

## **BUS ROUTES AND BUS STOPS**

Safety is the most important factor in transporting Hamilton students. The following information is offered to help make pupil transportation safe and successful.

1. Bus stops and bus routes are established on the basis of safety, efficiency, and the age of students as well as the State of Michigan guidelines. Bus stop locations should avoid as much traffic as possible. Stops shall not normally be on a hill or before or after a curve. Buses shall be visible in both directions when stopped, and stops shall be at least 250 feet apart.
2. Students should arrive at the bus stop ten minutes prior to the scheduled arrival of the bus. This will allow time to catch the bus but not enough time for problems among students to arise. PARENTS/GUARDIANS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR STUDENTS UNTIL THE BUS ARRIVES AND AFTER THE BUS LEAVES.
3. By state law, students **SHALL** cross in front of the school bus. They will receive instruction on proper crossing procedures from bus drivers and their classroom teachers. PARENTS/GUARDIANS WHO MEET STUDENTS AT THE STOP SHOULD SET THE EXAMPLE AND ALSO FOLLOW THIS IMPORTANT SAFETY RULE.

The district reserves the right to change stops and routes when necessary. Parent cooperation is required to make sure students ride the buses to which they are assigned. This ensures that the school will know who is actually on a bus, that a student can be located in an emergency, that overcrowding is controlled, and that other potential problems can be prevented. Walking distances and bus routes may be adjusted temporarily if necessary by reason of unsafe or impassable roads.

## **PROCEDURES FOR CHANGING BUSES**

At Hamilton Community Schools we are responsible for the safe and orderly transportation of your children. Parents/Guardians are requested to identify one (1) pick up and one (1) drop off location for the school year. The bus stop may or may not be located at the home address. However, students will be assigned within the prescribed walking distance.

**Permanent changes** to the scheduled transportation for a student may be made upon request in advance from the parent/guardian. Direct your changes to the transportation office. 269.751.5191

**Temporary Changes** to the scheduled transportation for a student also may be made upon **written request in advance** from the parent/guardian. Direct your changes to your child's school office. The note must include your student's name and destination and be signed by a parent/guardian. School personnel, upon receipt of your written request, will authorize

your note and/or complete a bus pass which your child must give to the driver when boarding the bus.

Bus capacity and assignment may limit changes.

## **TRANSPORTATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

### **Walk and Ride Policy**

Students may find it necessary to walk some distance to their designated bus stops or to school. In compliance with state laws, the Hamilton Community Schools walk/ride policy is:

- Elementary school students, grades Y5's/KDG, may be expected to walk up to 1/10 mile to school. Grades 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> may be expected to walk up to 2/10ths of a mile to a bus stop wherever appropriate walkways and traffic signs are available.
- Middle and senior high school students, grades 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, may be expected to walk up to 1 mile to school or up to 3/10ths of a mile to a bus stop.

Upon request by a parent/guardian, the district may approve transportation for an individual student regardless of residential distance from the school if a travel route is judged to be hazardous or if other extenuating circumstances exist. NOTE: With the exception of regularly scheduled shuttle buses, once a student boards a bus, they must remain on that bus until they reach their final destination.

### **Child Care Arrangements**

The district does not provide transportation to childcare facilities located outside of the attendance boundaries of the school.

Because routes are established based upon residence and/or child care, frequent changes of pick up or drop off during the year are difficult to accommodate. Requests for change must be made in writing, in advance.

## **STUDENT CROSSING PROCEDURES**

Please review these important safety procedures with all of your children. Parents, who escort their children to and from the bus when crossing, must set the example for their children and also adhere to these important safety procedures. Everyone needs to know that not all cars stop as required by state law, even when the red lights are flashing on school buses.

### **When crossing the street to board the bus:**

1. Students wait in a group at the designated bus stop at least 10 feet away from the

edge of the roadway and look to the bus driver for the signal to cross.

2. Bus drivers will display a sign (see below) to indicate when it is safe to cross the street. If it is dark, drivers may turn on the sign light to be seen easier.
3. Students proceed directly across the road always staying well in front of the bus and board the bus. Stay out of the "DANGER ZONE!"
4. Do not stop in the middle of the street or cross behind the bus.

### When crossing the street after leaving the bus:

1. Students exit the bus and take 10 giant steps in front of the bus staying on the side of the street. Stay out of the "DANGER ZONE!"
2. Students stand in a group and look to the bus driver for the signal to cross.
3. Bus drivers will display a sign (see below) to indicate when it is safe to cross the street. If it is dark, drivers may turn on an inside light to be seen easier.
4. Students proceed to a point even with the left side of the bus and STOP.
5. Students look left and right for passing cars.
6. Students look to the driver for instruction to complete the crossing.
7. Do not cross behind the bus.
8. If a paper or article goes under the school bus, always ask the bus driver for help.
9. Do not get mail from roadside mailboxes until after the bus leaves the stop.

#### "CROSS SAFELY"



#### "STOP"



### BUS CONDUCT REPORTING PROCESS

Please help us provide safe transportation for all students by discussing appropriate bus behavior with your child and stress the importance of good conduct while on the school bus. Parents/guardians will be notified of inappropriate behavior on the school bus. To assist the bus driver, video cameras are used to monitor student behavior while riding on Hamilton school buses.

All students need to attend school regularly to receive the best possible education. Riding the school bus is a privilege. Suspension of riding privileges does not mean a suspension from school. Parents/guardians are responsible for transportation to and from school.

Bus discipline is progressive and cumulative and will normally start at "*Step 1*" listed below. Any infraction can be processed immediately to "*Step 4*" when approved by an administrator. Immediate suspension will occur for any infraction involving fighting or possession of illegal drugs/alcohol/weapons/contraband. The school district reserves the right to implement alternative discipline options based on individual circumstances. Every attempt will be made to verbally notify parents/guardians prior to suspension of riding privileges.

**Bus Drivers Action:**

Drivers will give verbal warnings first and then the following steps will apply. All reports must be signed and returned before reinstatement of riding privileges.

*Step 1* - Bus conduct report placed in student's file, parents notified by report.

*Step 2* - One-day suspension and a call home by the bus driver.

*Step 3* - Short-term suspension and a call home by the bus driver.

*Step 4* - Long-term suspension depending on the offense, and a call home by the supervisor or principal.

*Step 5* - Permanent suspension.

**HEALTH ISSUES**

Out of consideration of those passengers and employees with medical conditions, passengers should refrain from using any aerosol spray, cologne, perfume or other items with strong odors while on the bus. Please be aware of, and respect, other people's medical issues and needs.