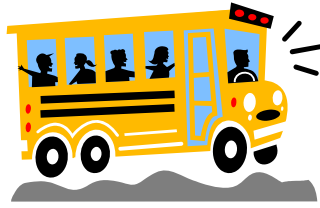


SCITUATE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



BUS PASS & FEE-BASED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM 2011-2012 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Who is eligible for town-paid (free) school bus transportation in Scituate?

Students in **Grades K-6** who reside over 2 miles from their assigned school are eligible for town-paid (free) bus transportation. This determination is mandated by the State of Massachusetts (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71 Section 68). All other students in Grades K-12 will have the option to participate in the fee-based transportation program.

2. How is the two mile distance measured?

The two mile distance is measured from the end of the driveway of the student's home to the closest entranceway of the school, using the shortest means by public roadway. The Transportation Department has an updated list of streets in the "fee zone" and "no fee zone". Please review the list as some changes have been made from the previous year's list. The list is available at the Scituate Public School's website at: www.scituate.k12.ma.us and at all four elementary schools.

3. What is the fee-based transportation program?

All students who are NOT eligible for town-paid busing will have the option to purchase a bus pass through the "Fee-Based Transportation Program." (i.e., K-6 students living two miles or less from their assigned school and all students grades 7-12, regardless of distance.) Passes for 2011-2012 school year are \$240.00 per student with a \$460.00 family cap.

4. Under what circumstances would I be eligible for a refund?

Refunds will be granted to those families who move during the school year if they return the bus pass to the Transportation office along with a written request for the refund. Refunds may be issued to high school students who receive a parking space for the 2011-12 school year. In this instance, parents/guardians must request a refund in writing within 30 days of receiving the parking pass and the bus pass must be returned. Refunds will be prorated. No refunds will be granted for those families who opt for other means of transportation. Please understand that routes and staffing will be established based upon enrollments as of June 10th.

5. How do I apply for the fee-based transportation program?

Each student will receive a bus pass application. Students wishing to obtain a bus pass must complete the registration/application and return it with payment no later than June 10, 2011. **Students in grades K-6 that reside in a "no fee zone" need not fill out an application; a bus**

pass will automatically be generated for these students. Payments can be submitted online via electronic payment which should be available sometime after May 15, 2011. You can make this payment through the Scituate Public Schools website at: www.scituate.k12.ma.us from your checking account (at no additional cost) or via MasterCard or Discover with a convenience fee for a single student or for a family plan. Convenience fees are shared by the credit card company and Unibank; no additional funds will be allocated to Scituate Public Schools.

6. What are the payment terms?

The payment deadline is June 10th, 2011. Payment is due in full by check or on-line payment as indicated above. Please note that any check returned due to insufficient funds or closed bank accounts will have a \$25 bank fee charged as a penalty to the check writer. Applications or payments received after the June 10th deadline will result in the student being placed on a waiting list for transportation. **Payment plans and/or partial payments will not be accepted.**

7. What happens if I send in my application/payment after the June 10th deadline?

Applications or payments received after the June 10th deadline will result in the student being placed on a waiting list for transportation. Bus routes and staffing will be planned based on applications and payments received on or before June 10th. Applications will be accepted after June 10th based on the availability of space on a bus and if there is an existing stop already on the route. **The cost for passes after July 15th will be \$265.00 per student with a \$485.00 family cap.** No new stops will be added for students paying late. New residents can pay for transportation upon enrollment to a new school.

8. Does my child need a bus pass?

Yes. **All bus students are required to carry their bus pass on a daily basis** beginning the first day of school. The bus pass should then be attached to the student's backpack. This will keep the pass handy and allow the student to display it without delay. Students who are unable to present a pass will not be allowed to board the bus.

Bus passes will be mailed to your home address; you can expect to receive your bus pass in mid to late August.

PLEASE NOTE: Passes will only be distributed to elementary students who reside in a "no fee zone" and K-12 students who have completed an application and paid the transportation fee in full, including any past due balances.

9. How do I know if I have a past due balance?

If you suspect that you may have a past due balance, please contact the Transportation Office.

