

Service Problems or Complaints

Please channel all comments, questions, or complaints regarding transportation service to the Stanislaus County SELPA Transportation Facilitator. Every attempt will be made by the Transportation staff to resolve each problem.

Christi McCarthy
Transportation Facilitator
Stanislaus SELPA
(209) 541-2940

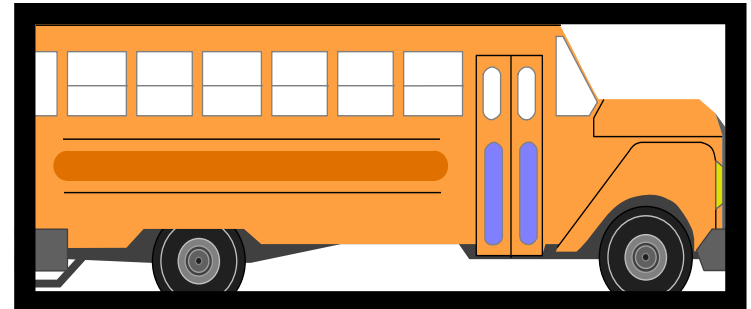
Storer Transportation Service
(STS) Bus Company
(209) 521-8331



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Stanislaus SELPA Transportation

Parent Manual & Transportation Safety Plan



2005-2006

Transportation Committee, A Sub-Committee of
the Program Advisory Committee

Dear Parents, Guardians, and School personnel.

Our goal is to provide the safest, most reliable transportation service possible for your student.

The transportation of your student involves the united efforts of the Stanislaus Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Staff, Storer Transportation, you, the parent or guardian, and all school personnel.

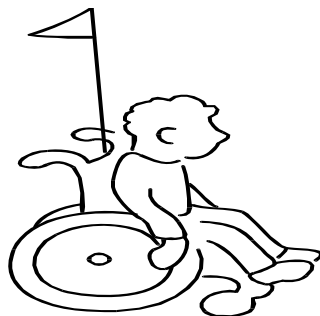
The Stanislaus SELPA determines the transportation requirements and policies for special education and contracts with Storer Transportation to fulfill these needs.

The Stanislaus SELPA has prepared this information package to acquaint you with the rules and regulations covering your students school transportation.

Please read this information to familiarize yourself with the guidelines and procedures for transportation. Your cooperation is needed to insure reliable, safe and efficient school bus service.

Thank You,

Transportation Department
Stanislaus County SELPA



School Buses are the safest mode of transportation for school students in the United States. However, school buses can be very dangerous and we must follow some very important rules when around a school bus:

At no time should anyone go under a school bus. If something is dropped or goes under the school bus, the school bus driver is the only person who is allowed to retrieve the item.

Students, parents and school personnel should stay away from the front, rear and sides of a school bus. The only time a person should be closer than 10 feet to the school bus is when the school bus is stopped and the doors are open.

Red Light crossing

In most cases your students will be picked-up and dropped off in front of your home. However, due to some one-way roads and other circumstances a student may be required to cross the street. In all cases where a student on our transportation service has to cross the street, they will be escorted by the bus driver with the use of the red crossing lights on the school bus.

The driver will turn on the red lights and exit the bus in front of the student to be crossed. The student will wait on the curb in front of the bus until the driver walks to the center of the roadway, stops traffic, and asks the student to cross the street. The student must walk, not run, all the way across the street before the driver can return to the bus and turn off the red crossover lights. All students requiring red light crossing will be noted on each drivers route sheet with the word “**ESCORT**” next to the students name.

School Site Responsibilities

Each and every school site that receives students who ride our transportation must have appropriate school staff available fifteen (15) minutes prior to the start of school. School staff should meet each and every bus to receive students and maintain safety in the school bus unloading area.

After school, students should be brought to the bus by school staff. School staff should assist students in getting on the correct bus and maintain a safe loading area.

School Bus Equipment

To assure use of safe equipment, all school buses are inspected daily by the bus driver and annually by the Department of the California Highway Patrol. In addition, each vehicle must be certified so that it meets all applicable regulations and laws relating to pupil transportation in the State of California. In addition, all buses are equipped with two-way radios and air conditioners.

