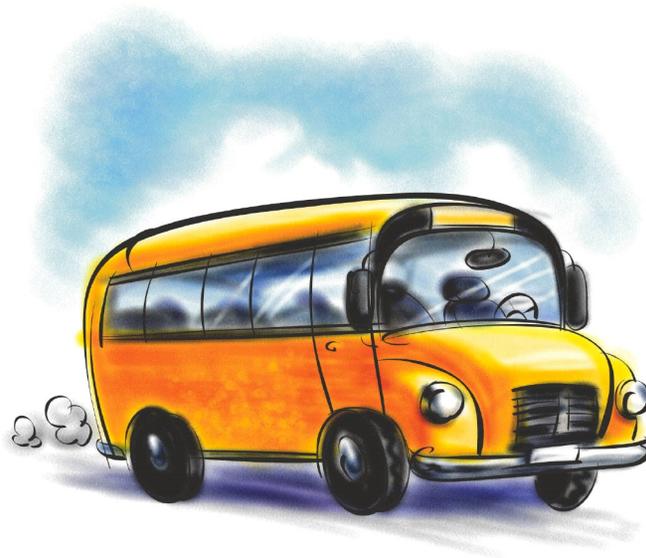

Stanislaus County SELPA Transportation

Parent Manual & Transportation Safety Plan



Dear Parents, Guardians, and School Personnel,

Our goal is to provide the safest, most reliable transportation service possible for children.

The transportation of children involves the united efforts of the Stanislaus County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Staff, Storer Transportation, you, the parent or guardian, and all school personnel.

The Stanislaus County SELPA determines the transportation requirements and policies for special education and contracts with Storer Transportation to fulfill these needs.

The Stanislaus County SELPA prepared this handbook to acquaint you with the rules and regulations covering your child's school transportation.

Please read this information to familiarize yourself with the guidelines and procedures for transportation. Your cooperation is needed to insure reliable, safe and efficient school bus service.

Thank you,

Stanislaus County SELPA Transportation Department



Bus Stops

Children are usually transported from their home to school and back. Pickup and drop-off at day care providers can be provided. Each student is limited to one (1) pickup address and one (1) drop address.

The bus stop will be in front of and on the same side of the street as the student's address unless unsafe to do so. Pickup or release of a student cannot be made in any area determined to be unsafe. Safety always takes precedence over other criteria. Students are required to follow all bus rules when walking to and from their bus stop and while waiting for the bus.

Each student is assigned to a specific bus route and may be assigned to a particular seat. State law requires that no child be permitted to leave the bus at a point other than his/her assigned stop. **Parents or guardians must not make private arrangements with the bus driver. All changes must be cleared through the appropriate SELPA transportation office.**

Drivers are required to follow established routes. They may not make changes in these routes unless authorized by the SELPA transportation office or Storer Transportation. Please do not request the driver to change routes or stops.

Bus Schedules & Delays

Prior to the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians will be notified by the transportation provider of their student's morning pickup schedules. Buses, routes and times may need to be changed throughout the school year to accommodate new students. Parents/guardians will be notified of time changes of more than thirty (30) minutes.

We often experience foggy weather during the winter months. The bus company can not operate its buses until the fog has lifted and visibility allows the buses to operate safely. The delay usually lasts for about one hour (sometimes more).

During the 2021-2022 school year, parents/guardians will be provided with a website address or app to access approximate arrival times and/or delays. The website address is <http://infofinder.com/ifi/?cid=STS5TFQDTSLD>, the parent app is Stopfinder, by Transfinder Corporation. These should be ready for access in the first quarter of 2021— 2022.

Pickup Procedure

Students must be supervised by an adult until the bus arrives. Please have the student ready for pickup at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled time. Buses must operate on a schedule so students arrive at their school sites on time. Buses will depart from the designated pickup location three (3) minutes after arriving. **A bus will not be sent back to pickup a child who is not ready on time.**

The parent/guardian is responsible for assisting the student from the house to the bus. **The bus driver may not leave the bus except to operate the lift gate for students in wheelchairs.** It is the bus driver's responsibility to load and unload the students and to ensure that wheelchairs, car seats, and all seat belts are secured and fastened.

