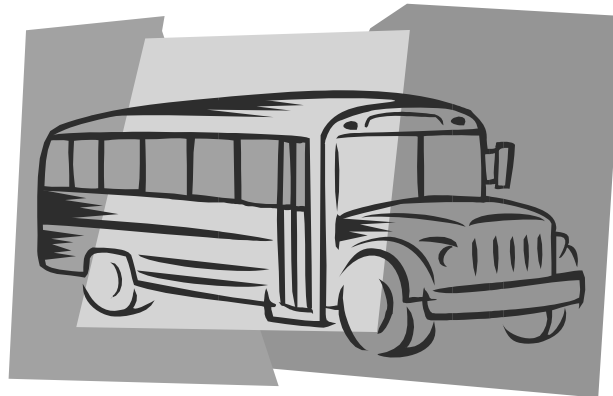
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Foreword

The Elmira Heights Central School District is committed to providing safe, efficient transportation to all eligible students of the district.

The policies of the BOARD OF EDUCATION, the rules and regulations of the state and our operating guidelines establish the framework for student transportation operation.

This booklet has been published to inform students and parents of the policies and guidelines under which we operate and to ensure that students, parents and school personnel alike have a clear understanding of the rules.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the information in this publication, please contact the Transportation Supervisor.

Please review with all students in your home!

Elmira Heights District Phone Numbers

Transportation Office.....739-1358

Fax: 739-6152

Cohen Elementary School.....734-7132

Cohen Middle School.....734-5078

Edison High School.....733-5604

District Office.....734-7114

Fax: 734-7134

Student Transportation

District Policy in effect allows all Cohen students (grades 1-8) living more than .7 miles from Cohen and all Edison students living more than 1 mile from Edison to be eligible for transportation. All resident kindergarten students receive transportation regardless of distance to school. Bus transportation is provided to non-public schools only on days when our public schools are in session.

Reference: * Board of Education Policy 5730
Last Revised: August 9, 2004

* Board Policies may be viewed on our school website
www.heightsschools.com

School bus transportation eligibility for students grade 1-8 (Effective 9/97)

Student in grades 1-8 are eligible for school bus transportation if they live more than .7 miles from Cohen.

Transportation eligibility is based upon the street address of the residence and is specified below.

The following addresses are eligible for transportation for students in grades 1-8, as listed below:

- All homes NORTH and WEST of West 17th St and all homes EAST of the railroad track
- Oakwood Ave, NORTH of West 16th St.
- College Ave, NORTH of 2172 and SOUTH of Verona St.
- McCanns Blvd, from 127 EAST
- Wesley and Chapman
- Parkwood, NORTH of 241
- Robinwood, NORTH of 278
- Glenwood, NORTH of 249
- West 16th from 212/213 EAST to Oakwood, and 274,279,284 and 285
- West 17th from 214/215 EAST to College, and 266/267 WEST to the top of the hill
- Davis St, SOUTH of Chapman
- Other residences within the school district located more than .7 miles from the Nathan Cohen Elementary/Middle School.

There is no transportation provided for regular education students in grades 1-8 who live on the streets listed below:

West 8th, West 9th, Marian, West 10th, West 11th, West 12th, West 13th, West 14th, West 15th, Verona, McAmbly, Oakwood, West 16th, College, Parkwood, Robinwood, Glenwood and Davis (except as listed above)

Transportation eligibility distance is measured along most direct public roads by vehicle odometer, to or from the flag in the Cohen bus port circle, to or from the residence front sidewalk or driveway in accordance with state guidelines.

Residents may challenge the eligibility determinations noted above by presenting clear compelling evidence that their residence is outside the mileage limit. Any challenge must be initiated and funded solely by the petitioner.

A survey, prepared by a surveyor licensed in New York State, which measures the distance from the school to the home along the most direct public roads in accordance with

methods outlined above, has been determined by the Board of Education to constitute clear evidence of eligibility (10/3/95, amended 2/10/97).

**School bus transportation eligibility for students grade 9-12
(Effective 9/97)**

Students in grades 9-12 are eligible for school bus transportation if they live more than 1 mile from the school. Transportation under Board policy is outlined below.

Transportation is provided for regular education students in grades 9-12 from the following local streets:

- Parkwood, NORTH of West 15th
- West 16th, WEST of 260
- West 17th, WEST of 255
- West 18th, WEST of Robinwood
- Robinwood, NORTH of West 18th
- West 19th and all homes WEST and NORTH of West 19th
- Lake Road, along the entire length
- Upper Oakwood, NORTH of ABB Traction
- Grand Central, NORTH of Mills Electric
- Any other address located within the district which is not listed above, but which is further than 1 mile from Thomas A. Edison High School by most direct roads.

