



Watertown Public Schools

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BUS TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION

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INTRODUCTION:

Registration for the 2011-2012 school year Transportation Program will begin on **Monday, July 26, 2011**. Transportation will be available for students in Hosmer, grades K-5 (student must be in Kindergarten and at least 5 years of age) and the Middle School grades 6-8 who live **more than .75 miles** from the schools. Please note that you must register your child each year; registrations are not automatically carried into the next school year. Students not registered will **NOT** be able to access the bus (see BUS ID Section).

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BUS REGISTRATION FORM GRADES K-8

[Link to Registration form.xml please](#)

FEE DETERMINATION:

Massachusetts State regulations require that every school department provide transport, free of charge, to any student in grades K-6 who resides in excess of **two (2.0)** or more miles from his/her school. This limit is in effect for 6th grade students at the Middle School. However, the School Committee has voted to reduce the Hosmer School limit to 1.5 miles.

The State determines the mileage as the **walking distance** from the student's home to the school. The babysitter, day care center, grandparent's home or location of the bus stop is not considered in the determination of the walking distance.

Mileage will be calculated by MapQuest using the student's home address and the physical address of the school.

All students who are not eligible for free transportation will be subject to a fee.

FEE SCHEDULE:

\$300. Individual **\$475.** Family Maximum
\$200 . Individual **\$320.** Family Maximum

*Students south of the Charles River (K-6) only
7th & 8th grade students subject fo full fee.*

STUDENTS SUBJECT TO FEES:

- **All 7th and 8th graders** who live in the bus route districts (no waivers/reductions) to pay full \$300.00
- All 6th graders who live in the bus route districts and live more than three quarters of a mile (.75) but less than two (2.0) miles from the Middle School.
- All K-5 students who live in the bus route districts and live more than three quarters of a mile (.75) but less than one and one-half (1.5) miles from the Hosmer School.

Bus pass fees cannot be pro-rated for one way, part of year or less than full use. Refunds will only be honored for students that are moving out of District. No other refunds will be honored.

WAIVERS AND REDUCED FEES:

All requests for waivers or reduced fees must be accompanied by documentation of **all** family income. **Failure to provide proof of income** (i.e. tax returns, AFDC, SSI, disability income, unemployment, child support, etc.) **may result in the rejection of the waiver/reduction request.** Check stubs are not considered proof of family income.

When mailing documents do not send originals! Send only photocopies of documents.

Bus I.D.'s will not be issued until all documentation is provided and approved. **You must provide this information in a timely manner.** No space will be held while documentation is pending.

SEVENTH & EIGHTH GRADE:

Massachusetts State regulations do not require that students be transported after 6th grade. However, seats will be available on a 'first come first served' basis to 7th and 8th graders who live in the bus route districts once all 6th graders have been assigned. **No waivers or reduced fees are available to 7th and 8th grade students.** A bus I.D. will be issued only upon receipt of full payment. In the event that a bus is full and students in grade six (6) move into the district and are eligible for transportation, seventh (7th) and eighth (8th) grade students may be “bumped” to a waiting list.

BUS I.D.:

By September 1, 2011 bus identification cards (I.D.) will be mailed to your home along with the new bus schedule. Students must carry their I.D. cards at all times (attach to bookbag or backpack) and verification of identification will be strictly enforced in 2011-2012 to insure that only eligible, registered riders board the buses. Students without a bus pass will be sent to the school office and a parent/guardian will be contacted to arrange alternative transportation for the student. Lost or stolen I.D.s may be replaced by calling the Transportation Office at 617-926-7716. There will be a \$10.00 processing fee for all I.D. cards that are reissued. All reissue passes are subject to this fee.

SEATING CAPACITY:

As space is limited it is important to register as soon as possible. Bus capacity is 53 students for the Middle School and 65 students for the Hosmer. Three bus routes are provided for each school. As a result the buses will fill-up quickly.

Even if a student is eligible for free transportation he/she must complete registration forms to receive a bus I.D. and to ensure that a seat on the bus is allotted to them. All other registrations will be accepted on a **'first come first served'** basis.

Students who attend the Hosmer School but live out of the Hosmer School district **are not** eligible to receive transportation. Additionally, students who do not live within the established bus routes for the Hosmer and Middle Schools are not eligible to receive transportation.

PAYMENT OF FEE:

Checks or Money Orders are made payable to Watertown Public Schools.

