

**Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Department of Transportation**

PARENT INFORMATION

Miami-Dade County Public Schools transports approximately 60,000 students every school day. In order to accomplish this task, we operate 1000 school bus routes and maintain a fleet of 1250 school buses.

The goals of the Department of Transportation:

- ❖ **A safe ride for our students**
- ❖ **On-time pick-up and delivery**
- ❖ **Effective and Efficient Operation**

- **When is transportation provided for public school students?**

Florida Statutes and Rules of the Florida State Board of Education establish when students are eligible for transportation on public school buses:

- Students who are attending their designated home/residence school **and** who live more than two (2) miles from the school will generally be eligible for transportation. However, this rule **does not** apply to students in magnet/school choice programs or to most other students who are attending a school other than their designated home/residence school.
- Special needs students shall receive transportation in accordance with the provisions of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or "504" Plan. However, this **does not** apply to students who have been enrolled in magnet/school choice programs. All such students will receive transportation on the same basis as regular education students, regardless of what may be included in an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or "504" Plan.

- **How far can my child be required to walk to his/her bus stop?**

- Per Rule 6A-3.001 of the Florida State Board of Education, students may be required to walk up to one and one-half (1½) miles from their home to their assigned bus stop. The Miami-Dade County Public Schools Department of Transportation makes every effort to keep walk distances between student's homes and their bus stops as short as possible and practical.

- **How can I find information on my child's school bus assignment?**

- At the beginning of the school year, in August, the school district mails a post card with bus assignment information to every family with a student who is eligible for transportation and who has been given a bus assignment.

- Bus assignment information for students enrolled in Miami-Dade County Public Schools is also posted on the district's web site on the internet. To access the information first go to www.dadeschools.net and then log on to the **PARENT PORTAL**. The top of the PARENT PORTAL screen has a link (click on BUS INFO) to the student's bus assignment information.
 - Bus assignment information on the **PARENT PORTAL** is updated every night. Parents are encouraged to periodically check the information on the Parent Portal so they will always have the most current information on their child's bus transportation.
 - Parents who are not able to access the Parent Portal should call their child's **school** for assistance. All schools have access to the district's transportation routing system, and should be able to answer most questions concerning a student's eligibility for transportation and bus assignment.
- **I have a question or a concern about my child's transportation. Who should I contact?**
 - Parents should always contact their child's **school**, when they have a question or a concern about their child's transportation. If needed, the school will get in touch with the appropriate staff at the Department of Transportation to make sure the question or concern is properly responded to. This will help to ensure that all questions and concerns are answered as promptly as possible.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS AND GUARDIANS OF STUDENTS WHO ARE TRANSPORTED AT PUBLIC EXPENSE

Rule 6A-3.0121 of the State Board of Education addresses the responsibilities of parents and guardians of students who are transported at public expense. It states:

- a. Parents and guardians shall ensure the safe travel of their students during the portions of each trip to and from school and home when the students are not under the custody and control of the school district, including during each trip to and from home and the assigned bus stop when the school district provides bus transportation.
- b. Parents and guardians shall ensure that students ride only in their assigned school buses and get off only at assigned bus stops, except when the district has approved alternative buses or arrangements.
- c. Parents and guardians shall ensure that students are aware of and follow the district's adopted code of student conduct while students are at school bus stops and to provide the necessary supervision during times when the bus is not present.
- d. Parents and guardians shall ensure that, when the physical disability of the student renders the student unable to get on and off the bus without assistance, the parent or guardian provides the necessary assistance to help the student get on and off at the bus stop, as required by district policy or the student's *Individual Education Plan* (IEP).

Additionally:

- Parents and guardians are responsible to make sure their students are waiting at the assigned bus stop at least ten (10) minutes before the scheduled pick-up time at the bus stop. Drivers will not wait for students who are tardy.
- For parents and guardians of students with an *Individual Education Plan* (IEP) or “504” Plan that requires parental supervision at the bus stop: Parents and guardians of such students must be at the bus stop at least ten (10) minutes before the scheduled drop-off time.

BUS SAFETY RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRANSPORTED STUDENTS

Students riding on school buses are required to observe the Miami-Dade County School Board *Code of Student Conduct* policy, school bus safety rules, and the following policies of the Transportation Department.

- a. Students may ride only in their assigned school buses and get on and off only at their assigned bus stops.
- b. Students must be at their assigned bus stop at least ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. Drivers will not wait for tardy students.
- c. Students must stand off the roadway while awaiting the bus.
- d. Students must cross the road **only in front of the bus** when traffic has been completely stopped by means of the flashing red lights and the extended stop arms on the bus. Students must **NEVER** cross the road in **back** of the bus.
- e. Students must enter and leave the bus at schools and student stops in an orderly fashion. This requires students to proceed at all times:
 - Without haste and without loitering
 - Without crowding, pushing, or shoving, and
 - With each student showing due regard for his/her own safety **and** the safety of others.
- f. Students, upon boarding the bus, must go directly to an open seat and sit down as soon as possible. If specific seats have been assigned to students by the school principal (or the principal’s designee) and/or the school bus driver, students must sit only in their assigned seats.
- g. School buses operated by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Department of Transportation are equipped with lap belts. While school bus drivers can not compel students to buckle their lap belts, all students should fasten their lap belts and keep them fastened for the entire trip to and from their school.
- h. Students must remain seated for the entire trip to and from their school.

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- i. Students must pay attention to the school bus driver and the school bus aide (if one is assigned to the bus route) and always follow their instructions and directions. They are responsible for the safety of the students entrusted to their care. School bus drivers have been instructed to pull over to the side of the road and park the bus anytime the driver feels misconduct on the part of any student endangers the safety of the students and/or the safe operation of the bus.
- j. Students must remain quiet enough so as to not distract the school bus driver's attention from the road. Students must, at all times:
 - Refrain from shouting, yelling, and other boisterous activities
 - Refrain from unnecessary conversation with the school bus driver
 - Refrain from any activity that worries or distracts the school bus driver and which may put the student's own safety and the safety of others at risk
- k. When crossing railroad tracks – students must remain absolutely quiet.
- l. Students may play music devices when riding on school buses only while wearing “ear buds” or headphones.
- m. Students may NOT, eat, drink, or smoke when on the school bus.
- n. Students must **NEVER** extend hands, arms, heads, or other parts of the body out of the windows of the bus.
- o. Students must not throw or scatter waste paper and other refuse on the bus floor or out the windows of the bus.
- p. Students must keep book bags, lunch boxes, and other personal property on their laps. If there is sufficient room, these items may be placed on the seat alongside the student or on the floor underneath the seat where the student is sitting.
- q. Students must not purposely mark, deface, damage, or destroy any part of the bus, the equipment on it, or the area surrounding the bus stop location.
- r. No signs may be displayed from the bus.
- s. Students may not serve as bus monitors.