California law does not require seat belts for bus passengers. However, the Stanislaus SELPA has requested seat belts be installed in all buses. All students are required to wear them while riding the school bus. **Seat belts are not to be unfastened until the bus has stopped.**

School Bus Driver Qualifications

The Stanislaus County SELPA requires all school bus drivers to attend regularly scheduled safety meetings and in-service training sessions to improve their skills in transporting special needs students. In addition, state law requires that each driver must: have a valid School Bus Drivers Certificate, have First Aid and CPR training from the American Red Cross, pass a physical examination, and obtain traffic and criminal clearance.

School Bus Accidents

We are fortunate to have an excellent record regarding school bus accidents. When/if any accident involving a school bus occurs, no matter how minor, it must be reported and a law enforcement officer must respond to the scene. Under these circumstances, it is common for the bus to be delayed an hour or more.

When an accident occurs, it is the bus company's responsibility to determine if there are any injuries and the extent of the damages, and to notify the proper authorities, including the California Highway Patrol, Emergency Medical Personnel (if needed), and the SELPA Transportation office. The bus company will notify the parents upon determining the names of the students on board, the extent of the injuries (if any), the location of the accident, and a description of the accident.

Bus Stops

Students are usually transported from their home to school and back. Pick up and drop off at day care providers can be provided. Each student is limited to one (1) pickup address and one (1) drop address.

The bus stop will be in front of and on the same side of the street as the student's address unless unsafe to do so. Pickup or release of a student cannot be made in any area determined to be unsafe. Safety always takes precedence over other criteria. Students are required to follow all bus rules when walking to and from their bus stop and while waiting for the bus.

Each student is assigned to a specific bus route and may be assigned to a particular seat. State law requires that no student be permitted to leave the bus at a point other than his/her assigned stop. **Parents or guardians must not make private arrangements with the bus driver. All changes must be cleared through the SELPA Transportation Office.**

Drivers are required to follow established routes. They may not make changes in these routes unless authorized by the SELPA Transportation Office or the Bus Company. Please do not request the driver to change routes or stops.

Bus Schedules & Delays

Prior to the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians will be notified by the transportation provider of their student's morning pickup schedules. Buses, routes and times may need to be changed throughout the school year to accommodate new students. Parents/guardians will be notified of time changes of more than thirty (30) minutes.

We often experience foggy weather during the winter months. The bus company can not operate its buses until the fog has lifted and visibility allows the buses to operate safely. The delay usually lasts for about one hour (sometimes more). **Please check with the following radio stations for reports on how long buses will be delayed:**

KAT FM	103.3	KHOP FM	104.1
KDJK FM	95.1	KJSN FM	102.3
KFRY FM	96.7	KFIV AM	1360
KO93 FM	93.1	KTDO FM	98.9 (Spanish)
KLOC AM	920 (Spanish)		

Pick up Procedure

Students must be supervised by an adult until the bus arrives. Please have the student ready for pick up at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled time. Buses must operate on a schedule so students arrive at their school sites on time. Buses will depart from the designated pick up location three (3) minutes after arriving and honking the horn (if horn honking is allowed). **A bus will not be sent back to pick up a child who is not ready on time.**

The parent/guardian is responsible for assisting the student from the house to the bus. **The bus driver may not leave the bus except to operate the lift gate for students in wheelchairs.** It is the bus driver's responsibility to load and unload the students and to ensure that wheelchairs, car seats, and all seat belts are secured and fastened.

If your student misses the bus or you take your student to school for some other reason, you need to contact the bus company to inform them that your student needs transportation home.

Address Change

Transportation will pick up and return your student to his/her residence. Temporary changes cannot be accommodated. Requests for alternative addresses will be considered on a case-by-case basis. **Only one agreed upon pick up and one return location can be accommodated.** Addresses must be the same day to day.

You must notify the Transportation Facilitator of permanent changes in your student's address, pick up or drop off locations at least ten (10) working days before the change is to be effective. Changes and additions are completed on a first come first serve basis - **NO EXCEPTIONS!** Due to the volume of changes at the beginning of the school year, changes may take up to ten (10) working days. Changes cannot be made two (2) weeks prior to the winter break nor four (4) weeks prior to the beginning and ending of the school year.