If your student misses the bus or you take your student to school for some other reason, you need to contact Storer Transportation to inform them that your student still needs transportation home.

Address Change

Storer Transportation will pickup and return your student to his/her residence. Temporary changes cannot be accommodated. Requests for alternative addresses will be considered on a case-by-case basis. **Only one agreed upon pickup and one return location can be accommodated.** Addresses must be the same day to day.

You must notify the district office of permanent changes in your student's address, pickup or drop-off locations at least ten (10) working days before the change is to be effective. Changes and additions are completed on a first come first serve basis - **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Due to the volume of changes at the beginning of the school year, changes may take up to ten (10) working days. Changes cannot be made two (2) weeks prior to the winter break nor four (4) weeks prior to the beginning and ending of the school year.

Behavior Intervention

If a student becomes a threat of harm to himself or others and all less restrictive measures have been exhausted, the student may be contained, if it can be done so safely. The Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) terminology statement reads "To maintain your students safety and the safety of others, CPI trained staff use a non-injurious containment technique".

Drop-off Procedure

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A responsible adult at least 18 years old must receive your student when the bus arrives at the scheduled drop location. Any adult who wishes to receive your student, other than the parent or guardian, must be listed on the Special Education Transportation Emergency Form. If the designated adult is unable to meet the bus, the parents must make arrangements for another adult (listed on the emergency form) to meet the bus when it arrives.

It is the parent's responsibility to be at the designated drop location every day the student rides the bus. It is against the law to leave a student unattended and is considered child abandonment when an authorized adult is not available. In the event that a responsible adult is not present to receive your child we will attempt to contact individuals listed on the emergency information form to receive the student. After the third incident you will need to set up a meeting with the Program Manager and complete an After School Plan. The plan must be completed and approved by the SELPA transportation office within ten (10) school days of the incident. If the meeting is not completed within the (ten) 10 school days, transportation **may** be placed on hold.

IF NO ONE IS AVAILABLE we will contact the appropriate law enforcement agency or Child Protective Services. In the event that CPS and/or law enforcement have to be contacted, transportation **may** be discontinued immediately.

Due to the number of medically fragile students, children not attending due to illness, SIP days and minimum days, the afternoon drop time may vary. The bus company is unable to guarantee a specific drop time on a daily basis. **A responsible adult should be available to receive your student beginning at the time he/she is dismissed from school.**

Transportation Emergency Information

A student is not allowed to start transportation until an Emergency Form is on file in the SELPA transportation office. It is imperative that you, as the parent/guardian, maintain correct emergency information in the transportation office. Additions or changes to your current emergency form cannot be done over the phone. You must contact the Program Specialist responsible for your student's class or the district of residence to obtain a new form. The forms need to be updated every 12 months to ensure transportation services.

Illness

Please notify Storer Transportation by telephone prior to the pickup time whenever you are not sending your student to school.

Children who are sick do not learn well at school and expose others to illness should not be sent to school. Most doctors recommend that children be free of fever for at least twenty-four (24) hours before sending them back to school.

Schools have established procedures to follow for students who become ill at school. In most situations parents will be requested to pickup ill students at school and take them home.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY: During times of a public health emergency, you will be notified if your child needs to wear a mask to ride the bus. Masks are required for children in third grade or older unless a valid medical exemption applies. Masks for students younger than third grade are suggested. If your child's grade is within the range of mask wearing, he or she will not be allowed to board the bus unless wearing a mask. If your child needs a mask, one will be provided for him or her.

MEDICATION - For safety, medications are not allowed on the school bus. All medication that needs to be administered at school must be taken to school by the parent, **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

PERSONAL HYGIENE - For the comfort of the others on the bus, it is important to maintain adequate standards of hygiene. Please be sure to toilet students before they board the bus. If your student has needs in this area, please be sure to supply the school with a change of clothes and a plastic bag for transportation home. All car seats, walkers and wheelchairs must be kept clean and sanitary at all times.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION - Please notify the school nurse and the SELPA transportation office of any medical conditions (seizures, asthma, allergy to bees stings, etc.) your child may suffer from. The SELPA transportation office will provide the bus company's dispatch office with the information which will be kept in a special file to be used in the event of an emergency. Each driver has been trained in basic first aid and CPR. Emergency medical personnel will be contacted in case of a medical emergency.