Transportation is not provided to regular education students in grades 9-12 in any residence between East McCanns Blvd and East 14th Street, nor to any of the side streets off Grand Central Ave south of Lounsberry St.

Transportation is not provided to any village residence west of College Ave unless noted above.

Transportation eligibility distance is measured along most direct public roads by vehicle odometer, to or from the flag in the Thomas A. Edison front circle, to or from the residence front sidewalk or driveway in accordance with state guidelines.

Residents may challenge the eligibility determinations noted above by presenting clear compelling evidence that their residence is outside the mileage limit. Any challenge must be initiated and funded solely by the petitioner.

A survey, prepared by a surveyor licensed in New York State, which measures the distance from the school to the home along the most direct public roads in accordance with methods outlined above, has been determined by the Board of Education to constitute clear evidence of eligibility (10/3/95, amended 2/10/97)

Child care transportation

Child care transportation shall be provided to resident children in grades K-8 in the schools of the Elmira Heights Central School District as follows:

Kindergarten students may receive transportation to child care providers located within the school district, regardless of the distance from the Elmira Heights Central School District school which they attend, provided that the child care provider is located along a regular transportation route within the district.

Children in grades 1-8 may receive transportation to child care providers who are located more than .7 miles from the Elmira Heights Central School District school which they attend, provided that the child care provider is located along a regular transportation route within the district.

Transportation to child care providers must be requested in writing at least two days prior to the start of such transportation.

Reference: * Board of Education Policy 5730
Last Revised: August 9, 2004
* Board Policies may be viewed on our school website
www.heightsschools.com

Video cameras on school buses

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to maintain and improve discipline and to ensure the safety and welfare of its staff and students on school transportation vehicles.

After having carefully considered and balancing the rights of privacy with the district's duty to ensure discipline, health, welfare and safety to staff and students on school transportation vehicles, the Board supports the use of video cameras on school buses.

Video cameras may be used to monitor student behavior on school vehicles transporting students to and from school or to extracurricular activities. Students in violation of bus conduct rules shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with established Board policy and regulations governing student conduct and discipline.

The district shall comply with all state and federal laws related to student records when such recordings are considered for retention as part of the student's record.

Video recordings shall be used primarily for the purpose of evidence for the discipline of students. However, the district can use such recordings for any other purpose it deems appropriate.

The Superintendent of Schools or designee is responsible for developing and publishing regulations governing the use of video cameras in accordance with the provisions of law and established Board policies and regulations.

Reference: * Board of Education Policy 5751
Last Revised: August 9, 2004
* Board Policies may be viewed on our school website
www.heightsschools.com

School bus scheduling and routing

Bus routes will be established under the direction of the Superintendent in cooperation with the Transportation Supervisor. Authorized bus stops will be located at convenient intervals in places where students may be loaded and unloaded, cross highways and await the arrival of buses with the utmost safety allowed by road conditions. Bus routes will be reviewed yearly and changes will be made in accordance to where student clusters are located throughout the district.

Bus routes are authorized by the Board of education and any requests for changes must be submitted to the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Fixed stops

Fixed stops will be established using the following guidelines:

- a. Generally, dead-end and loop streets will not be serviced by school buses.
- b. Number of students at bus stops will vary according to the concentration of riders in an area, the degree of traffic, the presence of stop signs, speed limits and bus turn-a-round requirements.
- c. An effort will be made to minimize crossing of the road by students.

Side roads

Transportation will not be provided on side roads that are not maintained by town

highway departments if the lack of maintenance makes it unsafe for drivers and students to be traversing these roads. Examples of unsafe conditions are flooding, road erosion, ice, snow and mud.

Private roads

Transportation will not be provided on highways that have not been dedicated and/or maintained by town, county and/or state highway departments.

Turn-a-rounds

Turn-a-rounds will not be established unless adequate space is available and this space is properly maintained.

Reference: Education Law, Sections 3602,3635
Commissioner's Regulations, Section 156-2

Miscellaneous information

Weather closings/delays

Weather related closings or delays will be announced on local radio stations and through the media. In addition, the Synvoice system of automated phone notification will be activated. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOLS OR BUS GARAGE.

Early dismissals

Several early dismissals are held each year. These are schedules by the individual schools and are publicized well in advance through newsletters, school calendars, mail and student handouts. Please be sure there is someone home to receive your child.

Kindergarten drop offs

According to district guidelines, kindergarten students must have a parent or responsible adult waiting for them when they are dropped off from the bus. If no one is there, the driver will return to school with the student. The school office will attempt to reach the parents or the emergency contact to come to school to pick up the student. If no one can be reached, the student will go to the Kids World after school care program located in the Cohen cafeteria. Parents will pick their child up from Kids World and will be billed through the YWCA for that service.

Standees

Students are not allowed to stand on school buses.

