

BUSINESS AND NON-INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS 3800

3800 SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION

It is the aim of the New Canaan Board of Education to provide the New Canaan Public Schools with a safe transportation system, one which will enable all qualified children of school age to attend public school by school bus wherever transportation is reasonable and desirable. The transportation system shall be planned and operated in compliance with the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut and all regulations of the State Department of Education and the State Department of Motor Vehicles governing the operation of school buses. The Board of Education shall further attempt to maintain transportation schedules which shall provide equal opportunity for all qualified students consistent with efficient and economic operations.

Key provisions of the policy:

	Elementary	--- Saxe Middle ---	High School				
Grade Level			K – 4	5 –	6	7 – 8	9 - 12
Eligibility for Transportation (distance to school)	>0.5 mile	>0.67 mile	>1.0 mile	>1.0 mile	>1.0 mile	>1.0 mile	>1.0 mile
Length of Cul-de-sac for bus to enter	>0.3 mile	>0.3 mile	>0.3 mile	>0.3 mile	>0.3 mile	>0.3 mile	>0.3 mile

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Rules and Regulations:

Eligibility for Transportation

It is the policy of the New Canaan Board of Education to consider eligible for transportation to and from school:

1. All pupils in grades K-4 who live more than one-half mile from the school to which they are zoned to attend.

2. All pupils in grades 5-6 who live more than two-thirds mile from the middle school.
3. All pupils in grades 7-12 who live more than one mile from the middle school or high school.

Exceptions: At the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee, distances may be waived for:

- a. children who for physical conditions or health reasons certified by a physician, are unable to walk to school; or
- b. if it is deemed hazardous conditions exist as defined below.

Vocational Schools

The Board of Education shall perform the following services for any student under twenty-one years of age who resides with his/her parents or guardian in New Canaan, and who attends a state or state-approved vocational school as a regular, all-day student or as a high school cooperative student:

The Board of Education shall provide reasonable and necessary transportation.

If the student attends any such school in a town other than New Canaan, provided that the cost of such transportation out of town would exceed the sum specified in the General Statutes, the Board of Education may elect to maintain such student in the town where they attend such vocational school.

In no case shall the Board of Education be required to expend for transportation or maintenance of any student more than the amount specified by General Statutes in any one school year.

Private Schools

New Canaan shall perform the following duties as required in Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-281:

The Board of Education shall provide, for its children attending private schools therein, not conducted for profit, when a majority of the children attending such a school are from the State of Connecticut, the same kind of transportation services provided for its children attending public schools.

In no case shall the Board of Education be required to expend for private school transportation, in any one school year, a per pupil expenditure greater than an amount double the local per pupil expenditure for public school transportation during the last completed school year.

Special Education

Transportation for students eligible for Special Education services will be administered on a case by case basis. **Attorney edit: 5/28/13 Total travel time shall not exceed one hour each way to and from a special education facility, unless written parental consent is obtained.**

Hazardous Conditions

1. A street or road having an adjacent or parallel sidewalk, raised walk or separate walk area shall be deemed hazardous when any one of the following conditions exists:

a. For pupils enrolled in grades K-4, absence of pedestrian crossing light or a crossing guard at street crossings where there are no stop signs and the average traffic count* during the time that pupils are walking to or from school exceeds sixty vehicles per hour at the crossing.

b. For pupils enrolled in grades 5-12, the absence of pedestrian crossing light or a crossing guard at street crossings where there are no stop signs and the average traffic count* during the time that pupils are walking to or from school exceeds ninety vehicles per hour at the crossing.

c. For all pupils, any street, road, or highway with speed limits in excess of forty miles per hour which do not have pedestrian crossing lights or crossing guards or other safety provisions at points where pupils must cross or walk when going to or from school or the bus stop.

2. Any street, road, or highway which has no sidewalks, or raised or separate walk areas shall be deemed hazardous when the stopping sight distance relative to the assigned speed limit does not permit vehicular braking/stopping in accordance with the Connecticut Department of Transportation, Highway Design Guidelines, latest version.

