

PUPIL TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK

for

STUDENTS

and

PARENTS



2014-2015

Pupil Transportation Handbook
for
Parents *and* Students

SOUTH ORANGETOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Blauvelt, New York 10913

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Overview and Purpose



The purpose of this handbook is to clarify the responsibilities of the many persons involved with the transportation of children within the South Orangetown Central School District to and from school. The District's yearly transportation requirements are subject to change due to many reasons, such as student population and the economy. Commuter and commercial traffic patterns and population changes also impact our transportation. As such, the safe transportation of our students is paramount and will require both the support and cooperation of all who are part of the transportation process. Your cooperation as a parent or guardian is vital for the success of a school bus safety program.

We hope you will find this handbook a useful source of information to be used by parents and students in the instruction of sound, safe school bus transportation.

2.0

General Information

Pupil Transportation Eligibility:



In accordance with voter authorization, Board of Education policies, and New York State Law, South Orangetown Central School District provides the following pupil transportation:

- Busing for all students in grades Kindergarten through 8 with no mileage limitation (universal)
- For grades 9 through 12, transportation is provided for students who:
 - ✓ Reside more than 1.5 miles from the Tappan Zee High School
 - ✓ Live in one of the Child Safety Zones that meet State eligibility standards and were authorized by the voters on May 18, 2004
 - ✓ Have an IEP/other approved classification that requires transportation or other special transportation needs.
 - ✓ Attend a **private school** outside the school district, the parent or guardian must submit a written request to the transportation department by **April 1** proceeding the next school year. Students who establish residence in the District after April 1st, including those who move into the district, must make a request within 30 days of residency. All late requests will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

If you are unclear as to your child's eligibility for pupil transportation services, or wish to review your child's eligibility status, please contact the Director of Transportation or Transportation Supervisor in writing or at the phone number contained in this handbook.

2.0

General Information



Missing a scheduled bus stop pick-up

If your child is not ready at the designated pick-up time in the morning, it is the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate transportation to their respective school. The Transportation Department can not send the bus back or dispatch a second bus to pick-up your child. Please make sure your child is ready at least 10-minutes prior to the designated pick-up time.

Bus Stop Locations:

All Students K-12 will be assigned a Bus stop that is safe and centrally located. These stops are selected based on distances from homes to minimize the distance a student must walk to and from the bus stop. It the parents' responsibility to ensure the student arrives at the bus stop at **least 10 minutes** prior to the scheduled pick up and drop off times. Pick up times are approximate and may vary due to unforeseen conditions such as traffic, weather or road conditions. Drop off times may be effected by similar conditions and/or ridership or delays in leaving the school building.

It is important to note:

- ***School buses will not enter dead end streets that require the vehicle to back up to turn around.***
- ***School buses will not enter a cul-de-sac, except when the distance exceeds one quarter mile from the entrance of the cul-de-sac or nearest central pick up location to the student's home. When a cul-de-sac exceeds one quarter mile, there will be a stop located within the cul-de-sac.***

Changes in your Child's Schedule

Please note that there can be NO changes in your child's bus schedule for the first two weeks of school. We expect that each student will make use of our round trip transportation to and from home. Your child can only be assigned to ONE bus route morning and afternoon for 5 consecutive days. If there needs to be a change in the child's drop off schedule due to changes for childcare please use the attached form. If approved, please allow 72 hours for the change to take effect.

Crossing Guards

In an effort to provide greater safety for our students who walk to and from school, the Town has approved crossing guards at the following time and locations:

2.0
General Information



For the following: Morning Times: 7:30am – 8:30am.
Afternoon Times: 3:00pm – 4:00pm

Route 303 at Orangeburg Road
Lester Drive and Orangeburg Road
Palisades Parkway northwest entry/exits
Palisades Parkway northeast entry/exits
Orangeburg Road at Dutch Hill Road
Dutch Hill Road across Tappan Zee HS

For the following:

Erie Street at Cottage Lane	Morning Times	8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
	Afternoon Times	3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

YMCA Program

The Rockland County YMCA will be offering a morning and after-school program open to all students in the District in Kindergarten through 5th grade, to be operated in the morning (AM) out of Cottage Lane Elementary School and in the afternoon (PM) out of Cottage Lane Elementary School and William O. Schaefer Elementary School. If your child will be attending the YMCA after-school program, please make sure you notify the school of your child’s attendance in this program. If your child attends a private school and requires transportation to the after school program, please contact the Transportation Department at the number contained in Section 11.0 of this handbook so that arrangements can be made prior to the start of school.

