

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

The mission of the Springfield Public Schools (SPS) is to provide transportation services that are in compliance with all rules and regulations set forth within the General Laws of Massachusetts, the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles and the Springfield School Committee as well as any other areas not covered by specific declaration of policy.

The SPS provides no cost transportation for students in grades K-5 who reside over one and one half miles from the school they attend. Students in grades 6-12 who reside over two miles are provided no cost transportation from the school they attend. Transportation is provided to and or from the student's legal residence only as it appears in the SPS student database. No alternative addresses will be considered. The SPS does not allow unauthorized passengers aboard school vehicles. School bus routes are established under the direction of the Administrator of Transportation Services for the SPS. Designated bus stops will be established within a reasonable walking distance not to exceed one mile. Authorized bus stops are located at intervals where students may board and disembark with the utmost in safety allowed by existing road conditions. All SPS school buses are subject to video surveillance.

Students who may qualify for special transportation (door to door) due to a physical/mental impairment may request such service by submitting a letter documenting the need for transportation by their family physician to the Administrator of Transportation Services. Ultimately, the decision to either grant or deny such a request is at the sole discretion of the 504 Coordinator/Team at the school the student attends.

### ***SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS AFTER SCHOOL CARE CENTER***

The Springfield Public Schools under the auspices of the Transportation Department operates an after school center located at the Rebecca M. Johnson School, 55 Catherine Street, Springfield. The telephone number at the center is 413-787-6859. The center operates each school day, 3:00pm to 6:00pm and serves children who cannot safely be returned home upon conclusion of their school day. Children are transported to the after school center by their school bus drivers where they are met by staff.

The after school center caters to kindergarten children who are not met at the bus stop by their parent/guardian or responsible sibling/adult. The center also cares for children with special needs in grades K-5 who are not met by a parent/guardian or responsible sibling/adult when brought home from school. Children in lower grades who show apprehension or are unfamiliar on how to travel home safely when not met by a parent/guardian or responsible sibling/adult may also be brought to the after school center. Furthermore, the after school center will also care for students in grades 6-12 with disabilities who cannot safely be left at home alone or who cannot safely gain access to their home.

## **ANTI-IDLING LAWS**

Chapter 90, Section 16A of the Massachusetts General Laws states in part that *“No person shall cause, suffer, allow or permit the unnecessary operation of the engine of a motor vehicle while said vehicle is stopped for a foreseeable period of time in excess of five (5) minutes. Whoever violates any provision of this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than one hundred (\$100) dollars for the first offense, nor more than five (\$500) dollars for each succeeding offense.”*

## **PROPER BUS CONDUCT**

### **Rules & Expectations**

1. The bus driver and monitor (if assigned) are responsible for the safety of all students aboard their bus.
2. Stand back and away from the curb until the bus is completely stopped and the door is opened prior to boarding.
3. All students should promptly take a seat when boarding and remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop. The bus driver/monitor will instruct all passengers when it is safe to disembark from the vehicle.
4. Windows should not be opened without the permission of the bus driver/monitor. At no time should any part of a student's body be extended outside of the bus.
5. Kindergarten students must wear identification tags while riding a school bus indicating the bus stop they are assigned.
6. Items that are considered a weapon are strictly prohibited aboard all school buses.
7. The use of tobacco products, alcohol or drugs are strictly prohibited aboard all school buses.
8. Do not push, fight or indulge in “horseplay” while aboard a school bus. Always respect the rights of fellow passengers.
9. Throwing objects from the bus is strictly prohibited.
10. Treat the school bus as you would an object of your own. Any act(s) of vandalism by a student will result in suspension from the school bus along with financial restitution for all damages incurred.
11. The school bus driver will determine whether or not a student may board with a small musical instrument such as a harmonica, trumpet, violin, etc., provided it can be stored within a student's belongings or under a seat. Large musical instruments such as cellos, keyboards, trombones or guitars are strictly prohibited.
12. Toys and sporting equipment (including but not limited to; baseballs, footballs, basketballs, soccer balls, hand held games and radios) are strictly prohibited aboard all school buses.
13. Live animals, even though they may be contained within a cage are prohibited aboard all school buses.

14. For safety reasons, students should not cross any street until they are absolutely sure all traffic is stopped and it is safe to do so. Students should cross in front of the school bus with the monitor (if present) or while the driver is watching. Students should never walk or run alongside of a moving bus.
15. Per SPS guidelines, kindergarten students must be met by a parent/guardian at their bus stop. If another individual is to meet a kindergarten student from the bus, the parent must submit to the Transportation Department a written note with the names and relationship to the child(ren). Violation of this procedure will result in the child being brought to the Johnson After School Care Center.
16. Whoever willfully throws or shoots an object at a school bus shall be punished by a fine or not more than \$500 or imprisoned for not more than one year or both. A person so offending may be arrested without a warrant by a law enforcement officer authorized to serve criminal process. If such person commits such an offense in the presence of an officer and refuses to state their name and address at the request of such officer, this individual may be arrested without a warrant. An object is defined but not limited to a rock, snowball, ice ball or metal object that is projected at a target as defined by MGL, Chapter 159, Section 104.