

# SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION

## PARENT PRIMER

# WELCOME !

The Bethlehem Central District Transportation Department recognizes that starting a new school year is an exciting time for you and your family. But, maneuvering through the required policies and forms can be overwhelming. Our goal is to partner with you and make this process as stress free as possible. The following pages were designed to guide you through some very important information regarding the safe transportation of your student. We encourage you to connect with our department early and keep our number handy for any future concerns. The number is (518)439-3830.

### First things first:

**The Board of Education has established a "walking Distance to a Bus Stop Policy #8412." This policy establishes the following walking distance from home to a bus stop as:**

**K -5 grades up to 1/10th of a mile,**

**6-8 grades up to 0.5 of a mile,**

**9-12 grades up to 1.0 mile.**

Transportation routes, bus stops, and scheduled pick-up and drop-off times for all eligible students are usually posted to ASPEN by August 1st. Be sure to obtain your password and instructions to access your students information by contacting the office of the registrar.

All kindergarten students **MUST** have an authorized person to receive them at their stop at the end of each day. The Transportation Department will need a list of any and all persons authorized to receive your kindergartener each afternoon. This can include baby sitters, neighbors and students 12 years or older. A driver may ask for Identification to verify an unknown adult.

The authorization form can be obtained at the Transportation Department located at 82 Van Dyke Rd or on-line at the Bethlehem Central School District website <http://www.bethlehemschools.org>. Instructions on how to find it are on the last page of this primer.

The form is entitled



**"PERMISSION FOR OTHERS TO RECEIVE STUDENTS."**

**NOTE: People listed as emergency contacts are NOT automatically listed as authorized persons. A KINDERGARTNER WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO ANY PERSON NOT AUTHORIZED TO RECEIVE THEM. IF AN AUTHORIZED PERSON IS NOT AT THE BUS STOP, YOUR KINDERGARTNER WILL BE RETURNED TO THEIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PERSONNEL.**

### At the stop:

Please remember that the pickup and drop-off times posted in Aspen are "**APPROXIMATE**." Due to the unpredictability of traffic patterns, weather conditions and student schedules, we cannot guarantee an exact pickup and drop-off time. For the first few weeks have your student at the bus stop ten minutes early. Making sure the number of your house is visible from the road is a big help.

Once the routes settle down, approximately two weeks, and times have been adjusted, the bus should be arriving at consistent time. Please consider this the time your child(ren) need to be at their bus stop. For the remainder of the school year, we ask that each student be at their stops **FIVE** minutes prior to the time of the bus's arrival.

Each student need to be safely visible while waiting at their stop, dressed for the weather and ready to board. Students should not wait in a house or in the garage. They should be standing 15' from the road lined up waiting for the bus door to open. Parents/guardians are responsible for assisting their students in getting to and from any bus stop. Students should never be playing in leaves, puddles, snow piles or anywhere near the road. If there is a crosser at your stop, know that they will be attended to first. Please remind your student never to chase a bus. That is Dangerous! Buses are not allowed to return for a student who is not out at their stop at their designated time and therefore miss the bus. If the bus is later than ten minutes, call the bus garage at (518)439-3830 for an update on their arrival.

If you are dropping off a student at the Middle School for a bus transfer, please **Do Not walk between the buses**. There is a danger zone that surrounds each bus. Please drop off at either end of the sidewalk and have your student(s) walk safely to their bus using the sidewalk.



Curb to curb stops may be scheduled for students who live on designated streets and those with IEPs. All stops are subject to change. We are mandated by the State Education Department to run an efficient routing system. Therefore, changes are inevitable. A student and guardian is notified of any changes by phone, verbally, written letter or any combination thereof.

Any Changes to a student's route made by you must be communicated as soon as possible. If this change is permanent, you **MUST** inform the transportation department using the **Special Transportation Request form** available on our website. If your student is occasionally going anywhere other than their home address you need to send a note with the student informing the elementary school. Emergency situations can be handled with a simple phone call directly to our dispatch office at (518) 439-3830.

**Bringing items on the bus:**

Please note that space on the bus is extremely limited. Students only have their seat space to hold all of their personal belongings. Backpacks are kept on their laps leaving no room for additional larger items. Please make other arrangements for large school projects, party food supplies, instruments and sports equipment. A more specific list of items not allowed on the bus is available on the transportation department website.

★ **Labeling all personal items will increase the chances of seeing them again.** ★



**Bus Safety:**

The bus is the first classroom of the day. It is the last classroom of the day. Just like in school classrooms, bus rules exist to make sure the bus family is safe and the bus itself is secure. Please review these rules with your child(ren).

## **4 MAIN RULES FOR BUS SAFETY**

### **1. *Follow the Driver's Instructions***

- The driver is trained to maintain control on their bus and instruct students as to what can and cannot be transported on the bus.

### **2. *Keep hands, Feet and Body to Self***

- Students must refrain from touching anyone or anything that belongs to someone else.
- Students need to care and respect themselves and others.
- BCSD has a **ZERO** tolerance policy for all forms of bullying.

### **3. *Stay Seated***

- Students must remain in their seats until the driver directs them to move.
- Students must keep the aisle clear.
- Driver has the authority to assign seats.

