

# Chardon Local Schools Transportation

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What are Chardon Local School's transportation rules for eligibility?**

As in past years, Chardon Local Schools will continue to transport students in grades kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> who live more than 1.0 mile away from his or her school (as well as those special education students with an individual education program (IEP) that mandates specialized transportation).

2. **What is the maximum time a student may ride his/her school bus in Ohio?**

There is no identified target number that districts are obligated to meet. It is up to each school district to manage the length of time students ride their bus. Ride times vary by traffic, locality and numerous other criteria; therefore, each school district's ride times can be different.

3. **We moved during the school year; how do I change my child's bus?**

All transportation changes are made through the student's school. Please be sure to update the school with your latest information, including address, phone number and day care arrangements.

4. **How long will it take for my child to receive transportation?**

At peak times, under normal conditions, it may take three to five business days from the time Transportation receives the request for the child to be placed on a bus route. The parent is responsible for the child's transportation during this period.

5. **How do I request transportation for a student?**

At Chardon Local Schools, a student automatically receives transportation, provided the student meets criteria. A transportation request for a district resident student attending a non-public school may be made through the school he/she attends.

6. **What is "state minimum" transportation?**

State minimum requires transportation for only those students in grades K-8 who reside more than 2.0 miles from school. The state does not require us to transport grades 9-12. However, districts do have an obligation to transport students with special needs, as identified in those students' Individual Education Programs (IEP).

7. **My child has an IEP (Individual Educational Program), but transportation is not being provided. Why is this?**

A child who has an IEP does not automatically receive transportation unless the IEP team writes this into the related services. If transportation is not included on the IEP, your child will be transported similarly to regular education students. Students on IEP's will receive the least restrictive type of transportation. Most students other than those with physical disabilities will be treated as regular education students for transportation purposes.

8. **I have been told the bus will not stop in front of my house and my child will have to wait for the bus at another location that is not visible from my home; what can I do?**

No law requires a parent to be able to see a bus stop from his or her home. It is the parent and/or guardian's responsibility to make sure a student arrives to and from the bus stop safely. Walk your young child to the bus stop and have older children walk in groups. There is safety in numbers; groups are easier for drivers to see. Brightly colored clothing is easier for drivers to see than dark colors. Have your child pack his/her belongings in a backpack so items are not

lost along the way. Make sure your child leaves the house so that he/she gets to the bus stop at least five (5) minutes before stop time.

**9. I want my child to wait inside my house until the bus is at the stop. Is this allowed?**

Chardon Local Schools requires children to be waiting at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to and ten (10) minutes after its scheduled arrival. Bus drivers must count the students at the bus stop before they load and as they get on the bus to ensure all children are safely onboard. If students are not waiting at the bus stop, the bus driver cannot count them and cannot be certain all students are safely on board. Waiting at the bus stop before the bus arrives further ensures that no one chases after a bus, which is a very dangerous thing to do.

**10. Will my child receive door-to-door transport?**

Not necessarily. The pick-up point will be within a reasonable distance of the home. Chardon Local Schools may require students to walk up to one-half (.5) mile to a designated bus stop as defined by ORC 3301-83-13 (B). For example, students living on cul-de-sacs less than one-half mile long may be required to walk to a designated bus stop at the nearest intersection. Neighbors who attend the same school are asked to share a single stop.

**11. Why can't my regular education student ride the same bus with my special needs student?**

Special needs transportation is granted in accordance with a student's needs as a related service to the IEP (Individualized Education Program); this type of transportation has specific regulations that make it impossible to transport special needs students with regular education students. Students who receive an education without an IEP are provided transportation through conventional means.

**12. 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, bus routes must be doubled or run as a second route if the regular driver is absent.

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

It is our goal to provide transportation to those students who qualify, every day, on time. Unfortunately, unexpected glitches such as traffic delays or a shortage of drivers covering routes may mean your child's bus is late for pick-up or drop-off. Because of the rapid nature of these delays, we may not be able to give you a specific time. We make every effort to communicate with parents through official school communication channels when a bus will be running more than fifteen (15) minutes late.

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

Behavioral expectations on the school bus are much like those in the classroom. Add 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. Most drivers have bus rules or expectations posted on the bus.

When there is an infraction, a referral is turned in to 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.

