

NONPUBLIC SCHOOL

TRANSPORTATION

PROCEDURES

New Jersey Department of Education
Office of Student Transportation
November 2013

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Transportation or aid in lieu of transportation shall be provided to eligible nonpublic school students Monday through Friday between September 1 and June 30 when the nonpublic school is in session. The rules adopted by the State Board of Education for the transportation of public school students are also applicable to nonpublic school students transported by a local board of education. The rules specific to nonpublic school transportation are found at *N.J.A.C. 6A:27-2*.

Districts shall advertise for bids before determination is made to provide aid in lieu of transportation. Resident district boards of education are not required to bid for nonpublic school transportation when transportation is provided by district owned vehicles, renewal of an existing contract, coordinated transportation services agencies (CTSA), joint transportation agreements, common carriers, or another district board of education or CTSA has bid on the resident board's behalf. *N.J.S.A. 18A:39-11* requires that school districts attempt to utilize one of the coordinated transportation services agencies identified by the Commissioner of Education before paying aid in lieu of transportation for the ensuing school year if they paid aid in lieu of transportation in the prior school year or have determined that they cannot provide transportation to a nonpublic school for the ensuing school year within the maximum per student cost permitted by law.

Boards of education may not be required to provide transportation or pay aid in lieu of transportation when the application for transportation and/or payment vouchers are not properly submitted. In accordance with *N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1*, boards of education shall not expend more than the maximum per student expenditure for nonpublic school transportation. Administrative fees charged by a CTSA are not to be included in the maximum per student expenditure calculation.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Mandated Transportation

To be eligible for transportation or aid in lieu of transportation, all nonpublic school students shall:

1. reside in a district which provides transportation to and from school for remote public school students.

Exception – Transportation Not Mandated

Nonpublic school transportation services are not required when the only transportation provided by the local board of education is for students attending special education, vocational/technical, or other specialized programs.

2. reside remote from their school of attendance.

The words, “remote from the schoolhouse” shall mean beyond 2 ½ miles for high school students and beyond two miles for elementary students. (N.J.A.C. 6A:27-1.2)

3. attend a private school located in New Jersey 20 miles or less from their residence.

Exception - Out of State

If the resident district is located in a third class county with a population of not less than 80,000 and not more than 120,000 transportation shall also be provided to a nonpublic school outside the state not more than 20 miles from the student’s residence.

4. attend a nonprofit private school. If a local school district is not certain of the status of a private school, it may require the private school to submit an affidavit certifying to their tax exempt status. The affidavit must include a tax exempt number. A letter of determination from the U.S. Treasury Department indicating that the school is a nonprofit tax exempt organization is also acceptable.
5. meet the age requirements for enrollment in the resident district public school and be enrolled in grades kindergarten through 12.

Transportation services are also mandated for the following nonpublic school students who reside more than 20 miles from their school, located within the State, and meet the five eligibility criteria previously stated:

- Students who reside in Cumberland, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Salem, Sussex and Warren counties and attend a nonpublic school located not more than 30 miles from their home may be eligible for transportation or aid in lieu of transportation. This provision is determined annually by the legislature.
- Students living more than 20 miles from their nonpublic school are eligible for transportation when seats are available, or aid in lieu of transportation when other remote students living in their municipality, whose residence is less than 20 miles from the school, are transported to the same school. Students who live more than 20 miles from the school may be required to use existing school bus stops established for students living within 20 miles of the school.
- Students living more than 20 miles from their nonpublic schools who are residents of a regional or consolidated school district composed of only two constituent municipalities are eligible for transportation when seats are available, or aid in lieu of transportation when other remote students of the district residing within 20 miles of the same nonpublic school are transported or their parents receive aid in lieu of transportation. Students who live more than 20 miles from the school may be required to use existing school bus stops established for students living within 20 miles of the school.

Non-mandated Transportation

(Courtesy)

1. Boards of education, at their own discretion and expense, may adopt policies to provide transportation for nonpublic school students who are not otherwise eligible for transportation.
2. A board of education that provides transportation pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1* or a coordinated transportation services agency (CTSA) may adopt policies to provide transportation for nonpublic school students who live in or outside the district who are not eligible for transportation or whose parents receive aid in lieu of transportation and charge the parent/guardian for all or part of the cost of transportation. The cost of transportation charged to the parent/guardian shall not exceed the per student cost of the route and shall be paid by the parent/guardian in the manner described by the board of education or CTSA. Nonpublic school students who reside more than 20 miles from the school may be required to use bus stops established for transported students who reside within 20 miles. Students whose parent/guardian is unable to pay the cost of the transportation because of financial hardship may not be excluded from this transportation. In determining financial hardship, the criteria shall be the same as the Statewide eligibility standards established for free and reduced price meals under the State school lunch program.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the obligation of a parent/guardian to:

1. annually obtain the “Application for Private School Transportation” (B6T) from the administrative office of the private school.

