



How Parents determine Student eligibility for Transportation to and from their Orange County Public School

A. Why is this important?

It is important that students attend school every day and OCPS Transportation is provided to ensure students are transported safely and arrive at their destination on-time.

B. Who does this instruction apply to? (Check all that apply):

Parent Student Staff (At a School) Staff (Non-School) Community

C. Who can I contact if I need help?

- *Help on the Web:* <https://www.ocps.net/op/tran/Pages/Parents.aspx>
- *Email Contact:* Routing@ocps.net
- *Department telephone Contact:* 407-317-3800, Fax is 407-317-3806

The Routing Department is responsible for scheduling bus stops for regular and special needs students. Other assignments include setting school opening and closing times, creating busing/feeder patterns and determining hazardous walking conditions. A list of routers by regional responsibility can be found in the addendum.

D. Things needed before this can be completed:

- Definition of "Student" – As used in this section, "student" means any public elementary school student whose grade level does not exceed grade 6.
- Student must be enrolled in a school designated for transportation by the District of Orange County school board. Parents or Guardians can confirm the student school assignment with the OCPS Pupil Assignment department. Pupil Assignment can be reached by calling 407.317.3233. <https://www.ocps.net/es/legislative/pupil/Pages/default.aspx>

E. What do I need to do?

1. Tools available to determine a Student Route by Address

A. Find a Bus Application

- 1) Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) Transportation Services publishes routes in the **Find A Bus** application at the beginning of every school year.
 - a) Access the Parent web-link on the Transportation Services website.
<https://www.ocps.net/op/tran/Pages/Parents.aspx>
 - b) Click on the **Find A Bus** icon at the top of the page, right side.
 - Parents must register to use the system.





- Access routes by entering their street address into the system.
- Your residence may be less than two miles if it is not associated with a bus route.

2. General Education Students

A. General Transportation

- 1) Students who live two miles or more from their designated school are eligible for OCPS transportation. OCPS Transportation Services publishes routes in the **Find A Bus** application, in step 1, at the beginning of every school year.
- 2) Bus Operators use call sheets to notify parents and students of their appropriate school bus schedule information. Please be advised that call sheets may be inaccurate based on when the information was last updated. Parents can contact the designated school or the Transportation Routing department for additional information.
- 3) Review the Student Code of Conduct for bus riders, page 6, with your child (children).

B. Special Transportation Considerations or Exemptions

1. **Temporary Medical Condition** – Parents may request transportation for a temporary medical condition such as a broken leg. All requests will begin at the designated school and require a Transportation worksheet to be emailed to the Transportation Routing department. The worksheet will include:
 - a) Time-frame transportation will begin and end.
 - b) Student Name.
 - c) Parent Address.
 - d) Parent Telephone Number.
 - e) School name and grade attending.
 - f) Weight and height may be required for wheelchair use.
 - g) It may take up to five (5) days to arrange for transportation.
 - h) Bus Operators will notify the parents with the stop location as well as the pick-up and drop-off times.
 - i) Please note, changes in student transportation needs are treated the same as a new request.
2. **Alternative Education** students who do not require an IEP or 504 IAP – Parent will contact the assigned school who will email the Transportation Routing department the Transportation worksheet which includes the following information:
 - a) Student Name.
 - b) Parent Address.
 - c) Parent Telephone Number.
 - d) School name and grade attending.



- e) Weight and height may be required for wheelchair use.
 - f) It may take up to five (5) days to arrange for transportation.
 - g) Bus Operators will notify the parents with the stop location as well as the pick-up and drop-off times.
 - h) Please note, changes in student transportation needs are treated the same as a new request.
3. **Hazardous Walking Conditions (FS.XLVII 1006.23)** – Determining the two-mile limit for OCPs school bus transportation is outlined in FDOE Rule 6A-3.001.
- a) Distance is measured from a point where the students' home property meets the public right of way to the nearest building entrance of the assigned school.
 - In the case of a gated subdivision with a private road system, calculation begins *where the subdivision's entrance meets the public right of way* and ends at the nearest building entrance of the designated school.
 - It is the shortest *pedestrian route* whether or not it is accessible to motor vehicles.
 - b) Requesting an Eligibility Review– Parents or Guardians may request a measurement review by contacting the routing department.
 - Contact the Routing Department and request a review of the pedestrian distance from the home starting point to the destination point.
 1. Distance is measured walking with an Engineers Wheel, by driving while using a Distance Measuring Instrument (DMI), or a combination of both.
 2. If the calculation is very close then the distance will be measured at least twice before a final determination is made.
 3. If the distance is found to be less than two miles the route is reviewed for possible hazardous walking conditions for further determination of transportation eligibility.
3. **Transportation for the Exceptional or Individualized Student Education Program**
- Florida Statutes (Part 1 Subpart E FS1006.21-27) states any general education student living less than two miles from their assigned school is not eligible for transportation *unless they qualify under the Exceptional (ESE) or Individualized (IEP) Student program or the 504 Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP).*
- A. Exceptional Student Education (ESE)** – Registered students with disabilities or special needs may require access to their educational services through specialized transportation. A need for assistance may occur to and from school or as a student



travels from one part of a school campus to another. In some cases specialized equipment may become necessary (such as special or adapted buses, lifts, climate controlled buses, and ramps). For some students behavioral support may be indicated. These services are determined through the **IEP committee**.

