IS MY CHILD ELIGIBLE FOR TRANSPORTATION?

This is determined by the distance the child resides from their school and the grade in which they are enrolled.  If a student resides over 1.5 miles from their home to school and are enrolled in grades K-5, they would be entitled to no cost transportation.  If a student resides over 2 miles from their home to school and are enrolled in grades 6-12, they also would be entitled to no cost transportation.  The SPS will consider travel and safety hazards (i.e., no safe walking route or lack of sidewalks) for those students residing under the state mileage restrictions who could encounter such conditions.

**WHERE IS MY CHILD’S BUS STOP?**

Bus stop information is sent to schools prior to the opening and is also available by logging onto the SPS website.

**WHAT IS MY CHILD’S BUS NUMBER?**

This information may be obtained by logging onto the SPS website and selecting the PARENTS tab on the homepage.  Under Parent Navigation, select School Bus Routes.  Scroll the page and locate your child’s school.  Select the school and open to access the bus routes.

**MY CHILD IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION AND DOES NOT?**

Eligibility for door to door transportation is based upon a student’s IEP.  Transportation must be included in the student’s IEP.  If it is not, special transportation is not provided.  The parent should start by contacting the ETL at the school their child attends to begin the process.

**MY CHILD’S BUS STOP HAS BEEN MOVED FROM THE PREVIOUS LOCATION WHERE IT HAS BEEN.  WHAT CAN I DO?**

The SPS is required to establish a bus stop for each student within a one-mile radius of the student’s residence.  Nearly all bus stops are much closer in proximity.  However, a parent may request a bus stop change by writing a letter, or submitting an email to the school their child attends.  The final decision will follow the safety and feasibility of the transportation for all students as well as transportation policies and procedures approved by the Springfield School Committee.

**WHO DETERMINES THE PLACEMENT OF BUS STOP LOCATIONS?**

The Transportation Department of the SPS determines the locations of all school bus stops.

**ARE STUDENTS ALLOWED TO STAND ON SCHOOL BUSES?**

Massachusetts State Law requires that seating be provided for each student assigned to the bus. Standees are strictly prohibited.  Furthermore, all students are to be completely seated always.

**WHO DO I SPEAK TO IF I BELIEVE MY CHILD’S SCHOOL BUS IS OVERCROWDED?**

All concerns regarding the capacity of school buses should be directed to the Transportation Department of the SPS.

**MY CHILD HAS A MEDICAL CONDITION AND REQUIRES TRANSPORTATION.  WHAT CAN I DO?**

You must obtain a letter or diagnosis from your child’s physician and submit all documentation to the Transportation Department.  Once received, the documentation will be forwarded to your child’s school where it will be evaluated by the 504 Team.  This team will determine if your child’s medical condition warrants transportation.

**MY CHILD HAS DOOR TO DOOR TRANSPORTATION BUT THE BUS CANNOT GET DOWN MY STREET?**

In some instances, mini-buses are unable to travel down narrow or dead-end streets.  School buses are prohibited from backing up from, or down select streets or cannot safety turn around.  For the safety of all concerned, children must be picked up and dropped off at the nearest intersecting street accessible by bus.

**WHY DON’T SCHOOL BUSES HAVE SEAT BELTS?**

School buses contracted by the SPS afford students the safest form of transportation to and from school.  This has been validated by Federal crash testing and research by the National Academy of Sciences.  School buses must meet rigid Federal construction standards for the sides and top of the bus, fuel tanks along with the inside of each bus.  The thick padded seats and seat-backs provide a passive form of crash protection known as “compartmentalization.”  This padding, combined with the placement of the seating area high above the impact zone offers a protection that has resulted in an unmatched record of passenger safety.

**MY CHILD WOULD LIKE TO HAVE FRIENDS COME TO OUR HOUSE AFTER SCHOOL. IS THIS ALLOWED?**

This is not permitted.  The SPS will only allow students who are assigned and authorized to ride school buses to and from their home address.

**WHY DOESN’T MY CHILD’S SCHOOL BUS HAVE A MONITOR?**

School bus monitors are assigned by need.  Most of school bus monitors are assigned to special needs vehicles due to a student’s IEP and physical challenges they may be faced with.  There is no Massachusetts General Law that states all school buses must have monitors.

**IF I AM HOMELESS, WILL THE SPS TRANSPORT MY CHILD TO THEIR SCHOOL OF ORIGIN?**

The SPS will provide transportation to children living in motels, hotels, emergency or transitional shelters, substandard accommodations or share the housing of another person considering established transportation guidelines.  To inform the district you are homeless, please notify the [SPS Homeless Education Services](http://prod.springfieldpublicschools.com/departments/pace/homeless-education-services) by calling 787-7294.

**MY CHILD REQUIRES ACADEMIC HELP AFTER SCHOOL OR PARTICIPATES IN AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, WILL THE SPS PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION HOME?**

The SPS provides late bus service for transportation eligible students in grades 6-8 each Monday, Wednesday & Thursday.  Students are transported to the closest school within the neighborhood they reside.

**DOES MY CHILD’S BUS HAVE A VIDEO CAMERA?**

All school buses that transport SPS students are equipped with video recording devices.  Recordings are confidential and can only be used by school officials and law enforcement personnel for disciplinary actions or prosecutions related to incidents occurring on the school bus.

**CAN MY CHILD BE PICKED UP AT AN ALTERNATIVE OR BABY SITTER’S ADDRESS?**

The SPS will only provide transportation to and from the student’s legal residence.

**WHAT TIME SHOULD MY CHILD BE READY FOR THE BUS?**

It is advisable to have your child at the bus stop a minimum of ten minutes prior to the scheduled pick up.

**MY CHILD’S BUS HAS NOT COME YET, WHO DO I CALL?**

If your child’s bus has not arrived at the bus stop, please contact First Student by calling 413-736-6781, or if your child rides a mini-bus or van, please call 413-787-2592.  If your child is confined to a wheelchair, please contact Van Pool Transportation by calling 413-599-1616.  If your child attends an out of district school or is homeless residing outside the City of Springfield, please contact Van Pool Transportation by calling 599-1616.