A separate application shall be completed for each child requesting transportation.

A new application shall be completed and submitted to the nonpublic school whenever the student has a change of address.

2. annually complete the “Application for Private School Transportation” (B6T) and submit it to the private school on or before March 10 preceding the school year for which transportation is being requested.

Late applications: An application received after March 10 is a late application. Eligible students will receive transportation or aid in lieu of transportation based upon the date the application is received by the public school.

The public school will notify the parent/guardian as to the determination of each application by August 1. It is recommended that the parent/guardian contact their resident district transportation office to verify receipt of application if notification is not received by August 1.

3. submit a signed “Request for Payment of Transportation Aid” (B7T) voucher upon resident district request.

PRIVATE SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the private school administrator to:

1. obtain the “Application for Private School Transportation” forms from the New Jersey Department of Education website.
2. supply applications to the parents/guardians of students upon registration in the nonpublic school and whenever the student has a change in address.
3. annually collect the applications for transportation and submit them to the public school from which transportation is being requested within 30 days of the student’s registration in the nonpublic school or by March 15 of the school year preceding the year for which transportation is being requested and submit a new application whenever the student has a change of address. Late applications shall be forwarded to the public school upon receipt.
4. ensure the accuracy of the information contained in the applications (except for the one-way mileage from the student’s home to the nonpublic school).
5. certify on forms prescribed by the Commissioner of Education that the named students were enrolled for the first and second semesters of the academic year. The forms shall be returned to the public school as prescribed by the resident district board of education.
6. submit the school calendar to the resident district board of education responsible for providing transportation services by May 15, preceding the school year in which transportation is being requested. The school calendar must include the opening and closing times of the school and days when the school is closed.
7. immediately notify the student’s resident district board of education in writing when a student eligible for transportation has a change in address or withdraws from the nonpublic school.
8. submit a new application whenever a student has a change in address.
9. notify the parents of students attending the nonpublic school of their responsibility to complete and return any documents necessary for transportation services or the payment of aid in lieu of transportation required by the district board of education in which the student resides.
10. immediately notify the student’s resident district board of education in writing when there is a change in the school location.

DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the obligation of the district board of education to:

1. date stamp applications upon receipt and verify information.
2. prepare nonpublic school routes and after consideration of the bidding criteria established by the Commissioner, determine the method of transportation. Nonpublic school transportation may be provided by district owned vehicles, contracted vehicles, coordinated transportation services agencies (CTSA), joint transportation agreements or common carriers. Prior to making the determination to pay aid in lieu of transportation, district boards of education shall advertise for bids or utilize a CTSA. The resident district board of education is not required to bid for nonpublic school transportation when another district board of education or CTSA has bid on the resident board's behalf. District boards of education that paid aid in lieu of transportation in the prior year or who have determined that they cannot provide transportation for the ensuing year must attempt to utilize a CTSA.
3. notify parent/guardian as to the determination of each application by August 1. If transportation will be provided, the bus pass may be used as notification to parents.

Late Application/Early Withdrawal: Any application received after March 15 is a late application. Eligible students are entitled to receive transportation or aid in lieu of transportation based upon the date the application is received by the public school.

Aid in lieu of transportation payments may be adjusted for late registration or early withdrawal.

4. prepare the "Private School Transportation Summary" (B8T) and submit it to the private schools for January and May certifications.
5. send the "Request for Payment of Transportation Aid" (B7T) voucher to parent/guardian of eligible students for first and second semester aid in lieu of transportation payments.

Note: Local boards of education are not required to pay aid in lieu of transportation when vouchers are not signed and returned by the parent/guardian before the end of the fiscal year.

Local boards of education shall not expend more than the maximum per student amount in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1a*. This maximum expenditure does not include any administrative fee charged by a CTSA.

FINDING THE DOE STUDENT TRANSPORTATION WEB SITE

The DOE Student Transportation web site is located at:

<http://www.nj.gov/njded/finance/transportation/trans.htm>

This document explaining nonpublic school transportation procedures, as well as the forms necessary to apply for such transportation, can be found on the web site under the heading of Procedures and Related Documents.