

# Transportation as a Related Service

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# Transportation as a Related Service

## Transportation as a related service is provided when:

- Required due to the nature of the student's disability.
- The location of their school relative to their home.
- The IEP team determines it is needed to access a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

## Services may include:

- Accommodations on a general education bus.
- Special needs bus or other mode of transportation.
- Adaptive equipment based on student needs.
- Portal-to-portal service.

# By the Numbers

## Data for the 25/26 School Year

Numbers of Students Transported by PWCS	
Numbers of Students with Disabilities (SWD) who have special transportation services indicated on the IEP	3,660
Number of Special Transportation Requests (STRs) Approved by SED for the 25/26 SY	4,961
Number of students transported by bus in PWCS	75,002
Number of Bus Stops	10,000
Miles Traveled Yearly	11,477,260



# Sibling Requests

- Sibling requests are not considered for approval until bus routes are finalized
  - Usually weeks into the school year
- Guardians should base transfer decisions on their ability to support both students
- Approved sibling riders:
  - Can ride if ample space is available on the bus.
  - Courtesy may change as routes adjust.
  - Limited sibling courtesy due to seat availability and regulations.
- We can arrange pick-up for the student requiring transportation at the same neighborhood stop (times may vary).



## Accommodations on a Gen Ed Bus

- LRE Conversation Guide helps identify the least restrictive transportation arrangement possible
  - Training for school-based administrators related to the LRE Transportation protocol
  - Promotes riding a Gen Ed bus with non-disabled peers as applicable.
- Gradual accommodations based on individual student needs
- Seeing positive transitions back to Gen Ed buses



# Training Opportunities

- All drivers and attendants are trained in:
  - Preschool and Autism Spectrum Disorder
  - Specialized Transportation modules:
    - Safety, Supervision, Behavior Management, LRE, Changes in Routine
- Drivers complete Special Needs curriculum through VDOE
- New module in development: **De-escalation techniques**
- Collaboration with SED and BCBAs for behavior strategies
- Committed to more individualized training for specific student needs
- Added 2 additional days to driver contract for additional training

## VDOE Special Needs Curriculum

Unit 1: The Challenge of Transporting Children with Special Needs

Unit 2: Characteristics of Children with Special Needs

Unit 3: Legal Aspects of Transporting Children with Special Needs

Unit 4: Communication is Critical for Special Needs Bus Drivers

Unit 5: Behavior Management Strategies for Children with Special Needs

Unit 6: Safe Loading and Transportation of Children Using Adaptive Equipment

Unit 7: Special Preparation for Emergencies

Unit 8: Unique Responsibilities of Drivers of Special Children

Unit 9: The Importance of Documentation

Unit 10: Personal Protection



## Communication of Incidents

- **Incident reports submitted within 24 hours; schools usually notified immediately**
  - Transportation communicates incidents to the schools
- **After-hours emergencies:**
  - Transportation may contact guardians directly.

## Disruption of Services

- Interruptions/cancellations communicated via updated STR; schools notify guardians.
- If no notice, guardians contact school or Case Worker (who contacts Transportation).
- Exceptions:
  - If bus is late (AM or PM), call **Transportation Call Center: 571-402-3940.**
  - Late notifications sent for delays over 15 minutes.
- Real-time information is available via:
  - **EZ A2B Parent App**
  - **Bus Delays Webpage**



## Change in Driver, Vehicle, Attendant

- Consistency is key for student success.
- Transportation receives **100+ student updates weekly**; one change can impact multiple buses.
- Improvements:
  - Fully staffed
  - On time arrival has increased significantly
  - In the midst of Over-the-air camera upgrades

## Alignment of School Calendars

- No transportation on federal holidays or PWCS closure days.
- Approximately 190 students in private placements:
- Guardians may transport students if programs remain open.
- Same applies during inclement weather closures.

# Recommendations for SEAC Advocacy:

- Collaborative training partnership between SED and Transportation
- Help recruiting additional substitute attendants



# Points of Contact

For general questions or concerns OTHER than awaiting the arrival of a late vehicle,

- Please submit a customer service ticket via our online portal at <https://www.pwcs.edu/departments/transportation/contact/index>
- You may also contact the Transportation Call Center at 571-402-3940.