3. Any walkway, path, or bridge in an area adjacent or parallel to railroad tracks shall be considered hazardous unless a suitable physical barrier along the entire pedestrian route is present and fixed between pupils and the tracks, and any crossing of railroad tracks that carry moving trains during hours that pupils are walking to or from school shall be deemed hazardous unless a crossing guard is present; or an automatic control bar is present at crossings used by pupils in grades K-4, or a bar or red flashing signal light is operational when the crossing is used by pupils in grades 5-12.

4. Any street, road, walkway, sidewalk, or path designated as a walking route for pupils that pass through an area with a history of aggressive acts of molestation resulting in actual or threatened physical harm or moral degradation during the hours when pupils ordinarily walk to or from school shall be deemed hazardous.

5. Walking to or from school or the bus stop at any time prior to one-half hour before sunrise or any time one-half hour after sunset shall be deemed hazardous for pupils in grades K-6.

6. Any street, road, or highway which has no sidewalks, or raised or separate walk areas within the roadway right of way shall be deemed hazardous if any one of the following conditions exists:

a. For pupils enrolled in grades K-4, any street, road, or highway with a posted speed limit in excess of thirty miles per hour.

b. For pupils enrolled in grades K-4, any street, road or highway possessing an average traffic count* of sixty or more vehicles per hour at the time that pupils are walking to or from school or their designated bus stop.

c. For all pupils, any roadway except a low volume local roadway available to vehicles that does not have a minimum width of twenty-two feet along the path for which a pupil is expected to walk.

d. For all pupils, any roadway except a low volume local roadway available to vehicles when plowed free of snow accumulations, does not have a minimum width of twenty feet along the path for which a pupil is expected to walk.

e. For all pupils, any low volume local roadway that does not have a minimum width of eighteen feet along the path for which a pupil is expected to walk. This width can include usable unpaved shoulders suitable for occasional vehicle traffic and if used as a walking area must be a minimum of 3 feet in width.

The Board of Education may grant an exception to any provision of the rules and regulations of this policy wherein a peculiar condition or combination of conditions renders such condition(s) a hazard based upon reasonable judgment.

**Average traffic count* to be determined over a minimum of 3 normal school days excluding days before /after holidays.

Appeals on Rulings

Initial identification of hazardous conditions and the need for special transportation shall be the responsibility of the Administration of New Canaan Public Schools as designated by the Superintendent of Schools.

Request for a hearing to appeal an administrative ruling on transportation may be made by any parent or guardian by petitioning the Board of Education in writing. The request for a hearing shall be made on a petition form (available from the Business Office) to substantiate a claim of a hazardous condition. After the Board of Education receives the petition, the following steps shall occur:

The Board of Education shall grant a hearing within ten days.

The Board of Education shall make a stenographic record or tape recording of such hearing.

The Board of Education shall make a finding within ten days after such hearing.

Such a hearing shall be held in accordance with the provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes, Sections 4-177 to 4-180, inclusive, of the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act.

Any parent, guardian, emancipated minor, student 18 years of age or older, or officer aggrieved by the finding of the Board of Education shall, upon request, be provided with a transcript of the hearing within thirty days of such request, and may take appeal to the State Board of Education.

The findings of the Board of Education shall be upheld by the State Board of Education unless it is determined that such finding was illegal, arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable.

Requirements for Bus Operations

The New Canaan Board of Education places safety as its primary concern in the operation of its school buses. While efficiency in service and punctuality in the operation of buses are important and expected from the contractor and bus operators, the safety of school children must always take precedence.

State roadways: For bus stops on minor arterial type roadways such as State Routes #106, #123, and #124, buses will stop only at locations where the bus stop is on the right side of the bus in the direction that the bus is traveling. Students will not be expected nor permitted to cross these State roads.

