

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES and PROCEDURES

In this document:

1. Registration and Payment Process for Shrewsbury Public School Students through the PowerSchool Parent Portal
2. Registration and Payment Process for Private and Vocational School Students – **Online registration via SPS Website**
3. Bus Privilege Registration Refunds
4. Free/Reduced Lunch and Bus Privileges
5. Route/Bus Stop Communication and Changes
6. Parental Responsibility
7. Student Discipline
8. Music Instruments
9. Before/After School Care Alternate Location Transportation
10. Route Planning
11. Snow/Emergency Cancellations
12. Emergency Evacuation Drills Snow/Emergency Cancellations
13. Video/Audio Recording
14. Early Dismissals
15. Missing Child

1. Registration and Payment Process for Public School Students

- All students enrolled in Shrewsbury Public Schools **MUST** register online through the PowerSchool Parent Portal*.
- If you see payment is required when you register, you have two options:
- **Pay online after setting up your family SchoolPay account OR**
- **Mail in payment (check or money order only) payable to Shrewsbury Public Schools, to Transportation, 100 Maple Ave, Shrewsbury, MA 01545. In the Memo area, please write the student's ID # and/or full name.**

**High school students cannot access Bus Privilege Registration through their accounts. Registration can only be accessed by parents through the Parent Portal.*

2. Registration and Payment Process for Private and Vocational School Students

- Private school and Assabet Valley Regional High School students will **NOT** register through the PowerSchool Parent Portal. Students who attend Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School or any private school in Shrewsbury **need to register online**. Access to online registration can be found here:
[_https://schools.shrewsburyma.gov/transportation/private-and-vocational-school-transportation-registration](https://schools.shrewsburyma.gov/transportation/private-and-vocational-school-transportation-registration)
- **Pay online after setting up your family SchoolPay account OR**
- **Mail in payment (check or money order only) payable to Shrewsbury Public Schools, to Transportation, 100 Maple Ave, Shrewsbury, MA 01545. In the Memo area, please write the student's full name and the School.**

Please note: Students attending Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School will receive bus transportation at no cost per state law. The same eligibility rules for free or fee-based busing for Shrewsbury Public School students apply to students attending private schools in Shrewsbury.

3. Bus Privilege Registration Refunds

- Refunds will be given up to the start of school. Once school has started, **no refunds will be granted**. You must complete the Refund Request Form and mail or drop off to Bus Registration, 100 Maple Ave. *Please note: A \$25.00 processing fee will be deducted from the refund amount and late fees will not be refunded.*

4. Free/Reduced Lunch and Bus Privileges

- **The Free/Reduced application must be completed EACH YEAR and submitted after August 1.** If you applied for Free/Reduced Lunch during the school year and were approved, the approval expires on **September 30**. Detailed information can be found on the Food Services Department webpage. Any questions, contact Beth Nichols: bnichols@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us. *Please note: Bus drivers, school administration and the Transportation Team will perform audits randomly throughout the school year to check ridership privilege eligibility and payment status.*

5. Route/Bus Stop Communication and Changes

- Parent/Guardian of SPS students can obtain bus route information in late August by accessing PowerSchool Parent Portal. A notification will be sent through email to families when the route and stop information is available.
- Parent/Guardian of private/vocational school students will also receive an email in late August. The district buses students to and from pre-established bus stops. Whenever possible, centralized neighborhood bus stops have been established. Making additional stops, even if the bus is passing your residence, will not be allowed. Do not request that the bus driver pick your student up in front of your residence if a centralized neighborhood bus stop has been indicated in your PowerSchool Parent Portal. We receive many phone calls about this. Having centralized bus stop locations is equitable, safe and saves both time and money. The Transportation Team has given AA Transportation strict instructions to maintain stop locations and notify the Transportation Team if changes are requested. If you feel there is an extraordinary safety circumstance that would justify a reevaluation of the bus stop location, a Bus Issue/Change Request Form must be submitted. This form is available on the Transportation main page under "Forms and Applications". All non-urgent issues will be evaluated and addressed in the order that they come in. Once the evaluation is complete, a communication will be sent as to the outcome.
- The school district may make modifications to bus assignments, routes and bus stops during the course of the year. These changes are made to improve efficiency or enhance safety. Parents and students will be notified in advance of the change start date.

6. Parental Responsibility

- Parents are responsible for children getting to and from the bus stops -• Shrewsbury Public Schools determines the placement of school bus stops after careful consideration. Site visits are often part of our process, whereupon site distances, traffic flow, patterns and volume are reviewed. We often ask members of both the Police Department and transportation contractor to assist us in making bus stop decisions. If a student is repeatedly not visible to the driver and at their designated bus stop spot, the School Department will send a warning notification home with the student. As stated above in Policy # 4 – If you feel a re-evaluation of the bus stop is necessary, you must complete the [Bus Change Request Form](#). This form is available on the Transportation main page under "Forms and Applications".
- Students are required to be present at their stop location and visible to the bus driver 10 minutes prior to designated pick up times.
- In addition, children highlighted in the following paragraphs require parent/guardian presence at the bus stop:
 - Kindergarten Students -• A parent/guardian or responsible adult must be present at their student's bus stop as they exit the bus. If a parent/guardian or responsible adult

is not present at the stop, the child will be returned to their respective school where the child must be picked up by a parent or responsible adult with proper identification.