2.0
General Information



The First Day of School

The first day of school for all students is September 2nd, 2014. This is a *full day* of school for all students in grades K through 12.

Pupil transportation to Tappan Zee High School is **NOT** provided to 9th graders attending orientation on the first day of school.

Transportation will be on a **2-hour delay** for all students in grades 10 – 12 on the first day of school.

Please contact the high School or the Transportation Department at the numbers contained in Section 11.0 of this handbook if you should have any questions.

School Times of Operation

William O. Schaefer (K-2)
8:30 AM - 2:50 PM

Tappan Zee Elementary (3)
9:10 AM - 3:30 PM

Cottage Lane (4-5)
9:10 AM - 3:30 PM

South Orangetown Middle School (6-8) Late Buses 3:30pm Tues/Wed/Thurs
7:35 AM - 2:20 PM

Tappan Zee High School (9-12) Late Buses 4:00pm Mon thru Thurs
8:15 AM – 3:00 PM

2.0 General Information



Reminder to all Drivers in our Community

Under New York State law, the driver of any motor vehicle that meets or overtakes from either direction a school bus that is stopped to pick up or discharge children must stop his/her vehicle before reaching the school bus when the red lights on the bus are flashing. The driver shall not proceed until the bus resumes motion or until signaled by the bus driver or a police officer to proceed.

A conviction for failure to comply with this law may result in a fine, imprisonment, points assessed against the drivers' license and/or an increase in automobile insurance costs.

Most importantly, breaking this law is a threat to the safety of our children.

3.0

School Transportation Guidelines



William O. Schaefer (K-2)

Please reinforce with your child that they must remain in their seats when the bus arrives at school. They need to listen carefully to the bus driver for instruction when to exit the bus.

Please remember there needs to be someone to meet your kindergarteners, first graders, and second graders at the afternoon bus stop. They should be at the stop at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time. **Parents should submit to the transportation office and respective school a list of up to 4 named designees who may receive their child in the event the parent is unable to be at the bus stop.**

If a parent, sibling or a parent approved designee is not present to meet your child at the designated bus stop, your child will be returned to the William O. Schaefer School on Lester Drive in Tappan. The school will call the parent and/or the emergency phone numbers to arrange for a pick up at school.

However, we urge parents, sibling or their adult designee to be at the bus stop at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time each day.

- At the William O. Schaefer School, parents who bring their children to school need to park in the back lot and walk the children into the front entrance of the school. Children should be dropped off between 8:15-8:30 AM. (Please stay out of the circular drive between 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM, and 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM).

3.0

School Transportation Guidelines



Tappan Zee Elementary (3) and Cottage Lane (4-5)

Students will be released from the bus at the afternoon bus stop even if an adult is not present. Children are not returned to either school. It is important that parents make alternate plans if they will not be home when the bus arrives.

- At the Tappan Zee Elementary School, the buses unload the children between 8:55 AM and 9:10 AM. For safety reasons, we ask that parents use the bus lane at the south end of the parking lot when dropping off their children.
- At the Cottage Lane School, between 8:50 AM and 9:10 AM, when buses are unloading children, you need to watch closely for directions from the adult on duty. Typically, you will be told to drop off your child along the bus lane and proceed out onto Western Highway.

3.0

School Transportation Guidelines



Tappan Zee High School (9-12)

- **IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR TAPPAN ZEE HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS AND STUDENTS-**

All eligible Tappan Zee High School students will receive a bus pass prior to the start of school. When boarding the bus at the school, each student will be required to present their ID card to the driver. If a student does not have a pass, the *student may be denied transportation.*

After School Pick-ups

If you plan to pick-up your child after school, please remember you may **NOT** pull into the semi-circles at Tappan Zee Elementary and William O. Schaefer, or the bus lane at Cottage Lane.

Please send a note with your child in the morning advising the school that you will be picking up your child so the teacher will know beforehand that your child should not get on the bus that afternoon. Your child should always know the plan, unless, of course, an emergency arises.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns, please telephone the school directly.