- 1) Parent or Guardian will contact the assigned school with request for ESE/IAP/IEP transportation.
- 2) A copy of the IEP signature page and a Transportation worksheet will be emailed by the designated school to the Transportation Routing department. The worksheet will include:
 - a) Student Name.
 - b) Parent Address.
 - c) Parent Telephone Number.
 - d) School name and grade attending.
 - e) Weight and height may be required for wheelchair use.
- 3) It may take up to five (5) days to arrange for transportation.
- 4) Bus Operators will notify the parents with the stop location as well as the pick-up and drop-off times. A student may require parent or guardian pick-up and drop-off based on the medical need or equipment requirement.
- 5) Review the Student Code of Conduct for bus riders, page 6, with your child (children).
- 6) Please note, changes in student transportation needs are treated the same as a new request.

B. Individualized Accommodation Plan (504 IAP) – Students who live within the two (2) mile range and are not part of an Exceptional Student Educational program (ESE) but require transportation for disabilities, or ongoing medical reasons, must apply annually at the assigned school for special consideration. Parents must provide the assigned school with:

- 1) A medical statement from a physician stating the disability or medical reason for transportation with which the school will complete a Section 504 IAP.
- 2) The school will complete a Transportation worksheet. The worksheet will include:
 - a) Student Name
 - b) Parent Address
 - c) Parent Telephone Number
 - d) School name and grade attending
 - e) Weight and height may be required for wheelchair use.



- 3) A copy of all documents will be emailed by the school to the Transportation Routing department.
- 4) It may take up to five (5) days to arrange for transportation.
- 5) Bus Operators will notify the parents with the stop location as well as the pick-up and drop-off times. A student may require parent or guardian pick-up and drop-off based on the medical need or equipment requirement.
- 6) Review the Student Code of Conduct for bus riders, page 6, with your child (children).
- 7) Please note, changes in student transportation needs are treated the same as a new request.

C. Guidelines for Transporting Wheelchairs

- 1) Every wheelchair should be equipped with footrests and appropriate straps.
- 2) Every wheelchair must have a lap restraint separate from the safety vest. This restraint preference is an automobile-type buckle (not Velcro) or aircraft buckle, pelvic positioning belt (2" wide), and attached to the frame of the wheelchair.
- 3) The backrest and seat must be secured to the frame of the wheelchair.
- 4) Wheelchair wheel locks (brakes) must be in working condition. The wheel locks must be applied before transporting the chair.
- 5) Wheelchair headrests are required for students who lack head control. It is strongly recommended that headrests be used on all wheelchairs.
- 6) Consult the treating therapist and physician regarding the need for chest support secured through buckle fasteners, neck collar (for poor head control), and trunk and extremity positioning pads.
- 7) Wheelchairs must be the appropriate size for the height and weight of the student. If a question arises, please consult the treating therapist or physician.
- 8) Anti-tippers on wheelchairs must be in the DOWN position when on the bus and when on level ground.
- 9) Lap trays used during travel must be a "Foam Transportation Tray" securely fastened to the wheelchair; otherwise it must be removed prior to transport and secured on the bus.
- 10) If a student uses a three-wheel scooter, he/she must be able to transfer to a regular bus seat during transportation.



- 11) Only students in wheelchairs may ride the lift. Students using a three-wheeled scooter may ride the lift only if the scooter is equipped with lap restraints.
- 12) If a student's disabilities requires a side-lift bus, he/she must supply his/her own wheelchair for loading and unloading procedures.
- 13) All powered wheelchairs must have leak-proof, sealed, lead acid batteries.
- 14) All powered wheelchairs will be turned off and wheels disengaged before and during transportation. Wheelchair locks must be in proper working condition to ensure safety. If the power wheelchair is not equipped with wheel locks, then, the drive system must be able to be engaged with the power off in order to lock the wheels.
- 15) A parent or guardian must meet the student at the bus stop unless written authorization has been signed from the parent or guardian and Principal. (Latch key students).

D. Helpful ESE and IEP websites:

- 1) OCPS ESE guidelines and assistance can be found at this website:
<https://www.ocps.net/cs/ese/Pages/default.aspx>
- 2) State of Florida Exceptional Student Education website:
<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu>
- 3) Information about Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 can be found here:
<https://www.ocps.net/cs/ese/policy/Pages/Section.aspx>

F. What happens next?

1. Transportation Routing or Bus Operators will:
 - a) Ensure the safety of students during bus transportation.
 - b) Notify the parents with the stop location as well as the pick-up and drop-off times.
 - c) Provide Parent and Student access to a student conduct on the bus or safe rider guide.
 - d) Provide Parent access to a guide to "Bus Transportation for Students with Special Needs" and assist with loading/unloading as necessary.
2. Parents and Guardians will:
 - a) Ensure students are at bus stops at least five minutes before pick-up times.
 - b) Notify schools, as soon as possible, when changes occur regarding living address, guardianship, medical conditions.
 - c) Renew information requirements as needed to maintain student transportation.
 - d) Parent or guardian must be available at drop-off and pick-up times when required for loading/unloading of students.