

Administrative Procedure 561- Transportation of Students with Unique Needs

Background

The Division believes that transportation for students with unique needs is to be provided where possible, balancing the needs of the student with the requirement to safely transport all students to school. Requests for the transporting of a student with unique needs shall be considered on the individual circumstances of the student and the collective circumstances of the bus and bus route the student rides.

In general, students with unique needs, including Pre-Kindergarten Program Unit Funded (PUF) students, would have an inclusive education coding and qualify for additional transportation funding for the unique needs from Alberta Education.

Procedures

1. Students with unique needs that are mobile and exhibit a high level of self control may be transported on a school bus on the same basis as other students.
2. Students with unique needs that are not mobile or do not exhibit a high level of self control may be transported to and from school provided that:
 - 2.1. an evaluation of the student be completed by an inclusive education consultant to provide information to assist with a decision.
 - 2.2. an Individual Program Plan (IPP) be completed; such plan to include specific program needs that relate to riding independently on a school bus.
 - 2.3. the Director of Inclusive Education is responsible for directing specific modifications that may be required to attend to the specific needs of the student
 - 2.4. the bus driver, parent(s), Principal, teacher(s), and education assistant(s) keep an open line of communications regarding the needs and progress of the student.
 - 2.5. where the student is secured through a harness or locking mechanism (as in the case of a wheelchair) that appropriate arrangements be made by the bus driver to release the student and assist them to safety in the case of an emergency.
3. Pre-Kindergarten (PUF) students may receive transportation services provided that such transportation does not disrupt the safe operation of the school bus and where transportation funding is provided for the child.
4. In the event that the Pre-Kindergarten PUF student is deemed by the Division to need an approved child restraint:

- 4.1. The parent(s) will be responsible for helping the child onto the bus and securing the child into the restraint system.
 - 4.2. The receiving school will ensure that staff is available at the school to help the child out of the restraint system and off the school bus.
 - 4.3. This process will be the reverse in the afternoon with the school ensuring that the child is helped onto the bus and secured into the restraint system and the parent(s) being responsible to meet the bus and help the child out of the restraint system and off the bus.
5. In the event that transportation cannot be done in a safe manner or any of the criteria cannot be met, alternate parent provided transportation will be arranged with the Director of Transportation Services. Parents providing their own transportation for students may be reimbursed by the Division at the current Division rate to the maximum provided by Alberta Education.

Reference: Section 4, 11, 32, 33, 36, 37, 52, 53, 59, 59.1, 68, 197, 222, 225 Education Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Traffic Safety Act
Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation 121/2009
School Transportation Regulation (A.R. 96/2019)
Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation 304/2002
Vehicle Equipment Regulation 122/2009

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