- The fee from FEE SCHEDULE Section must be paid in full to insure a seat and receive a bus I.D.
- All fees must be paid in full by August 22, 2011.

Sorry, no cash, debit or credit cards.

After August 29, 2011 all unpaid registrations will be cancelled and deposits returned. Spaces created by cancellations will be held for new enrollees and/or students on the waiting list.

WAITING LIST:

After buses have been filled to capacity a waiting list for each route will be established. Registration for Boy's and Girl's Club only will not be processed prior to September 19, 2011.

ROUTES AND SCHEDULES:

Please link to [The Bus Schedule FY12.doc](#)

Routes and schedules are subject to change based on registration. Updated route information will be mail to your home September 1st. with the bus pass. No stops will be added for students not registered by August 22, 2011.

Children will be dropped off at **scheduled bus stops only**. No unscheduled stops, no friends riding home with a student or other special arrangements will be made. Each Hosmer School bus will stop at the Watertown Boys and Girls Club. Children using the Boy's and Girl's Club after school and who are not regularly scheduled on a Bus will only be registered based on seating availability after all regular registrations have been completed September 21, 2009.

LATE BUS:

Late bus service will be provided only for Hosmer School and Middle School students who are registered for the regular Transportation Program. The late bus will stop only at pre-determined designated stops throughout town. Late bus sites will be determined and posted on the website by September 1st and will be included in your Pass ID Letter.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY:

Student parents/guardians are responsible for their student's safety to and from the bus stop each day. Neither the transportation company nor the school department is responsible for students that are not met at the bus stop. Children 5 years of age **and** in Kindergarten will not be dropped at their stop without an adult to accompany them home but will be returned to the Hosmer School. Once a child boards the bus, and only at that time does he or she become the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day. The parent/guardian is responsible for the behavior and safety of the student between the residence and the designated bus stop, while waiting at the bus stop, and at the afternoon drop off.

REFUNDS FOR CANCELLATIONS:

Refunds for cancellations are calculated at \$1.00 per day remaining in the school year and will be honored for students that are moving out of district only. No refunds can be processed until the current bus pass has been returned to the Bus Transportation Office.

TRANSPORTATION CONTRACTOR:

The transportation contract is with Local Motion, Newton MA.

If you have any questions please call Jae Smith at 617-926-7716. Thank you for your cooperation.

BUS CONDUCT POLICY:

The School Committee and its staff share with students and parents the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the principal.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers, the health, safety or welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the School Committee.

(See section RULES OF CONDUCT)

RULES OF CONDUCT :

We are pleased to offer school bus privileges for the school year. Please be aware that the school bus is an extension of the school itself and all rules regarding behavior are the same as in school. School bus safety is a primary concern to Watertown Public Schools and we reserve the right to take action including revoking a student privilege to ride the bus. In cases where a pupil seriously or continuously misbehaves, parents will be notified by the principal or designee of the school to which that student attends. A bus pass can be revoked if, in the opinion of the principal, such action is necessary for the general safety and well being of other students.

PUPILS WHO RIDE A SCHOOL BUS ARE EXPECTED TO BE FAMILIAR WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. Pupils shall stand on the sidewalk or another designated place while waiting for the school bus. They shall respect other people's property, respect the right of other people to pass on the sidewalk and display manners that indicate consideration and safety for others.
2. Pupils shall never approach a school bus until it has completely stopped and the door is opened. In boarding, the bus, they should proceed in an orderly manner, single file. Younger students should board and alight first from the bus.
3. **Students shall remain seated at all times.** Students who are repetitively told to return to their seats will be subject to possible suspension of bus privileges.
4. Do not throw anything out the window. Do not put our hands, arms or any part of your body out the window at anytime. Do not open the rear exit emergency door unless there is an emergency or you are directed by the driver.
5. In crossing the roadway after alighting from, cross at the crosswalk only. If there is a crossing guard at that stop, you **MUST** cross with the crossing guard. If there is not a Crossing Guard at that stop, alight from the bus and cross in front of the bus when the blinking lights are on and the stop sign is extended. Pass at least 10 feet in front of the bus and look for traffic in both