- *Special Needs Students kindergarten to grade 12* -• A parent/guardian or responsible adult must be present for special needs students requiring specialized transportation. A parent/guardian or responsible adult must be available to assist if necessary to remove the child from the vehicle. Driver and/or monitor are not allowed to leave the vehicle unattended. If a parent/guardian or responsible adult is not visible at the stop location, AA Transportation will follow the “[Special Education Emergency Transportation Procedures](#)” protocol posted under “[Featured Pages](#)” on the [Transportation Department main page](#).
- Parents should not allow students to ride any other bus than the one assigned and identified in the Parent Portal account. Students may not ride a bus they do not have privileges to ride for any reason. This is a safety issue and the student will be subject to a warning notification if they do not comply.
- Students cannot carry on oversized objects that may block the aisle, cause a loss of passenger seat space, obstruct the driver’s view or create a safety hazard. Objects will be permitted only if they can be held in a student’s lap. The school district assumes responsibility for children once they are seated in the school bus until the children depart from the bus at the end of the school day.

7. Student Discipline

- Since school bus transportation is an extension of the school day, expectations for student behavior on the bus are the same as in the classroom. If a student engages in inappropriate behavior, the bus driver is expected to complete a “Bus Conduct Report”. These reports are sent to the student’s school principal, the Transportation Office.
- Principals will exercise judgment and discretion regarding appropriate consequences based upon the circumstances of the incident and the student(s) involved. The “[Bus Discipline Procedures and Consequences](#)” form can be viewed on the district’s website.

8. Music Instrument

Students are allowed to bring their music instruments on the buses only if the instruments are small enough to fit alongside their seats. Instruments shall not take bus seats, shall not be left in the hallway, nor shall they be left unattended. When carrying the instruments on the bus, students need to be careful so that the instruments will not knock on other students.

9. Before/After School Care Alternate Location Transportation

Transportation to or from alternate locations for the purpose of before or after school care providers within the Town of Shrewsbury is available to students using the following criteria:

- Kindergarten and Elementary Students – the alternate location must be for **5 days per week** to be eligible for transportation. Transportation will not be available to students who attend daycare or travel to another location on a part time basis (less than 5 days per week). Also, the location must be in the same school district as the home residence. (Ex: a student living in the Floral Street School district must go to a location in the Floral Street School district;; a student living in the Coolidge district must go to a location in the Coolidge district, etc.).
- It will be necessary to complete the [Before/After School Care/Alternate Location](#) information in PowerSchool Parent Portal **while registering** in order to utilize before/after school care alternate location transportation services.
- If an alternate location (pick up and/or drop off) becomes necessary after registration during the school year a Bus Issue/Change Request Form must be submitted. This form is available on the Transportation main page under “Forms and Applications”.

10. Route Planning

The district uses a computer-generated route optimization software package to assist in

developing the most efficient and cost effective plan for bus routing. *This is the only calculation method that will be used to determine distance.* Prior to the start of school, school bus route information will be posted on PowerSchool Parent Portal.

11. Snow/Emergency Cancellations

- The Superintendent of Schools determines school cancellations and delays. The Superintendent's Office will notify all families via the school department's website and telephone notification system. (Please be sure to confirm your desired phone number/s in your child's demographic section of your PowerSchool Parent Portal.)
- In addition, school delays and cancellations are announced on local television and radio stations. When Shrewsbury Public Schools cancel, delay or have an early release due to inclement weather, all buses will run on the public school schedule, and private school transportation will be provided on the same schedule. When Shrewsbury Public Schools has a one-hour delayed opening, the school buses will run on a one hour delayed schedule. When Shrewsbury Public Schools has a two hour delay, the school buses will run on a two hour delayed schedule.

12. Emergency Evacuation Drills Snow/Emergency Cancellations

As mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, emergency evacuation drills will be conducted twice per school year. These drills will occur at the school site, while students occupy the bus. Representatives from the Transportation Office and/or school staff will be present during the drill. In addition, police officers and firefighters routinely observe the evacuation drills.

13. Video/Audio Recording

The school district, through the school bus contractor, has access to digital recording devices on its school buses. These cameras are used at the discretion of the school department, or school bus personnel, to monitor and record student behaviors while on board the school bus. No student shall be allowed to use video/audio recording devices on the bus.

14. Early Dismissals

On rare occasions, the school district may release students from school prior to the regular release time due to inclement weather, or a facility emergency. Communication regarding such events is sent to all parents as far in advance of the event as possible, using telephone and electronic means of contact.

15. Missing Child

All missing children calls should be reported to the Transportation Office at 508-•841-•8363 or 508-•841-•8400, option 2. Whenever a child is reported missing (i.e., not returning home after an attended day at school) the Transportation Team responds with the following protocol:

- Notification made to the School Principal. S/he will contact the student's teacher(s) and have the school building and grounds searched.
- Notification to the bus contractor. They will search the student's bus and the driver will be contacted and interviewed.
- Parents will be asked to contact friends of the missing child. Most often a child is located at a friend's house within the first hour.
- Notification is made to the Police Department if necessary.

Once the child has been located, all involved parties are contacted to confirm.