Consecutive Absences

Failure to ride the bus for five (5) consecutive days will be cause for termination of transportation services unless the Transportation Facilitator is notified in advance.

Car Seats and Wheelchairs

Students who are physically unable to sit safely secured by a seat belt or safety vest must be transported in approved car seats or wheelchairs.

Students under the age of four (4) years and/or weighing under 40 pounds will have a car seat provided for by Storer Transportation.

Wheelchairs shall be equipped with brakes and seat belt properly maintained by the owner of the chair. Velcro fasteners shall not be the sole source of restraint on a wheelchair. All wheelchair tires and brakes must be maintained so as to prevent the wheels from moving when the brakes are applied.

Electric wheelchairs transported on school buses shall be capable of being locked in gear when placed in a school bus or shall have an independent braking system capable of holding the wheelchair in place. Wheelchairs shall be turned off while being transported on the school bus. Batteries used to propel electric wheelchairs shall be both leak-resistant and spill-resistant or shall be placed in a leak-resistant container. Batteries shall be secured to the wheelchair frame in such a manner as to prevent separation in the event of an accident.

Any wheelchair which does not meet these minimum requirements shall not be transported. It is the parent's responsibility to provide all equipment which meet minimum safety requirements.

Therapy

Students eligible for CCS Therapy will be transported on school attendance days only. Transportation cannot be provided during off-track, holidays, and student non-attendance days.

Minimum Day Transportation

The bus company is contracted to provide two (2) minimum days per school district, each school year. Your students school district is responsible for requesting its two days of minimum day transportation at the beginning of each school year. Transportation will be provided at regular bell time on all days where minimum day transportation is not provided.

Bus Suspension Policy

The bus driver and/or bus aide, through the bus citation process, will report students who are disruptive and/or exhibiting dangerous behavior, including, but not limited to, infraction of the bus rules to the SELPA Transportation Office and the Bus Company. Any student may receive the maximum suspension and/or be denied bus transportation if it is determined that he/she created a safety hazard on the bus. The Stanislaus County SELPA Transportation Office will make the determination of the suspension.

Students will receive a verbal warning by the bus driver or bus aide, and a citation will be completed and sent to the parent/guardian with a copy of the bus rules. Continuing misconduct will result in the procedures outlined below:

1st Citation - Verbal warning and a copy of Citation Procedures mailed to parent/guardian.

2nd Citation -Verbal warning and a copy of Citation Procedures mailed to parent/guardian.

3rd Citation - Student will be denied bus riding privileges for up to three (3) school days.

4th Citation - Student will be denied bus riding privileges for up to five (5) school days pending the outcome of and IEP meeting.

*** If your student has been denied bus riding privileges and you are not able to provide transportation, contact your district of residence. This citation procedure does not affect the responsibility of the district of residence to provide the services specified on the IEP. ***

Vandalism

The California Civil Code, Section 1714.1 states: "Any act of willful misconduct of a minor which results in injury or death of another person or in any injury to the property of another shall be imputed to the parent or guardian having custody or control of the minor for all purposes of civil damages, and such parent or guardian having custody or control shall be jointly and severally liable with such minor for any damages resulting from such willful misconduct up to a maximum of \$10,000."

Drop off procedure

A responsible adult at least 18 years old must receive your student when the bus arrives at the scheduled drop location. Any adult who wishes to receive your student, other than the parent or guardian, must be listed on the Special Education Transportation Emergency Form. If the designated adult is unable to meet the bus, arrangements must be made for another adult (listed on the emergency form) to meet the bus when it arrives.

Transportation will be discontinued, for up to five (5) days, on the third (3rd) occasion a responsible adult is unavailable to receive your student. Written notices will be sent on each occurrence.

It is the parent's responsibility to be at the designated drop location every day the student rides the bus. It is against the law to leave a student unattended and is considered child abandonment when an authorized adult is not available. In the event that a responsible adult is not present to receive your child we will attempt to contact individuals listed on the emergency information form to receive the student.

IF NO ONE IS AVAILABLE we will contact the appropriate law enforcement agency or Child Protective Services. In the event that CPS and/or law enforcement have to be contacted, transportation will be discontinued immediately.