- directions before crossing the roadway. Never run beside a bus, chase after a bus pick up anything that has fallen near the wheels of a bus.
6. The bus driver has full authority as well as responsibility for control of the conduct of pupils while they are on the bus. Pupils should not annoy the operator or distract his/her attention from driving. They should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times.
 7. There shall be no pushing, striking or general fooling around. Pupils are not allowed to use profane or abusive language. Pupils who witness the destruction of property have a responsibility to report such misbehavior to the driver or school authorities.
 8. All eligible and fee-based students will be issued a bus pass which they must show to the driver each day upon entering the bus. The pass entitles students a ride to and from school. Student's are to ride only the bus to which they are assigned. A student who allows another student to use his/her bus pass or sells his/her bus pass is subject to having the bus pass privileges revoked.
 9. Under no circumstances should drugs, alcohol or related items, firearms, explosives, knives or weapons be brought onto a school bus. Items such as backpacks, instruments and athletic equipment should be placed on the seat, student's lap or under their seat and must be kept from blocking the aisle.
 10. The school buses belong to the contractor, Local Motion. Vandalism, destruction or defacing of their property is strictly prohibited. The contractor has the authority to seek damages for destruction of their property.
 11. There is not eating, drinking or smoking on the school bus. The bus must be kept neat without litter.
 12. A pupil who pays a fee for transportation and whose riding privileges are suspended because of violations of these rules **will not receive a fee refund.**

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS:

Getting Ready for School

- √ Have your children put everything they carry in a backpack or school bag so that they won't drop things along the way.
- √ Make sure they leave home on time so they can walk to the bus stop and arrive before the bus is due. Running can be dangerous and a student should never chase a bus.

Walking to the Bus Stop

- √ Walk your young child to the bus stop and have older children walk in groups. There is safety in numbers; groups are easier for drivers to see.
- √ Practice good pedestrian behavior: walk on the sidewalk, if there is no sidewalk, stay out of the street.
- √ If you must walk in the street, walk single file, face traffic and stay as close to the edge of the road as you can.
- √ Stop and look left, right and then left again if you must cross the street. Do the same thing at driveways and alleys. Exaggerate your head turns and narrate your actions so your young child knows you are looking left, right and left.

Waiting at the Bus Stop

- √ Don't let your child play running games or push and shove at the bus stop. It is dangerous near traffic.
- √ Make sure your child stands at least 10 feet (5 giant steps) from the road while waiting for the bus. The child will then be out of the way of traffic. Have younger children practice taking 5 giant steps to become familiar with 10 feet.
- √ Never speak to strangers at the bus stop and never get into the car with a stranger. Always go straight home and tell you parents if a stranger tries to talk to you or pick you up.
- √ Wait for the bus to arrive, watch for red flashing lights and the stop sign to be extended, and cross only when all traffic has stopped. Look left, right, and left again before crossing.

Getting On and Off the Bus

- √ Warn children that, if they drop something, they should never pick it up. Instead, they should tell the driver and follow the driver's instructions. If they bend over to pick up a dropped object, they might not be seen by the driver and could be hurt if the driver pulls away from the stop.
- √ Wait until the bus has stopped and the door opens before stepping onto the roadway.
- √ Use the handrail when stepping onto the bus.
- √ If you meet your child at the bus stop after school, wait on the side where the child will be dropped off, not across the street. Children can be so excited at seeing you after school that they dash across the street and forget the safety rules.
- √ Before you reach your stop, get ready to leave by getting your books and belongings together.
- √ At your stop, wait for the bus to stop completely before getting up from your seat, then walk to the front door and exit, using the handrail.

Riding the Bus

- √ Children should talk quietly, be courteous to the driver and follow the driver's instructions.
- √ Children should find a seat quickly and stay seated during the entire bus ride and keeps the aisles clear.
- √ Never put head, arms or hands out of the window.
- √ Keep aisles clear – books or bags are tripping hazards and can block the way in an emergency.
- √ Never throw things on the bus or out the windows. Never play with the emergency exits.
- √ If there is an emergency, listen to the driver and follow instructions.

MBTA STUDENT PASSES:

High School and Middle School students that use the MBTA may sign up for Student Passes for reduced fare on MBTA buses. There are two types of Student Passes available. The first option is a \$20.00 monthly pass that will give student's unlimited access to buses and commuter rails for that month. This pass must be paid for by the student prior to the 1st of the month. This is the most economical options for students that use the bus as their primary transportation to and from school. The second option works like a prepaid charge card that the student can put money on the card and

.60¢ is deducted from the balance each time the student uses the pass. To obtain an MBTA Student Pass or for more information you will need to contact the Transportation Office at 617-926-7716.