Crossing roadways: When children must cross a roadway, the bus must remain stationary with its stop lights flashing until the children safely reach the opposite side of the road. Children must cross the road in front of the bus.

Maximum speed: New Canaan school buses shall be operated at a safe rate of speed consistent with the volume of traffic, intersections, curbs and any other condition requiring special caution. The maximum speed when carrying passengers shall not exceed speed limits for the roads traveled.

Railroad crossings: During home to school and school to home transportation, a NCPS school bus is not to cross a railroad track while carrying passengers unless there is a special road circumstance necessitating such crossing and additional safety personnel are present.

Passengers: No passengers or other persons other than pupils, teachers and school administrators, supervisory personnel, drivers in training, or individuals granted written permission of the Superintendent of Schools or his designee are allowed to board the bus during periods when pupils are present.

Cul-de-sac roadways

School buses will not enter a cul-de-sac that is shorter than 0.3 miles, as measured from the closest point of intersection with the main road from which the bus must turn into the cul-de-sac to the furthest point on the circular portion of the cul-de-sac, unless the following conditions exist:

The bus stop or roadway on which the student must walk to the bus stop or school has been deemed a hazardous condition as defined by this policy; and

There is sufficient turning room to permit the bus to circumnavigate the circular portion of the cul-de-sac without having to back up; and

The bus can safely enter and exit the cul-de-sac roadway.

Where a cul-de-sac is shorter than 0.3 miles, the bus stop will be on the main road at the safest location closest to the point of intersection of the cul-de-sac with the main road.

Where a cul-de-sac is longer than 0.3 miles, there must be sufficient turning room to permit the bus to circumnavigate the circular portion of the cul-de-sac without having to back up.

Where a cul-de-sac is longer than 0.3 miles, the bus will typically stop only twice. The first stop will be at the last safe area prior to entering the circular portion of the cul-de-sac. The second stop will be after completing the turn at the last safe area prior to exiting the straight portion of the cul-de-sac as the bus turns back onto the main road. Students must be waiting outside dwellings and in full view of the bus driver as the bus approaches the circular portion of the cul-de-sac.

Where a cul-de-sac is longer than 0.3 miles, bus drivers will have the sole discretion not to enter when there is an obstruction or when inclement weather requires the bus to back up.

Private roadways: A NCPS school bus shall not travel into a private road except under the following conditions:

To pick up and/or discharge student(s) whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP) requires such transportation, subject to the conditions below concerning standards for road construction and maintenance;

To pick up and/or discharge students residing on private roads, subject to the following criteria:

The road must meet the conditions set forth in Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-220c, *i.e.* such road must be constructed and maintained in accordance with the standards for construction and maintenance of similar roads of the Town of New Canaan, as determined by the First Selectman, and

All owners of the road on which the New Canaan Public Schools vehicle(s) will travel must execute a waiver releasing the New Canaan Public Schools from any liability for damages to property that is not caused by the negligent acts of the New Canaan Public Schools and/or its agents;

The road must provide sufficient space to permit a standard size bus to pass oncoming vehicles and to circumnavigate the route without having to back up;

The road must be clear of snow and ice; and

The distance the student would otherwise have to walk exceeds 3/10ths of a mile.

No Travel roadways: Based on periodic studies conducted by the transportation function of the Administration, certain roadways in New Canaan are deemed unsuitable for bus travel. A listing, which is subject to change, is available from the Business Office of the Board of Education.

Bus Stops and Schedules

The establishment of bus stops will be the responsibility of the transportation function of the Administration. Bus operators must adhere to the schedules and to the designated bus stops established.

In developing designated stop locations the transportation function is to consider various factors. These include but are not limited to the safety of a stop location and/or the route along which the student must walk to and from the bus stop, including sight distance afforded the student or oncoming vehicles, the number, speed and stopping distance of such vehicles, topography of the area including the availability of a shoulder area along the roadway, the existence and type of foliage along the pathway, the proximity of water, the existence of steep slopes adjacent to the pathway, the possible requirement or limitation for the student to cross a road, and the age or special needs of each student.