Consecutive Absences

Failure to ride the bus for three (3) consecutive days will be cause for termination of transportation services unless the SELPA transportation office is notified in advance.

Parents assume all responsibility for all items brought on the school bus. Please label all personal items sent to school. The bus company and SELPA transportation assume no responsibility for any lost or stolen articles.

Bus Rules for Students

1. Passengers shall obey bus driver's and bus aide's instructions at all times.
2. Passengers shall sit facing forward with their feet and legs kept out of the aisle.
3. Passengers shall remain seated, with seat belts on, until the bus comes to a complete stop.
4. To avoid possible injury, passengers must keep head, arms and legs inside the bus at all times.
5. The following are not permissible on the bus:
 - a. Loud talking, yelling or screaming;
 - b. Eating, drinking or gum chewing;
 - c. Glass containers;
 - d. Animals, insects, and reptiles;
 - e. Large, bulky items. In no instance shall aisles, doors, steps or emergency exits be blocked;
 - f. Electronic devices including gaming consoles unless authorized by a Bus Plan;
6. Cell phones must be OFF and completely put away while on the bus. They are subject to being taken away if student does not follow this rule.
7. Passengers shall not throw any object inside or from the bus.
8. **Depending on the severity of the offense, an automatic denial of bus riding privileges may be imposed for the following:**
 - a. Fighting, biting or spitting;
 - b. Obscene language or gestures directed at the bus driver, aide, other students, or the general public;
 - c. Vandalism to the bus or private property;
 - d. Exiting the bus through a window or emergency exit (except during an emergency) or at an unauthorized location;
 - e. Any weapons or hazardous items brought on the school bus;
 - f. Any matches, cigarettes and/or controlled substance brought on the school bus;
 - g. Any time school, transportation, public authorities and/or parents/guardians must be dispatched to a bus due to a student (s) misconduct;
 - h. Threatening driver/aide and other students.

REMEMBER - The bus driver has a high degree of responsibility. So do the passengers! Advise your student to help the bus driver(s) so your student may have a safe and pleasant trip! **Thank You!**

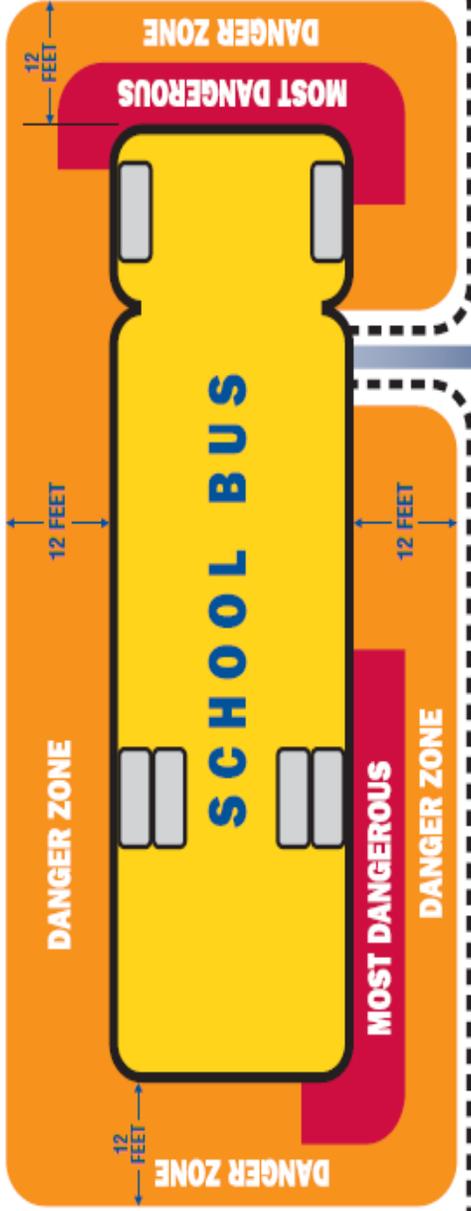
Student SAFETY Rules For Boarding/Exiting the School Bus