### **4. *Use Inside Voices***

- Students need to distinguish between the loud voice we use when we are out on the playground and the polite, respectful voice we use to speak to the person next to us.

It is never too early to begin conversations that ensure your child is a proactive member of the bus family helping to create a safe bus environment. Together they can work to win the award:

**BUS OF THE MONTH!**

## Accessing our website:

The school bus remains the safest existing mode of transporting students to date. The Bethlehem Transportation staff is a group of highly trained professionals. The safe transport of our students is our number one priority. We encourage you to visit our website at

<http://www.bethlehemschools.org>

Activate the drop down menu under “**Departments and Services.**” Then click on “**Transportation.**” You can find the forms you need at the bottom of the right hand column entitled “**More Information.**”

The screenshot shows the website header with the Bethlehem Central School District logo and navigation links. The 'Departments & Services' menu is highlighted with a yellow circle, and a yellow arrow points to a 'TRANSPORTATION' box. The main content area is titled 'Transportation' and includes sections for 'Transportation Eligibility Requirements', 'Elementary School Boundaries', and 'Bus Stop Assignments'. A right-hand sidebar titled 'MORE INFORMATION' contains contact details for the Transportation Director, a 'MOVING?' section, and 'TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS' with links to various forms. A yellow arrow points from the 'TRANSPORTATION' box to the 'MORE INFORMATION' section, and three yellow starburst icons are at the bottom right of the sidebar.

**Bethlehem**  
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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### Transportation

#### Transportation Eligibility Requirements

The Bethlehem Central School District provides transportation to and from schools for the following resident students:

- All elementary students
- Middle School students who live more than a half mile from school.
- High School students who live more than a mile from school.
- Resident students who attend private and parochial schools within 15 miles of their homes.

#### Elementary School Boundaries

The following list delineates the boundaries for our elementary schools by street name. If you have questions, please contact the Transportation department.

- [Elementary school boundaries by street name \[PDF\]](#)

#### Bus Stop Assignments

The district is committed to assigning appropriate stops for all transportation-eligible students.

Many factors are considered when selecting stops, including availability of sidewalks, speeds traveled by vehicles on a particular road, and the potential number of students at a given location. The 2012-13 school year included many changes, across all program areas, including transportation. The impacts to transportation included requiring students walk further to their bus stops, possibly up to a half-mile for students in grades 6 to 8 and up to a mile for students in grades 9 to 12. Students will be asked to walk from side streets and cul-de-sacs, up to main roads. Also, the number of stops was minimized, so students need to walk to a central pick up point.

We recognize that not all streets have sidewalks, some roads are curved, and some streets are narrower than others. Sometimes you might not be able to see your child from your home. We are responsible to create stops that are appropriate and consistent with our guidelines, and to do our utmost to provide a safe ride to and from school. Parents are responsible for the safety of their children to and from their assigned bus stop.

We know that no one is more familiar with your particular neighborhood than you are. If as you consider your child's bus stop, you have a suggestion for an alternate stop, please bring it to our attention. If we can make an improvement in the stop location that is still consistent with our guidelines, we will be happy to shift the assigned stop. Remember though, that sometimes a change that might be ideal for your child will negatively affect a larger group of students, or will require the creation of an additional stop, which is not consistent with the broader goal of consolidated stops. When the stops are determined, the District looks collectively at what works best in a particular section of a route, for the group of students in that neighborhood.

Remember that the setting of bus stops and routes is a fairly complex operation, and that it normally takes a few weeks into the start of the school year before the routes "settle down". Please be patient, and know that we will make every effort to be responsive to your concerns. You may reach the Transportation Department by phone (439-3830) or by e-mail ([transportation@bcasd.neric.org](mailto:transportation@bcasd.neric.org)).

#### MORE INFORMATION

##### Transportation Director

CINDY JUREWICZ  
[cjurewicz@bcasd.neric.org](mailto:cjurewicz@bcasd.neric.org)

82 Van Dyke Road  
Delmar, NY 12054

Phone: [518-439-3830](tel:518-439-3830)  
Fax: 518-439-7885

##### MOVING?

If you move during the school year, or over the summer, please call Registrar Melissa Haas at 439-2442, and then follow up with a phone call to the Transportation Department at 439-3830 to make sure the information we have for your child(ren) is accurate.

##### TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS

Parents/Guardians may make special transportation arrangements for children if they attend private/parochial school and/or if they must be dropped off at an address other than their home address (e.g., child care provider, alternating between parents/guardians).

Private/parochial transportation requests must be completed each year and submitted in writing to the Transportation Department by April 1.

All other requests must be received in writing no later than August 1 and changes must be received no later than August 15.

- [Private/parochial school transportation request form \[PDF\]](#)
- [Permission for others to receive student\(s\) at bus stop \[PDF\]](#)
- [Elementary and middle school special transportation request form \[PDF\] – Use this form for grades K-8 if you have alternating custody of your child\(ren\)](#)

Please contact us directly at **(518)439-3830** with any questions regarding the transportation of your student(s). Our dispatch officers are very experienced and a wealth of knowledge. We look forward to partnering with you at this exciting time. Together we can make each bus ride a safe and healthy one.