Due to the number of medically fragile students, children not attending due to illness, SIP days and minimum days, the afternoon drop time may vary. The bus company is unable to guarantee a specific drop time on a daily basis. **A responsible adult should be available to receive your student beginning at the time he/she is dismissed from school.**

Transportation Emergency Info.

A student is not allowed to start transportation until an emergency form is on file in the SELPA Transportation Office. It is imperative that you, as the parent/guardian, maintain correct emergency information in the transportation office. Additions or changes to your current emergency form cannot be done over the phone. You must contact the Program Specialist responsible for your student's class or the District of Residence to obtain a new form. The forms need to be updated every 12 months to assure transportation services.

Please notify the bus company by telephone prior to the pick up time whenever you are not sending your student to school.

Children who are sick do not learn well at school and expose others to illness should not be sent to school. Most doctors recommend that children be free of fever for at least 24 hours before sending them back to school.

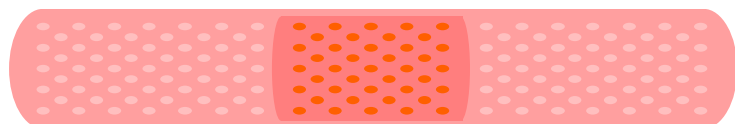
Schools have established procedures to follow for students who become ill at school. In most situations parents will be requested to pickup ill students at school and take them home.

At no time shall students with live lice and/or nit infestation be allowed to be transported. In all situations parents will be required to transport the student home from school once a student has been determined to be infested. Additionally, all students must be returned to the school by the parents and be checked and cleared by the school nurse prior to the reinstatement of transportation services.

MEDICATION - For safety, medications are not allowed on the school bus. All medication that needs to be administered at school must be taken to school by the parent, **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

PERSONAL HYGIENE - For the comfort of the others on the bus, it is important to maintain adequate standards of hygiene. Please be sure to toilet students before they board the bus. If your student has a problem in this area, please be sure to supply the school with a change of clothes and a plastic bag for transportation home. All car seats, walkers and wheelchairs must be kept clean and sanitary at all times.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION - Please notify the school nurse and the SELPA Transportation Office of any medical conditions (seizures, asthma, allergy to bees stings, etc.) your child may suffer from. The SELPA Transportation Office will provide the bus company's dispatch office with the information which will be kept in a special file to be used in the event of an emergency. Each driver has been trained in Basic First Aide and CPR. Emergency Medical Personnel will be contacted in case of a medical emergency.



Parents assume all responsibility for all items brought on the school bus. Please label all personal items sent to school. The bus company and SELPA Transportation assume no

Bus Rules for Students

- 1 Passengers shall obey bus driver's and bus aide's instructions at all times.
- 2 Passengers shall sit facing forward with their feet and legs kept out of the aisle.
- 3 Passengers shall remain seated, with seat belts on, until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- 4 To avoid possible injury, passengers must keep heads, arms and legs inside the bus at all times.
- 5 The following are not permissible on the bus:
 - a. Loud talking, yelling or screaming;
 - b. Eating, drinking or gum chewing;
 - c. Glass containers;
 - d. Animals, insects, and reptiles;
 - e. Large, bulky items. In no instance shall aisles, doors, steps or emergency exits be blocked.
- 6 Passengers shall not throw any object inside or from the bus.
- 7 **Depending on the severity of the offense, an automatic denial of bus riding privileges may be imposed for the following:**
 - a. Fighting, biting or spitting;
 - b. Obscene language or gestures directed at the bus driver, aide, other students, or the general public.
 - c. Vandalism to the bus or private property;
 - d. Exiting the bus through a window or emergency exit (except during an emergency);
 - e. Any weapons or hazardous items brought on the school bus.
 - f. Any matches, cigarettes and/or controlled substance brought on the school bus.
 - g. Any time school, transportation and/or public authorities must be dispatched to a bus due to a student (s) misconduct.
 - h. Threatening driver/aide and other students.

REMEMBER - The bus driver has a high degree of responsibility. So do the passengers! Advise your student to help the bus driver(s) so your student may have a safe and pleasant trip! **Thank You!**