10. What if my child loses the bus pass?

A replacement bus pass may be purchased for a \$10.00 fee at the School Department Transportation Office, Scituate Public Schools, 606 C.J. Cushing Highway, Scituate, MA 02066.

11. Where will my child be picked up or dropped off?

Children will walk to a common bus stop. Students are not entitled to street-by-street or door-to-door pickup or delivery. All stops will be at corners, whenever possible, as to make them fair and consistent for all. Bus stops are set up in accordance with School Committee policy and State law. In the case of new residents, you may be in an area that might require issuing a new bus stop. Until the area is reviewed, and if a new stop needs to be added, students should go to the closest bus stop until a new one is established by the Transportation Office. Parents are responsible to assure their child is at the correct bus stop. Any child standing at unauthorized locations or bus stops may not be picked up.

Regarding Full-Day Kindergarten: Students attending the full-day kindergarten program will board the bus at the group stop with other neighborhood elementary students (provided there is one in your neighborhood). In the afternoon, full-day kindergarten students will be dropped off at the same group bus stop.

Regarding Half-Day Kindergarten: Kindergarten students attending the half-day morning session will board the bus at a group stop with the other neighborhood elementary students (provided there is one in your neighborhood). Kindergarten students attending the half-day afternoon session will be dropped off at the same group stop. Mid-day door to door service is available to any kindergarten student who resides on a street that the bus currently drives down. If the bus does not go down your street, mid-day students must be met or brought to a designated bus stop by an adult. Failure to meet your child's mid-day bus will result in your child being returned to school. It is school policy to return children to their school should an adult not be present to meet the mid-day Kindergarten students. If the school is closed, the child will be brought to the Superintendent's Office or the School Business Office, both located at Scituate High School.

12. Can my child ride home on another bus?

No. Students may only ride their assigned buses. If there is a family emergency or medical situation, parents should notify the school principal and other transportation arrangements may be made.

Daycare Transportation: Requests for transportation to a stop other than the student's home address must be approved by the Principal and forwarded to the Superintendent for daycare/babysitting on a five-day-a-week basis. On other than a five-day-a-week basis, transportation is only provided when the requested location is on the same bus route as the student's home route and the student is NOT a kindergarten student.

13. What if my child only needs bus transportation one way or only two or three days per week?

The cost for all students is the same. The amount of time you use the bus does not matter; bus costs cannot be prorated according to varied daily usage. This is not a "pay-as-you-ride" program.

14. What if I only want to enroll for a partial year?

Routes and staffing will be configured based upon students enrolled as of July 1st. There is no provision for payment of a partial year. Should you choose to submit an application and payment after July 1st, transportation will be provided only if space is available, if routing does not require reconfiguring, and the fee is paid in full. In the case of new residents, a pro-rated fee will be assessed.

15. Can student conduct result in suspension from the school bus?

Students are expected to behave in a manner which will provide for optimum safety of the individual student as well as the safety of other students aboard the bus. When a student is reported for violating a safety rule in and around a school bus, school officials will review the situation with the student. Parents will be notified of the behavior. Depending on the severity of the offense and the frequency of violations, the student may receive a warning, a brief suspension from the bus or suspension for the balance of the school year. If a student is participating in the “Fee Based Transportation Program” and is suspended from the bus, the fee **WILL NOT BE REFUNDED**.

16. Is there a provision for a fee waiver?

If you cannot afford the transportation fee and meet income requirements, the waiver application must be completed and submitted, along with required income documentation, by June 10, 2011. Incomplete information will NOT be processed.

17. What if my child has special needs?

Special needs students attending out of district placements (outside the Town of Scituate) and ride special vehicles or vans are NOT subject to the fee. Special needs students who attend Scituate Public Schools are subject to the fee under the same provisions as other students unless they have “special transportation” by a “special vehicle” indicated in their Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.). Special needs students with these two provisions in their I.E.P. are NOT subject to the fee.

18. What if my child has a “504 Plan”?

Students who have a 504 plan are subject to the fee under the same provisions as all other students.