In developing designated route schedules the transportation function is to consider various factors, including but not limited to, the time available for routes, stop and load times, bus capacity, geographic location of residences, anticipated speed of travel, distances between stops, fairness of ride times for all riders, efficient use of equipment, and risk management practices (student miles).

Pick-Up Time: AM pick-up times are expected to be within ± 5 minutes of established schedules. Within this window period, bus drivers are not required nor expected to wait for students assigned to the stop.

Highway stops: The operator shall not stop his bus on the main traveled portion of the roadway when existing shoulders or adequate roadway width is available or when curbs, bus stops or special facilities exist. When a bus in traveling on a minor arterial or collector type roadway and by its several stops causes a line of traffic to form behind it, in a safe place the operator should drive his bus to the side of the road and stop until the line of traffic has passed. Doors should be kept closed and lights should not be flashing during this time.

Children Seated: The bus operator shall not put his bus in motion until the door of the bus has been closed and all children have been seated.

Requirement for Compliance

Motor vehicles used to transport school children eligible for BOE transportation services shall comply with all regulations established by the State of Connecticut and / or the United States Department of Transportation and all other legal requirements as may apply.

The New Canaan Board of Education places safety as its primary concern in the operation of its school buses. While efficiency in service and punctuality in the operation of buses are important and expected from the contractor and bus operators, the safety of school children must always take precedence.

Drivers used by the contractor to provide transportation services to NCPS must meet all the specifications required by the Connecticut DOT / DMV and be in accordance with the regulations of the Connecticut State Board of Education concerning the transportation of public school children.

Maintenance: The transportation/bus contractor is responsible for maintaining vehicles used to transport students in full compliance with all applicable requirements, including but not limited to DOT and DMV requirements. The Superintendent of Schools and/or his/her designee may require the contractor to provide written record of maintenance efforts and inspections performed to verify compliance. The school district also has the right to conduct, or to require the contractor to conduct, inspections of the contractor's equipment and to require changes, repairs or additions to the equipment as necessary to comply with all applicable requirements to ensure the safe transportation of students.

Bus Lists: The contractor will, upon request, submit an updated list of buses to be used for New Canaan Public School transportation. The list of buses shall include the name of the manufacturer, the date of manufacture and the pupil seating capacity.

Accidents: The contractor shall make the trips on the time schedule required by the Board of Education and should a bus accident breakdown or other delay occur, it shall provide a substitute bus for the immediate transportation of the pupils, to the end that as little time as possible be lost, and safety assured. The Superintendent of Schools or his designee shall be notified of all accidents and all delays which prevent the buses from operating on schedule. The notification is to be given as soon as possible after the accident, breakdown or other delay is known.

Driver conduct: A driver, in the course of his/her duties as a representative of NCPS, is required to act with the highest level of personal, moral and ethical integrity and must exhibit a personal concern for the welfare of the children and families serviced by the organization. NCPS expects drivers and related personnel to conduct themselves in a manner that exemplifies leadership and that protects the interests and safety of children, parents, employees and the NCPS organization.

Student conduct: Transportation of students is considered an extension of the school day. Pupils riding the buses are to demonstrate behavior consistent with that expected during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, being thoughtful of others, acting in a manner that supports safe operation of the vehicle, and contributes to the safe transport of those on the bus or those in the area in which the bus is operating. Please refer to the New Canaan Board of Education policy concerning Student Conduct for a more detailed description of expectations, and the consequences for violating such expectations, regarding student conduct on buses.

Parental expectations: Parents/Guardians should be familiar with bus rules intended to support the safe transportation of students. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to review these rules with their children and reinforce their expectation that children should act accordingly. This includes behavior during AM and PM travel between the home and the bus stop, any waiting time for the bus to arrive in the morning as well as time spent on the bus.