4.0

Parent Responsibilities



The following represents a summary of parent responsibilities that will assist the District in assuring the safest possible transportation for your child(ren). They include:

1. Cooperate with the school by:
 - Making sure pupils are ready on time;
 - Insisting on pupil cooperation with school officials;
 - Consolidating loose books, papers, lunch box or items in knapsack, backpack, gym bag, etc.;
 - Parents should transport to school large item such as instruments, athletic equipment, etc. that cannot fit on your child's lap since large items pose a safety hazard;
 - Observing best safety practices in their own driving.
2. Try to instill in all children habits of punctuality and correct behavior.
3. Assure your children that the bus driver is a friendly representative of the school.
4. Study the list of safety regulations with your child including:
 - Always use the seat belt
 - Remain in your seat at all times, especially when the bus is in motion
 - Keep the aisles clear
 - No fighting, yelling, or throwing objects
5. Accompany very small children to the bus in the morning and meeting them in the afternoon for the purpose of supervising their conduct and assisting in the establishment of desirable safety practices.

4.0

Parent Responsibilities



6. **William O. Schaefer parents**, please remember to be at the stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time in the afternoon.
7. Support the bus driver and school officials in enforcing transportation rules and regulations.
8. Notify the Transportation Department and principal of changes in address, telephone number, or other important information related to your child(ren).
9. In case of any emergency, please contact the principal and/or Transportation Department by telephone.
10. Report to the principal of the school and notify the Transportation Department of any injury or accident involving their child on the bus. Please provide the bus number, route number, location of the incident and the name of the bus driver.
11. Report to the Transportation Department any moving violation committed by a bus driver, with the location, number of the bus, and nature of the violation.
12. Insist that your children adhere to the rule that guests are not permitted to ride buses provided by the Board of Education.
13. **Note that a student may ONLY ride the bus to which he/she is assigned. No student may change buses to ride with friends or go to a destination other than his/her pre-approved bus stop.**

5.0

Student Responsibilities



The following represents a summary of student responsibilities that you should review with your child(ren) prior to the first day of school. They include:

1. Learn and obey all bus safety rules.
2. Be 10 minutes early at the scheduled stop.
3. Wait until the bus comes to a full stop before attempting to enter or get off the bus.
4. Go immediately to your seat and stay there until the bus comes to a complete halt at the next assigned stop or at the school.
5. Take all books, lunches, or other articles with you as you exit the bus.
6. Refrain from talking with or distracting the driver while the bus is in motion.
7. Be a courteous and respectful at all times.
8. Always use the handrail when entering or exiting the bus.
9. Adhere to the following procedures if you must cross the road:
 - Students crossing the road should walk forward of the bus until they can see the bus driver.
 - Before crossing the road, wait until the driver signals that it is okay to cross.
 - While crossing the road, continue to look in both directions.
 - If something falls on the street or under the bus, **DO NOT TRY TO GET IT** – continue crossing the street. Call to the bus driver or tell a parent.
10. Adhere to the following exiting procedures if not crossing the road:
 - Students not crossing the road will exit when the driver signals that it is okay to leave, using handrail.
 - Immediately on exiting, walk at least fifteen (15) feet away from the bus to the nearest sidewalk or out of the roadway. (NYS V.T. 1174)

5.0

Student Responsibilities

11. Do not walk in danger zones (See Below).



12. Ask a parent to call the Transportation Office at 680-1662 if something is left on the bus.
13. Do not bring large or hazardous items on the bus. The NYS Department of Transportation requires that objects carried on a school bus must fit in a child's lap, must not block the aisle or any emergency exits and must not intrude on another child sitting in the same seat. This includes school projects, duffle bags, musical instruments, and any object that could become a projectile in a sudden stop.
14. Properly adjust and fastened your seat belt during the entire trip.
15. Follow all directions given by the bus driver.
16. Do not open the windows without permission. If permission is granted, do not extend head, hand, arms or any objects out the window.

Students not obeying the rules outlined above are subject to the disciplinary actions indicated in Section 10.0 of this handbook.

6.0

Bus Driver Responsibilities



The following represents a summary of responsibilities that we expect and review with all of our Contract Bus Drivers. They include:

1. Maintain the highest degree of safety at all times.
2. Conduct themselves properly and practice good personal habits.
3. Keep the bus clean and orderly at all times and keep it properly heated and well ventilated.
4. Bus drivers must remain on the school bus while passengers are on board and during loading and unloading.
5. Require good conduct and desirable attitudes on the part of pupils.
6. Cultivate proper attitudes of respect and regard for discipline.
7. Move the bus only when absolutely certain all pupils who have crossed in front of the bus are safely located on the opposite side of the roadway.
8. Load and unload pupils properly according to the following rules:
 - Pupils shall not be loaded on a steep grade, blind curve, or on the crest of a hill.
 - Pupils shall not get on or off a school bus or leave their seats while the bus is in motion.
 - Drivers shall not move the bus until all pupils are properly seated.
 - Drivers will encourage students to wear seatbelts, but are not authorized to put the seatbelts on students.

