

Dear Parents:

This information brochure will acquaint you with the rules governing school transportation. Your assistance and cooperation are necessary in order for us to maintain timely, reliable and safe bus service.

Your comments and suggestions can help the County provide better transportation service. Contact your school principal or Ventura County Office of Education Transportation Department (805) 383-1918 if you have a suggestion, complaint or comment.

Emily Mostovoy
Executive Director,
Special Education

Marc Sattler
Transportation Coordinator

SCHOOL BUS SERVICE GUIDELINES

DESIGNATED PICK-UP TIME. Students are expected to be ready for pick-up ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled time. The bus will not leave before the designated time but will only wait TWO minutes, then depart. Parents should wait fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled time before calling Durham (382-2854) to inquire about a late bus. The pick-up and delivery times of each bus should be consistent within approximately ten minutes, although buses may be late due to weather and traffic conditions. Durham will attempt to telephone residences if delays exceed 20 minutes.

TRAVEL TIME. Parent should be prepared for changes in buses, routes and times of pick-up throughout the school year that result from adding or dropping students in the program. Overall route travel time will vary depending on school and home location. The County attempts to ensure that each student rides the bus no longer than one hour

in each direction. There are some students, however, who are regularly scheduled to ride more than one hour.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS. If your son/daughter moves during the school year, notify the school of attendance or district special ed. office at least ten (10) days in advance to ensure continuous transportation service. A change in telephone number as well as emergency address should be recorded with the school and Transportation Dept. No changes will be taken over the phone directly by the Transportation Dept. Child care addresses must be within the resident or receiving district and be the same for all five days during the week.

TEMPORARY CHANGE OF SERVICE. Drivers will not change established routes to accommodate special requests without authorization from the County Transportation Office. All requests for change must be initiated through your child's school and cannot be of a temporary nature, e.g.: one time only, once a month or every other week. Students may use existing stops other than their assigned as an alternate when approved in advance (24 hours) by the school and Transportation Coordinator.

DELIVERY LIMITATIONS. If the parent or designated adult is not present to meet the student, the bus company will contact the emergency address and attempt to deliver there. If this is unsuccessful, the child will be taken back to school or if after school hours, to the local police agency. It is the parents/ guardian's responsibility to be home at the designated time and be aware when their child's school has a minimum day schedule. There must be a signed "Release of Responsibility's form on file at the school and VCOE Transportation Office before a driver can release a student without a designated adult or age appropriate sibling present.

EMERGENCY ADDRESS. Each student must have a designated emergency address (ideally

located within one mile of residence) in case no one is home to receive the student. This can be a relative, neighbor or apartment manager. Pager or cell phone is also acceptable. Service may be delayed until one is provided.

TRANSPORTATION OF MEDICATION. The drug or medication is to be sealed in an envelope or other container IN ADDITION to the bottle or container holding the substance. The envelope is to be labeled with the students name and school. The package is to be given to the driver. Under no circumstances is the student allowed to keep medication in their possession. The driver will deliver the package directly to the school staff or parent/guardian.

ILLNESS. If your child will not be going to school that day, please place the colored placard (available from the driver) in a window visible to the street signifying to the driver not to wait. If your child will not be riding for several days, please call Durham, VCOE Transportation or the school to temporally stop service and again to resume. If a student does not ride for 5 consecutive days, service will stop. You must call Durham the day before to resume service. Students will be dropped from the route after 30 days. **Parent is responsible to pick-up their child at school if the child becomes sick. No additional bus will be sent to take a student home early.**

LOST ITEMS. Parents may call Durham (382-2854) about items left on the bus. Neither the driver, bus company or school will be responsible for student's personal belongings.

WHEELCHAIRS

Parents with students in wheelchairs are responsible to keep the chair in good working order. Wheelchairs shall be equipped with seatbelts with a metal to metal connector and push button or lift cover release. A 3 inch heavy plastic buckle is also acceptable. Velcro held restraints may be utilized for additional support, but not in place of lap belt described above. If brakes are inoperable or the chair is deemed to be unsafe, the student will be denied bus transportation until the repair(s) is made.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Each student riding a bus is expected to obey these conduct rules:

- No physical playing or rough conduct is allowed at any time.
- Remain properly seated at all times and keep head and other parts of the body inside the bus.
- Ask the drivers permission before opening windows.
- Follow any additional direction given by the bus driver or aide.
- No eating, drinking, chewing gum or smoking on the bus.
- Respect the rights of others inside and outside the bus.

Students will be disciplined for disobeying bus rules based on the same standards as misconduct on the school campus. Malicious damage to the bus or persistent infraction of rules may result in denial of VCOE bus service to the student.

PARENT LIABILITY. Parents are required to reimburse the bus company for any vandalism to a school bus committed by the student. Parents will be notified by the school if their student has been involved in behavior leading to damage of a school bus.

REPORTING UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR.

When a student's behavior is unacceptable, the driver will file a written report with the school administrator. The school principal or designee will investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident and take appropriate action.

When a student's misconduct is of a nature that does not jeopardize the safety or welfare of other students or interfere with the safe operation of the bus, counseling may be appropriate. Suspension is considered when counseling fails, there is a safety concern or when a student damages the bus.

Bus service may be terminated if a student's behavior threatens the safety of other passengers or operation of the bus. The parent will be notified of disciplinary action taken by the school administrator or Transportation Coordinator.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

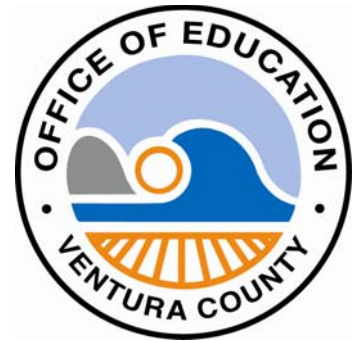
Buses used for the VCOE program are tracked using global positioning satellite (GPS) technology for student safety and accuracy of timing.

School bus transportation is rated by the National Safety Council as the safest form of passenger transportation. Each school bus driver completes classroom and road instruction before certification. They are finger printed and background checked. Candidates are then tested by the California Highway Patrol. The County requires all bus drivers to complete first aid instruction, attend regularly scheduled safety meetings and attend additional training sessions to maintain the skills necessary to safely transport special needs students.

All buses are inspected daily by the bus drivers and annually by the California Highway Patrol to ensure that buses meet safety standards. In addition, certified mechanics perform comprehensive inspections at frequent intervals.

VENTURA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Information About Your School Bus Service



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Stanley C. Mantooth
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"Commitment to Quality Education for All"