Emergency drills

Emergency exit drills are held in according to a schedule established by the NYS Education Department. All students in grades K-12 participate in three such exercises per year. The bus drills include safety instruction, exiting practice and a review of general rules and expectations.

Discipline

All riders that violate bus safety rules or exhibit inappropriate behaviors in the bus are subject to discipline in accordance with the Code of Conduct. The penalties for inappropriate behaviors may range from a warning and parent contact to denial of transportation. Additional information is outlined throughout this manual.

Transportation to private schools

We provide transportation to private schools as required by state law. Parents requesting such transportation must do so in writing prior to April 1 of the year of which transportation is being requested (in March for the following September). Contact the Transportation Supervisor for further information.

Emergency changes in transportation

We try to accommodate changes in your transportation needs. Any requests need to be in writing, whenever possible. This issue is addressed further in the operating guidelines section of this publication.

Location of bus stops

We periodically review bus routes and stops and make changes as necessary. We make every effort to ensure safe and convenient stops. If your scheduled stop is changed, you will be notified by the Transportation Supervisor.

Lost children

If your child does not get off the bus at the scheduled stop, please contact the school office at once. School phone numbers are listed in the front of this publication.

Rules and expectations

At the bus stop

The district has no jurisdiction over public roads or private land where stops are located. We do expect that students act with courtesy to each other and to motorists and homeowners.

Students must get on and off the bus as their regular stop, unless a written request has been made by a parent or guardian for alternate arrangements.

Students are expected to be at their bus stop five minutes before the bus is due.

Students are to wait several feet away from the side of the road. If they are crossing the road, they must cross ten feet in front of the bus, at the driver's signal. Students must exercise caution when crossing the road, even after the driver has signaled.

Students who miss their bus must not attempt to catch up with the bus or bang on the bus door. Running up to the bus from behind is very dangerous.

Students are to board the bus in an orderly fashion.

The district is not responsible for transportation of students that miss their bus.

On the bus

Rules of conduct while on the bus are similar to classroom rules of behavior, and include but are not limited to the following:

- Obey the driver. Drivers may assign seats.
- Use classroom behavior and voices.
- Stay seated in your seat.
- Do not fight, push or shove.
- Be courteous. No profane language.
- No eating, drinking or smoking allowed.
- No matches, lighters or flammable materials allowed.
- Do not damage or tamper with the bus equipment.
- Keep head, hands, arms and feet inside the bus.
- No pets are allowed on the bus.
- Pick up after yourself. Keep the bus clean. **Have a safe trip!**

Some additional expectations are as follows:

- Students must identify themselves upon request of transportation personnel.
- Students must not change seat when the bus is moving and must take an assigned seat if the driver chooses to assign seats.
- No weapons or dangerous instruments are allowed on the bus.
- Portable stereos, tape recorders and radios may not be brought on the bus.

Rules and expectations (cont'd)

- Large parcels, athletic equipment which can not fit in a gym bag, large musical instruments, skateboards, and large school projects may not be brought on the bus.
- All tobacco and alcohol products are prohibited.
- Glass containers may not be brought on the bus.

As a general rule, drivers may deny a student entry to the bus if the student attempts to board the bus with items which are prohibited.

Discipline

There are established procedures for resolving incidents of student misbehavior on the bus. Students who misbehave, or who fail to follow the instructions of the driver, or who engage in any dangerous or unsafe acts will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Although the procedure calls for progressive discipline, there are several behaviors which may result in immediate denial of transportation for the first offence. All due process rights are protected through our discipline process.

Among such offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Abusive language to or striking of transportation personnel
- Fighting on the bus or striking another student
- Smoking or lighting of lighters, matches or other objects
- Alcohol or drugs on the bus
- Leaving the bus from an emergency drill
- Any life threatening activity
- Damage or destruction of bus equipment

Upon report of such behaviors, and due process, immediate action may be commenced to deny transportation to the offending individual(s). **ILLEGAL ACTS MAY BE REPORTED TO THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES FOR FURTHER ACTION.** Students who are denied transportation are still obligated to attend school, and parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring attendance.

Operating guidelines

Eligibility

All resident kindergarten students are eligible for transportation.

Resident students in grades 1-8 who live more than .7 miles and resident students in grades 9-12 who live more than one mile from their school, by the most direct roads, are eligible for transportation.

Transportation is provided to private schools for students whose schools are located 15 miles or less from their homes. Private school students in grades 1-8 who live less than .7 miles and students in grades 9-12 who live less than 1 mile from the transfer point at Edison school

must walk to the transfer point. Private school kindergarteners will receive transportation to the transfer point on a regular route.

We do not provide transportation for non-resident students.

Responsibility of school personnel

Transportation personnel are responsible for safe operation of the buses. They are in charge of enforcement of rules on their bus and may assign seats as they deem necessary. Transportation personnel are expected to be courteous and friendly and greet riders pleasantly.