6.0

Bus Driver Responsibilities



9. The driver of a school bus, when discharging pupils who must cross the road, shall:
 - Instruct pupils to cross the road at a distance of 10 feet in front of the bus so as to be in the vision of the driver. The driver shall also keep such school bus halted with red signal lights flashing until all pupils have reached the opposite side of the road.
 - If the driver must discharge both crossers and non-crossers at any one bus stop, the crossers will be discharged first and the driver will devote his/her full attention to their actions. When all crossers have safely crossed the road, then the non-crossers will be discharged.
 - Be sure all pupils and others are free of the danger zones, at least fifteen feet away from bus and safely on sidewalk or out of roadway, before moving the bus.
 - Activate the proper signals relative to the crossover lights before stopping to receive or discharge pupils.
 - Count riders to assure that no bus shall be loaded beyond the capacity indicated by the Department of Motor Vehicles Regulations.
10. **Check each student's name as they board the bus.** High school students will be required to present a pass before being permitted to board the bus.

7.0

Principal Responsibilities



The following represents a summary of each school Principals responsibilities related to your child's transportation. They include:

1. Enforce board policies relating to the transportation of children.
2. Assist the Transportation Department in providing a school bus safety program and enforce its regulations.
3. Work with the Transportation Supervisor resolving problems relating to the transportation of children.
4. Maintain proper standards of pupil conduct on a school bus in cooperation with Transportation Department staff.
5. Help students recognize the important duties of the bus driver and respect for his/her directions.
6. Provide for supervision of loading and unloading school buses with the assistance of school staff.
7. Support the school bus driver in taking whatever disciplinary action is necessary in order to maintain behavior on a school bus. Assigning seats may be warranted in specific instances.
8. Enforce the regulations prohibiting the transportation of large and/or hazardous items on buses.
9. Notify parents as soon as possible if students who ride buses are to be detained after school for any reason.
10. Consult with parents concerning infractions of safety rules committed by their children. If a student is suspended from the privilege of riding a school bus by the Principal the suspension shall be communicated directly to the parent or guardian of the child. It is the district's practice that a suspension shall not become effective until proper notification is made to the parent or guardian. See Section 10.0 on Disciplinary Procedures for more information.
11. Report to the Transportation Department all violations relating to the safe operation of buses assigned to transport children.
12. Conduct bus safety drills in conjunction with the Transportation Department Staff as outlined under Title 8. Section 156.3 of the Educational Law.

8.0

Transportation Department Responsibilities



Transportation for the South Orangetown Central School District is overseen by the Transportation Supervisor, Dennis Rankin, and the transportation department's assistant, Lymarie Colon. Responsibilities of the Department include:

1. Implement and carry out policies of the Board of Education consistent with legal requirements and Education Law.
2. Inspect the credentials of all bus drivers in relation to driver's license, physical examinations, and moral character before certifying the driver to the Superintendent of Schools for approval.
3. Maintain records of the department such as inventories, cost analysis, time keeping, payroll, other correspondence, etc. and submit records as required.
4. Establish all bus schedules and assignments. Participate in special transportation studies and safety programs. Review all accident reports.
5. Develop bus lists of children eligible for district transportation.
6. Coordinate with the school administration transportation for special events, including field trips, interscholastic athletics, etc.
7. Prepare the district's transportation budget.
8. Communicate transportation procedures and regulations to the public.
9. Work with school administration and other personnel to provide a coordinated transportation program.

9.0

Board of Education Responsibilities



It is the intent of the Board of Education to comply with the letter and the spirit of the New York State Education Law; with the regulations of the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Transportation and with the Commissioner of Education's regulations and decisions pertinent to student transportation.

The Board of Education recognizes and assumes the responsibility for all aspects of the transportation of children wherein the health and safety of students are involved. The Board of Education has a legal obligation to safeguard the welfare of district eligible children. This implies that the Board is responsible for the safety of the children transported and further implies that in no way shall education suffer as a result of transportation or lack thereof.

The purposes of the transportation program is to provide safe transportation for students to and from school, to extracurricular activities, on field trips, and those requiring special services.

10.0

Disciplinary Procedures



School bus safety is paramount. Students who violate the School Bus Safety Rules will be written up by the driver. The principal will be notified and the student may have their school bus privileges suspended. Because we seek to assure uniform treatment of our students, the following Schedule of Disciplinary Actions will be followed throughout the District by the building administration:

1st Violation Parent notified of violation.