1. Wait until the school bus stops, the door opens and the driver says it is okay to board the bus.
2. Assure that there are no objects dangling from your student's backpack which could get caught in either the handrails or doors while entering or exiting the bus.
3. Check the road for other vehicles before stepping off the bus.
4. Never stand closer than 12 feet to the bus as drivers will not be able to see the student. Anything within 12 feet of the bus is the DANGER ZONE.
5. Stay in a safe place away from the street while waiting for the bus.
6. Never try to pick up things which are near or under the bus; warn the driver before picking it up.
7. Students must walk to and from the school bus.
8. Use the handrails when entering and exiting the school bus. Proper use of the steps is required.



DANGER ZONES

DANGER FROM PASSING CARS



Bus Suspension Policy

The bus driver and/or bus aide, through the bus incident process, will report students who are disruptive and/or exhibiting dangerous behavior, including, but not limited to, infraction of the bus rules to the SELPA transportation office and Storer Transportation. Any student may receive the maximum suspension and/or be denied bus transportation if it is determined that he/she created a safety hazard on the bus. The Stanislaus County SELPA transportation office will make the determination of the suspension.

Students will receive a verbal warning by the bus driver or bus aide, and an incident report will be completed and sent to the parent/guardian with a copy of the bus rules. Continuing misconduct will result in the procedures outlined below:

1st Incident - Written warning and a copy of Incident Procedures mailed to parent/guardian.

2nd Incident –Written warning and a copy of Incident Procedures mailed to parent/guardian.

3rd Incident - Student may be denied bus riding privileges for up to three (3) school days.*

4th Incident - Student may be denied bus riding privileges for up to five (5) school days pending the outcome of an IEP meeting.*

*** If your student has been denied bus riding privileges and you are not able to provide transportation, contact your district of residence. This incident procedure does not affect the responsibility of the district of residence to provide the services specified on the IEP.**

Vandalism

The California Civil Code, Section 1714.1 states: “Any act of willful misconduct of a minor which results in injury or death of another person or in any injury to the property of another shall be imputed to the parent or guardian having custody or control of the minor for all purposes of civil damages, and such parent or guardian having custody or control shall be jointly and severally liable with such minor for any damages resulting from such willful misconduct up to a maximum of \$10,000.”

School Bus Driver Qualifications 11

The Stanislaus County SELPA requires all school bus drivers to attend regularly scheduled safety meetings and in-service training sessions to improve their skills in transporting special needs students. In addition, state law requires that each driver must: have a valid School Bus Drivers Certificate, have First Aid and CPR training from the American Red Cross, pass a physical examination, and obtain traffic and criminal clearance.

School Bus Accidents

We are fortunate to have an excellent record regarding school bus accidents. When/if any accident involving a school bus occurs, no matter how minor, it must be reported and a law enforcement officer must respond to the scene. Under these circumstances, it is common for the bus to be delayed an hour or more.

When/if an accident occurs, it is Storer Transportation's responsibility to determine if there are any injuries and the extent of the damages, and to notify the proper authorities, including the California Highway Patrol, Emergency Medical Personnel (if needed), and the SELPA transportation office. Storer Transportation will notify the parents upon determining the names of the students on board, the extent of the injuries (if any), the location of the accident, and a description of the accident.

School Bus Equipment

To ensure use of safe equipment, all school buses are inspected daily by the bus driver and annually by the Department of the California Highway Patrol. In addition, each vehicle must be certified so that it meets all applicable regulations and laws relating to pupil transportation in the State of California. In addition, all buses are equipped with two-way radios and air conditioners.

California law require seat belts for bus passengers. All students are required to wear them while riding the school bus. **Seat belts are not to be unfastened until the bus has stopped.**

Car Seats and Wheelchairs

Students who are physically unable to sit safely secured by a seat belt or safety vest must be transported in approved car seats or wheelchairs.

