

### **Why is my child's bus late?**

Weather, traffic, driver absenteeism, maintenance difficulties, and unforeseen incidents are responsible for delays in the arrival of school buses in the morning and afternoon.

- Sometimes the bus routes must be doubled out or run as a second load to or from the school due to the regular driver being absent.
- Traffic in the Roxbury area is increasingly snarly, especially on Route 80, 206, 10 and 46.
- Drivers check buses before their routes and sometimes find mechanical problems that can cause delays and require driving another bus for that day. This can cause the bus to be unpunctual.
- Schools dismiss late which will cause a domino affect on the other arrivals at school.

Please know that we are doing everything humanly possible to have all buses running on schedule everyday. In the event that your bus does not arrive as scheduled, please allow ten to fifteen minutes before calling the transportation office or the school.

### **Why did you suspend my child from riding the bus?**

Behavioral expectations on the school bus are much like those in the classroom. Then, factor in the mobility of that "classroom" and traffic, added noise and the size of the "classroom" and you have a potential catastrophe if there are not clear expectations and enforcement. The behavioral expectations on the bus revolve around the individual rights of every person on the bus, including the driver and the collective rights of students and driver as it pertains to SAFETY. Anything that jeopardizes the safety of individuals on the bus is viewed as serious.

When there is an infraction, a student incident report is turned into the school administrators, who are responsible for contacting the student and parent to solve the lack of compliance with bus expectations. The school administrator is solely responsible for consequences based on the incident as described by the driver and student. Our goal is never to deny any student transportation to and from school, but we must maintain safety for all students.

### **Why can't you call when you know the bus will be late?**

It is simply a numbers problem. There are as many 54 students on each bus. That is at least 54 phone calls in a short time frame to parents who are quite possibly at the bus stop with their children. It is just not feasible. Please know that there is a bus on the way and that we will do everything humanly possible to transport your child to and from school in a timely manner every day. If your scheduled bus is more than ten minutes late, please allow for the time that it requires for the route to be driven as a second load.

### **Why can't you come further into my sub-division?**

School buses come in various sizes ranging from 25 to 36 feet long, 20,000-33,000 pounds, 12-13 feet high and 6-9 feet wide. The length is what limits the school bus to be maneuvered in cul-de-sacs and tight places. Smaller buses can turn in a shorter radius,

while longer buses cannot maneuver the same circle without backing the bus, which is avoided in routing if possible. Residents sometimes park trucks, boats, and trailers on the streets. Children leave their bicycles, skateboards, and basketball backboards on the streets. Although our drivers are trained to be able to parallel park their buses, some subdivisions are not designed with school bus transportation in mind. Please know that we will design school bus routes to be safe and convenient to the majority of students within the limits of time and physics.

### **Why does my child have a seat assignment?**

Seat assignments are a positive way for the ride to be consistent and safe. It is also our policy for elementary, middle and high school students to be assigned to a specific seat. This aids the driver with discipline and learning each student's names at the beginning of the school year. It also aids the driver in the event of an accident to identify quickly those students who may be injured.

### **Why can't my child get off wherever they want in the afternoon?**

To avoid multiple problems, the driver requires a note, signed by the parent and school administrator to alter the destination of students, for emergency reasons only. This allows the drivers to focus on driving and safety instead of having to decide whether the student should be allowed to change their routine and get off at an alternate stop. This policy avoids confusion and the chance of students getting lost or running away.

### **How do you decide when it is too dangerous for school buses to transport students to school due to inclement weather? Who decides? How is the public notified?**

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for the final decision to close schools due to inclement weather. The decision is made after administrative staff report from various positions in the township regarding road conditions. Other factors considered are school facility information (heat, water, power), school parking lot conditions, temperature and wind chill, snow and ice build up on main and secondary roads and weather forecasts and predictions. A decision will be made and the public will be notified as soon as possible. The Honeywell Instant Alert System will be used and also the following media sites will carry that information to the public:

<u>Internet</u> <a href="http://www.news12.com">www.news12.com</a>  <a href="http://www.roxbury.org">www.roxbury.org</a>	<u>TV Stations</u> News 12 New Jersey  Channel 5 – FOX News	<u>Radio Stations</u> WRNJ 1510 AM	<u>Phone</u> 973-584-6099
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If the schools close during the day, the students will be sent home on their regular bus.

### **Why are there only 30 students riding some buses and my child's bus is crowded?**

Decisions regarding each bus route are made by careful planning based on information from the school registration, previous similar routes, and Department of Transportation data. Most routes are fixed during the summer months and changes are made after the first two weeks of school, if not sooner. The more current information we are given, the

better decisions regarding specific routes we can make. Distance from school, number of buses and drivers, and grouping of students and neighborhoods are factors considered also. Sometimes it is just not possible to have the exact number of students on every run. State guidelines allow for up to 54 capacity seating.

### **Special Needs Transportation**

#### **How can I receive transportation for my special needs child?**

A committee of people already involved in a student's education determines transportation needs. After it has been determined that the student would benefit from being transported apart from the mainstreamed students, the case manager will complete and send a special needs transportation request to our office for processing.

#### **How long does it take to set up transportation for my special needs child?**

Up to ten (10) days are needed to obtain all emergency information, process routing information, contact drivers and communicate with parents and other professionals involved.

#### **Why can't last minute changes be granted?**

SAFETY is our main goal and concern. Changes may be granted for consistent schedules within the child's regular route.

#### **Why can't my regular education child ride the same bus with my special needs child?**

Special needs transportation is granted in accordance with a student's needs as a related service to the IEP (Individualized Education Plan). Students who receive an education without an IEP are provided transportation through conventional means.

#### **Can I reach someone in the Transportation Department before 8 AM?**

Yes, our Dispatcher is available from 5:30 AM and our office is open until 4:30 PM. Our phone number is 973-584-6756. Our fax number is 973-252-1412.