**15. Why can't my child get off wherever he or she wants in the afternoon?**

Bus passes are required for all elementary and parochial students in the district not going to an assigned stop associated to their home address. **Bus passes are NOT issued to Chardon Middle School or Chardon High School students.** Students are not permitted to change buses or get off at another stop without approval. Parents should send in a signed letter to be given to the school office. The office will generate a bus pass and your child will need that pass in order to board the bus. If they do not have a bus pass, they will not be able to ride or get off at the stop requested. This bus pass allows the drivers to focus on driving and safety instead of making individual decisions. It also verifies that both the parent and school are aware of the change and helps avoid confusion about the student's location. Bus passes are only issued if space exists on the bus for additional passengers. Please be aware that we may not be able to accommodate your requests until two (2) weeks after school begins.

**16. My child missed the bus pickup in the morning; will one come back?**

No. Because of the large and complex number of routes our district runs, we may not be able to send buses back to pick up students who have missed the bus.

**17. Can my student get off the bus without a parent/guardian/designee there to meet them? What happens if I am not there to meet the bus?**

A parent/guardian/designee is required to be at the stop only for kindergarten or special education students riding special education buses. If no adult is at the stop to receive a kindergarten or special education student, they are taken back to the student's assigned school or the transportation office. If parents/guardians do not feel that their presence is needed at a bus stop, they are encouraged to notify the Transportation Office in writing that their child may get off the bus without a parent/guardian present.

**18. How are bus stops determined?**

Bus stops are determined by the Transportation Department, which considers a variety of factors including the number of students living in the area, while adhering to district policy and state law.

**19. Why are times listed in the original bus schedule posted at the beginning of the year subject to change?**

Bus stop times listed in the Bus Schedule published in August of each year are subject to change due to many reasons. Adjustments to routes are made and times should be established after the first few weeks of school.

**20. How do you decide it is too hazardous to transport students to school because of weather?**

The decision to call off school due to inclement weather begins at approximately 3:30 AM and includes analysis of the following information:

- Weather and radar reports
- Personal observation
- Input from local law enforcement and road crews
- Input from district maintenance and snow removal staff
- When necessary, school personnel drive the roads to determine the condition
- Input and discussions with superintendents from neighboring districts

When all of this information is gathered, the Superintendent, Business Manager, and Transportation Supervisor jointly make the decision to close the schools or keep them open for

students. Our objective is to make this decision no later than 5:45am as school buses are beginning to depart for their morning runs at that time. However, it may be necessary where the decision has to be made after that time. Weather conditions can change abruptly, for better or for worse, but our intent is to determine that it is safe for students and staff to attend school.

**The district uses a delayed start rather than canceling school should weather conditions allow for this option:**

In order to ensure greater safety during a delayed start, the opening of schools will be delayed two hours. The following is information concerning how the delayed opening will be implemented and a school-specific schedule:

- Once the decision has been made to close schools or delay the opening, the Superintendent will activate our Blackboard Communication System and update via Twitter @**chardonsupt** and @**chardonschools**, our district web site and local television stations. It is strongly suggested that parents subscribe to the text/email notification systems now offered by the major Cleveland television stations in order to receive school closing information as soon as it is entered into the system.
- All parents will receive an automated phone call indicating that school has either been cancelled or will open using a delayed start of two hours.
- Under a delayed start, all buses will arrive at their morning stop locations exactly two hours later than normal schedule within the constraints of weather and road conditions. Students (including non-public school students that receive transportation through Chardon Schools) should plan to arrive at their assigned stops approximately 10 minutes prior to that time.
- Under a delayed start, all schools will open for operations exactly two hours later than their normal schedule. Students that walk to school, drive, or receive rides to school should plan on arriving two hours later unless directed otherwise for special programs.
- Under a delayed start, all schools will offer a lunch program with options that meet school nutrition standards.
- Under a delayed start, all schools will dismiss at the usual time.
- Under a delayed start, there will be no transportation to/from Auburn Career Center or CEVEC for AM classes. These students should plan to arrive at CHS for their afternoon classes following the modified schedule for that day. The bus for PM Auburn Career Center Classes will depart CHS at 11:00 AM.
- Under a delayed start, Lake Academy and Geauga Academy transportation will depart at 9:40 AM.
- Under a delayed start, there will be no morning preschool class. Afternoon class will report at noon.
- Under a delayed start, **morning** Latchkey programs will be cancelled for that day.

Again, safety is our highest priority and we strive to make the best possible decision with the information available at the time. Parents can always choose to keep their children home if they truly feel there is a weather-related safety risk. These absences will be recorded as excused, with make-up work provided to the student, if the Superintendent designates the day as a Severe Weather Day in the school district.

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**For any other questions, please contact Transportation at 440-285-4069.**