Parents of K-2 students, or another designated adult, are asked to accompany each K-2 student to his/her designated bus stop in the morning and meet each at his/her designated bus stop on return trips home.

Information confidentiality: Individuals may learn of or be entrusted with sensitive information of a confidential nature during the course of conducting NCPS business.

Individuals shall not, at any time during or after his/her service to NCPS disclose, disseminate, convey, utilize, or otherwise profit from the use or sharing of confidential information.

Glossary of Terms

Definitions listed below are words or terms as they are used in the context of the transportation policy:

"Grade K" means kindergarten pupils.

"Hazard" means a thing or condition, as prescribed in this policy, affecting the safety of pupils walking to and from school, or a designated bus pickup area; a possible source of peril, danger, duress or difficulty, exposure to molestation or attack considered morally degrading or physically harmful.

"One mile walking distance" means a reasonable measurement of a route to be traversed extending from the point of measurement 5,280 feet.

"Pupil" means any individual of school age enrolled in a public or private school located within the school district or contiguous school district as the case may be.

"Raised walk area or sidewalk" means a portion of the landscaped right of way at least three feet wide, usually parallel to the traffic lanes which is paved, distinguished by some elevation above the street pavement level, and marked by curbing, drainage ditch, grass area, fencing, apart from and independent of any white line safety markings along the street pavement.

"Separate walking area" means absent of a sidewalk, a portion of the roadway right of way that is at least 3 feet away from the roadway edge with a minimum 3 foot wide walking area along the roadway for continuous sections of the roadway and which may connect to other raised walk areas or sidewalks.

"School Transportation" means the procedure, program, or fully effective and implemented plan by which a pupil is conveyed to and/or from school from his/her residence or the bus stop at public expense, whether by use of publicly-owned equipment or by contract.

Types of Roadways:

"Minor Arterials" mean a type of roadway in rural areas that provide a mix of interstate and interregional travel service. Minor Arterials provide lower travel speeds than Principle Arterials, accommodate shorter trips and distances and lower traffic volumes but provide more access to properties. State roads in New Canaan are considered minor arterials.

"Collectors" mean a type of roadway characterized by a roughly even distribution of their access and mobility functions. Traffic volumes and speeds will typically be somewhat lower than those of arterials. For school transportation purposes, most two-way through roads in New Canaan are to be considered collector type roadways.

"Local Roads" mean roadways not classified as arterials or collectors and are characterized by their many points of direct access to adjacent properties and their relatively minor value in accommodating mobility. On these primarily residential roads, speed limits, whether

posted or assumed are typically low, volumes are usually low and trip distances are short. Through traffic is discouraged and is often not possible.

“Low Volume Local Roads” mean a subset of roadways classified as local roadways including cul-de-sacs and other dead end roadways with very low traffic volumes (less than 400 vehicles per day or 30 vehicles per hour*) and assigned speed limits of 25 miles per hour or less. This subset of local roads is classified by the Town of New Canaan.

(Note: A listing of roads and their classification type are available upon request from the Town of New Canaan, Department of Public Works Engineering Office, and the New Canaan Board of Education business office.)

“Usable unpaved shoulder” means a portion of the roadway right of way which is adjacent to the roadway, unpaved but suitable for occasional vehicle traffic and if used as a walking area must be a minimum of 3 feet wide. This usable width can be included in determining the local roadway width.

“Walking distance” means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the pupil's residence and his school from a point at the curb or edge of a public road nearest the pupil's residence to a point at the entrance of the school, or a safe entrance to the school grounds located within one hundred feet of the school building entrance or the bus pick-up area, or the route from the point on the public thoroughfare nearest the residence to the school bus or vehicle embarkation point established by the Board of Education.

(Legal Reference: Ct. General Statutes: 10-220; 10-220(c); 10-186; 10-76d; 10-97; 10-273a; 10-280a; 10-281; 14-275a; 14-275b; 14-275c; 14-280; and P.A. 90-112) (See STUDENTS, Student Behavior on School Buses, 5310)

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