

POLICY TITLE: TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS

BACKGROUND

The COSSA Board of Trustees recognizes the problems caused by districts being on disparate calendars and realizes that it is in the best interest of all consortium members to set forth guidelines for the transportation of students when district calendars do not match.

SPECIAL EDUCATION CONSIDERATIONS

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the student must be followed and is the controlling document for that student. If the IEP states that schooling for the child is to occur on X date at the district of attendance and the district of residence is not in session, the district of residence must follow the IEP. Failure to follow the IEP can expose the school district and COSSA to liability to the family/student.

Likewise, a student's Section 504 Plan must be followed with regard to disability/transportation related issues, regardless of the home school's calendar.

Transportation shall be provided as a related service when a student with a disability requires special transportation in order to benefit from special education or to have access to an appropriate education placement. Transportation needs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Travel to and from school and between schools;
2. Travel in and around school buildings or to those activities which are a regular part of the student's instructional program;
3. Specialized equipment (such as special or adapted buses, lifts, and ramps) if required to provide special transportation for a student with disabilities; and
4. Other services that support the student's use of transportation, such as:
 - a. Special assistance, such as an aide on the bus and assistance getting on and off the bus;
 - b. Safety restraints, wheelchair restraints, child safety seats, and vehicle-seat restraints for children whose age/weight requires a vehicle-seat;
 - c. Accommodations, such as preferential seating, a positive behavioral support plan for the student on the bus, and altering the bus route; or
 - d. Training for the bus driver regarding the student's disability or special health-related needs.

The Child Study Team that develops the disabled student's Individualized Education Program will determine on an individual basis when a student with a disability requires this related service. Such recommendations must be specified on the student's IEP. Only those children with disabilities who qualify for transportation as a related service under the provisions of the IDEA shall be entitled to special transportation. All other children with disabilities in the District have access to the District's regular transportation system under policies and procedures applicable to all students of the District. Utilizing the District's regular transportation service shall be viewed as a "least restrictive environment."

Mode of Transportation

One of the District's special education buses will be the preferred mode of transportation. Exceptions may be made in situations where buses are prohibited from entering certain subdivisions due to inadequate turning space or where distance from school may seriously impact bus scheduling. In such situations, other arrangements such as an individual transportation contract may be arranged with the parents. Such voluntary agreement shall stipulate in writing the terms of reimbursement.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Transportation to COSSA Special Education programs is the responsibility of the student's district of residence. Special Education students who require "specialized transportation" which is indicated on their IEP as such will be provided these services through their district of residence. Specialized transportation may include the use of wheelchair accessible buses, aides, specialized equipment, and transportation to their district/school of attendance other than their district of residence.

Students who attend a special education program in another COSSA district (other than their district of residence), will follow the school calendar of the district of attendance unless specific calendar changes have been approved by the COSSA Board of Trustees. The district of residence will provide bus transportation for the student to attend their special education program, even when the district of residence does not have students in attendance at their district.

Regarding severe weather conditions that require school district closure, it will be the responsibility of the transportation supervisor of the student's district of residence to determine if it is safe to transport students.

Transportation of the student to program locations shall always be controlled by the safety of transportation due to weather conditions. If the home district is closed, due to weather, and the district of program attendance is open, a determination will have to be made by the transportation supervisor as to whether the student can be safely transported to the program. If the school district of program attendance is closed due to weather conditions, the student shall not be transported to the location of program attendance.

CTE CONSIDERATIONS

Requiring students to attend CRTEC when their home school district is not in session comes down to the issue of hours of instruction required and conforming to the course requirements. If a school is on a shortened schedule, it is using longer instructional days to obtain the mandatory hours of instruction. Just because a home school district is using a shortened week or year, with longer instructional days, does not mean this is also occurring at CRTEC to the same extent or number of hours for those extended days. Students who are at CRTEC have to attend instruction for mandatory hour requirements, regardless of the home school schedule, in order for everyone to obtain appropriate funding.

A secondary issue is the course requirements. The school district and the student have enrolled in the program. Part of the program is the schedule of classes and the full curriculum necessary to complete the course. A student who only attends CRTEC during the days their home school district is in session likely will not complete the full schedule of classes or curriculum necessary to complete and earn credit for the course.

CTE TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Transportation to CRTEC Career-Technical Education (CTE) programs is the responsibility of the student's district of residence.

Students who attend a CTE program of study at CRTEC will follow the school calendar of CRTEC for their CRTEC participation and the home school's calendar for the coursework done at their home school district. The district of residence will provide transportation for the student to attend their CTE program, even when the district of residence does not have students in attendance at their district.

Regarding severe weather conditions that require school district closure, it will be the responsibility of the transportation supervisor of the student's district of residence to determine if it is safe to transport students.

Transportation of the student to program locations shall always be controlled by the safety of transportation due to weather conditions. If the home district is closed, due to weather, and the district of program attendance is open, a determination will have to be made by the transportation supervisor as to whether the student can be safely transported to the program. If the school district of program attendance is closed due to weather conditions, the student shall not be transported to the location of program attendance.

LEGAL REFERENCE:

I.C. § 33-1501 Transportation Authorized
I.C. 33-315 through 33-318 inclusive
I.C. 67-2326 through 67-2333 inclusive
20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq. Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA)
IDAPA 08.02.03.109 Special Education
Idaho Special Education Manual
COSSA Bylaws, Revised and Adopted April 15, 2019

POLICY HISTORY:

Originally issued as Policy 504. Revised and reissued as policy 8130:
December 21, 2020