2nd Violation Conference with parent, pupil, principal and/or bus driver, transportation supervisor. Pupil placed on probation.

3rd Violation Parent notified, bus privileges suspended for up to five (5) school days.

4th Violation Parent notified, bus privileges suspended for up to ten (10) school days.

5th Violation Parent notified, bus privileges suspended for up to twenty (20) school days.

6th Violation Parent notified, bus privileges revoked for remainder of the school year.

NOTE: If a violation, even the first, constitutes a serious danger to any individual, then a conference shall be required as outlined under 2nd Violation above, and bus privileges may be suspended immediately for a minimum of five (5) days.

Video Cameras:

In accordance with Board Policy 8210.1, video cameras may be used on school buses. Video may be used to monitor, support and further document reports of incidents on a school bus. Viewing of a video will be permitted at the students primary school, transportation office or at the central administration offices.

*It is extremely important for all parents and students to note that students will be held accountable to the **Code of Conduct** in effect at the school which they are attending. This pertains to **any** South Orangetown student whether attending a school in the district **or** out of the district.*

11.0

Emergency Numbers/ Notifications



For any concerns or issues regarding your child's transportation, please contact the Transportation Department first. Other important numbers are also provided for your convenience. Please use e-mail where possible to correspond with transportation office.

Transportation Office

Ph. 680-1662
Fax 680-1972

Dennis Rankin
Transportation Supervisor
drankin@socsd.org

Lymarie Colon
Transportation Department Assistant
lcolon@socsd.org

Bus Companies

Peter Brega, Inc – 268-6107
Student Bus – 359-9200
BOCES – 627-4754

Schools

William O. Schaefer	680-1300
Tappan Zee Elem.	680-1400
Cottage Lane	680-1500
SO Middle School	680-1100
TZ High School	680-1600
General Phone Directory	680-1000

11.0
Emergency
Numbers/ Notifications



A NOTE TO PARENTS

Please contact the School Principal if your child experiences a problem while riding aboard our buses. Also, please notify us if anyone is observed in our school bus operation acting in an unsafe manner. Thank you for your continuing cooperation and assistance.

Important

☎ So that we might reach you if we need to, **please make certain we have current emergency numbers**, including accurate phone numbers at which to reach you at work as well as alternate emergency phone numbers for relatives and/or neighbors.

12.0

School Closings

When the South Orangetown Central School District closes due to inclement weather or emergencies, all transportation is cancelled for all students including private, parochial and special ed. During two hour delays, all schools including out of district schools will be affected. The regular pick up time will be two hours later than the regular schedule. Notification will be provided as follows:

- District's website at www.socsd.org
- By the District's automated emergency notification system
- Notification via e-mail or TEXT message if you have registered for this service on the District's website.
- Recorded message on phone # 680-1100

Radio Stations

- 1640 AM
- WCBS-101 FM
- WCBS-88 AM
- WOR-710 AM
- WFAS-103.9 FM
- WFAS-1230 AM
- WNLA-1420 AM
- WHUD-100.7 FM
- WBNR-1260 AM
- WRCR-1300 AM
- WVNJ-1160 AM

TV Stations

- NBC Channel 4
- ABC Channel 7

When transportation is provided on days of extreme cold, ice rain and/or snow, school bus delays should be expected. Drivers are instructed to drive at speeds based on road and/or weather conditions. Mechanical problems may also increase when weather is cold and/or wet.

SOUTH ORANGETOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
623 WESTERN HIGHWAY
BLAUVELT, NEW YORK 10913

2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR

ALTERNATE SITE REQUEST FORM

My child, _____, grade _____, will be going to an alternate site for childcare. This site is located within the South Orangetown Central School District. The name and address of this site is:

Name of Site: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

This childcare is for (check one): _____ AM only (5 days/wk)

_____ PM only (5days/wk)

_____ AM/PM (5days/wk)

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____

Phone #: _____

This form MUST be received by the Transportation Department no later than Aug 15, 2014, in order to accommodate for the beginning of school. Any future changes in your child's bus schedule will require a 72 hour notice and submission of this form.

PLEASE FAX TO 845-680-1972, EMAIL TO TRANSPORTATION PERSONNEL
(lcolon@socsd.org or drankin@socsd.org), **OR MAIL TO ADDRESS ABOVE**

Please note that there can be NO changes in your child's bus schedule during the first two weeks of school. We expect that each student will make use of our round trip transportation to and from home. If there is a change in the child's schedule due to changes for childcare please complete this form and allow 72 hours for the change to take effect once approved.