Bus drivers or aides will report rule infractions to the Transportation Supervisor. The Dean of Students will be notified and initiate school disciplinary procedures. Disciplinary grievances should be addressed to the respective Dean handling the discipline referral.

Transportation personnel may not change routes or stops without authorization from the Transportation Supervisor.

Drivers may pick up a student at another stop providing that he student has a note requesting the change for that day. Changes for more than one day must be made in advance, in writing, and approved by the Transportation Supervisor or the Dean of Students or Principal. In emergency situations there may be some flexibility in allowing changes in student transportation.

Responsibility of students

Students are to get on and off the bus at their assigned stop. Students are to be at the bus stop five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive, wait safely and board the bus in an orderly fashion when it arrives.

Students are to ride safely, follow all instructions of the transportation personnel on the bus and comply with all rules.

Responsibility of parents

Parents should reinforce the rules of conduct on the bus and support school personnel in attaining compliance by their children.

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their children should they miss the bus or be denied transportation for disciplinary reasons.

Parents should make arrangements for someone to receive your children as they are delivered home. All kindergarten children are required to be met at the bus by a parent or adult.

Locations of bus stops

Bus stops for regular routes will be located at reasonable intervals, usually less than half a mile apart.

Whenever possible, stops will be located to minimize the need for students to cross streets to get to their stop.

Stop locations will be reviewed periodically and changes as necessary to ensure safety and efficiency.

Concerns about stops should be directed to the Transportation Supervisor.

Transportation of kindergartners

Eligibility

All resident kindergartners are eligible for transportation.

Notification

All registered kindergarteners are notified at the end of August about their bus route. This information is sent with other information which comes from the school principal.

If you are having your child picked up or delivered to a child care provider, please let us know by August 20th.

Bus stops

Kindergarteners board their buses at regular stops. The district is not responsible for children while they wait for a bus. A responsible adult should wait with students at the stop, both morning and afternoon.

For kindergarteners who live less than .7 miles from school, we provide special routes. For these students, the scheduled stop may be in front of the home, or at a nearby corner.

According to district guidelines, kindergarten students must have a parent or responsible adult waiting for them when they are dropped off from the bus. If no one is there, the driver will return to school with the student. The school office will attempt to reach the parents or the emergency contact to come to school to pick up the student. If no one can be reached, the student will go to the Kids World after school care program located in the Cohen cafeteria. Parents will pick their child up from Kids World and will be billed through the YWCA for that service.

Orientation

The first week of school this year will be scheduled full days for all students.

On the first three days, teachers and aides will ride home with the kindergarteners to help them get used to the bus the driver and all rules. This will help the drivers to get to know the children's faces and names, and where each child is dropped off. On Kindergarten Orientation Day we will spend extra time with all kindergarten students on how to load and un-load safely on and off the bus. We cover proper behavior and all other rules associated with riding a bus. Part of the reason for this is to accustom them to the adventure of riding a bus home. Each child takes part in three emergency exit drills each year, the first of which is scheduled the first full week of school.

If you have any questions about kindergarten transportation, contact the Transportation Supervisor.

Transportation for exceptional students

Eligibility

Students who have been determined to have handicapping conditions by the district Committee on Special Education (CSE) are eligible to receive transportation on special routes. Students on special routes are usually picked up at their home for transportation to their school placement.

Responsibility of school personnel

School personnel have the same responsibilities for exceptional students as for students on regular routes.

Responsibility of parents

Parents of exceptional students have the same responsibilities as parents on regular routes.

Parents should call the bus garage by 7a.m. if their child will not attend school on that day.

A responsible adult should be home 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival of the afternoon bus, to receive the child in the afternoon.

Transportation personnel are not responsible for transporting medication. Please make arrangements to handle this responsibility yourself.

Transportation for interscholastic sports contests

All student athletes are to ride to and from sports contests on the team bus.

Non-athletes that are not affiliated with the team may not ride team buses.

Responsibility of school personnel

Transportation personnel are responsible for the safe operation of the bus.

Coaches are responsible for reminding student athletes of the rules and expectations regarding on-board behavior.

Coaches are responsible for enforcing rules and maintaining order and discipline during the trip, and ensuring the bus is clean of debris at the end of the trip.

Drivers are responsible for cleaning and refueling the bus at the end of the trip.

Responsibility of student athletes

Student athletes have the same rights and responsibilities on the team bus as students on regular routes. All applicable rules and policies apply.

Sexual misconduct of any type is strictly prohibited. Individuals or teams involved in such conduct may be denied transportation privileges and will be subject to additional sanctions.

No tobacco products, spitting or urinating is allowed on the bus.

No food or beverages will be allowed to be consumed on buses to and from sports contests.

Incidents of misbehavior may lead to denial of transportation for the student athlete or team(s) involved.