Students under the age of four (4) years and weighing under forty (40) pounds will have a car seat provided for by Storer Transportation.

Wheelchairs shall be equipped with brakes and seat belt properly maintained by the owner of the chair. Velcro fasteners shall not be the sole source of restraint on a wheelchair. All wheelchair tires and brakes must be maintained so as to prevent the wheels from moving when the brakes are applied.

Electric wheelchairs transported on school buses shall be capable of being locked in gear when placed in a school bus or shall have an independent braking system capable of holding the wheelchair in place. Wheelchairs shall be turned off while being transported on the school bus. Batteries used to propel electric wheelchairs shall be both leak-resistant and spill-resistant or shall be placed in a leak-resistant container. Batteries shall be secured to the wheelchair frame in such a manner as to prevent separation in the event of an accident.

Any wheelchair which does not meet these minimum requirements shall not be transported. It is the parent's responsibility to provide all equipment which meet minimum safety requirements. Storer cannot transport unoccupied wheelchairs.

Therapy

Students eligible for CCS Therapy will be transported on school attendance days only. Transportation cannot be provided during off-track, holidays, and student non-attendance days or during prime home-to-school or school-to-home times.

Minimum Day Transportation

Storer Transportation is contracted to provide two (2) minimum days per school district, each school year. Your student's school district is responsible for requesting its two days of minimum day transportation at the beginning of each school year. Transportation will be provided at regular bell time on all days where minimum day transportation is not provided.

No Student Left Unattended Procedure

Each school bus, shall be equipped with an operational child safety alert system. A “child safety alert system” is a device located at the interior rear of a vehicle that requires the driver to either manually contact or scan the device before exiting the vehicle, thereby prompting the driver to inspect the entirety of the interior of the vehicle before exiting.

Each school bus driver is required to check their bus after each run/route/trip once finished. This means they will get out of the driver seat, walk the entire length of the bus checking the entirety of the interior for sleeping students and articles that may have been left behind before exiting the vehicle. Drivers will physically walk to the back of the bus contact or scan the device after transporting each group of students during their tour of duty. This is pursuant to Senate Bill 1072 which amends Education Code 39831.3(a) which requires the preparation of this Transportation Safety Plan.



Red Light Crossing

In most cases your students will be picked-up and dropped off in front of your home. However, due to some one-way roads and other circumstances a student may be required to cross the street. In all cases where a student on our transportation service has to cross the street, they will be escorted by the bus driver with the use of the red crossing lights on the school bus.

The driver will turn on the red lights and exit the bus in front of the student to be crossed. The student will wait on the curb in front of the bus until the driver walks to the center of the roadway, stops traffic, and asks the student to cross the street. The student must walk, not run, all the way across the street before the driver can return to the bus and turn off the red crossover lights. All students requiring red light crossing will be noted on each drivers route sheet with the word **“ESCORT”** next to the students name.



School Bus Safety Zones

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School buses are the safest mode of transportation for school students in the United States. However, school buses can be very dangerous and we must follow some very important rules when around a school bus:

At no time should anyone go under a school bus. If something is dropped or goes under the school bus, the school bus driver is the only person who is allowed to retrieve the item.

Students, parents and school personnel should stay away from the front, rear and sides of a school bus. The only time a person should be closer than 10 feet to the school bus is when the school bus is stopped and the doors are open.



School Site Responsibilities

Each and every school site that receives students who ride our transportation must have appropriate school staff available fifteen (15) minutes prior to the start of school. School staff should meet each and every bus to receive students and maintain safety in the school bus unloading area.

After school, students should be brought to the bus by school staff. School staff should assist students in getting on the correct bus and maintain a safe loading area. Buses will depart the school site **5 minutes** after bell time. If buses arrive after the bell time, they will wait **5 minutes** before departing.

Service Problems or Complaints

Please direct all comments, questions, or complaints regarding transportation service to the Stanislaus County SELPA. Every attempt will be made to resolve each issue.

**Stanislaus County SELPA
(209) 238-6566**

**Storer Transportation
(209) 521-8331**



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