

COOPERSVILLE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Transportation Department Offices.....	997-3299
Coopersville Administrative Offices.....	997-3200
Coopersville Special Education Office.....	997-3503
Coopersville School Hot Line-School Closings.....	997-3333
Coopersville Public Schools Web Site.....	www.coopersvillebroncos.org

BUILDINGS & PHONE NUMBERS

High School.....	997-3505
Junior High.....	997-3405
East Elementary.....	997-3105
West Elementary.....	997-3305
Community Services.....	997-3605
Campus Operations	997-3250

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COOPERSVILLE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide students and parents/guardians with general information about the CAPS pupil transportation system. Public Act 187 of the Michigan Motor Vehicle Code outlines the pupil transportation laws that all school districts must follow. A copy of Public Act 187 is available for review during regular office hours in the Transportation Department. Selected Coopersville School transportation policies, regulations and safety rules are included in this handbook.

Coopersville Public Schools operates a fleet of over 33 regular education and special education buses and vans. We travel almost 430,000 miles a year and transport over 2500 pre-primary through twelfth grade and special education students on a daily basis.

CAPS provides transportation services for over 500 field trips and athletic events each year. Each day CAPS buses shuttle students to and from the CAPS campus, O.A.I.S.D. Skill Center, as well as many special education programs in surrounding districts.

Coopersville Area Public Schools is proud of its fleet of buses. There is one full time mechanic that provides preventative maintenance and general repairs. The Michigan State Police inspects the fleet on an annual basis.

At CAPS we strive for excellence in transportation services to you, our customers.

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***Law does not require transportation of regular education students to and from school.
Please take time to read the following pages and review them with your children in
order to protect your transportation privileges.***

It is the mutual responsibility of the parent/guardian and school district personnel to make a reasonable effort to understand and cooperate with each other regarding safe and orderly pupil transportation.

School bus transportation is provided only for eligible students and shall be considered a **PRIVILEGE** to be enjoyed only as long as the students accept responsibility for their own personal conduct and carefully follow all rules and regulations.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Together we will have a great school year.

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BUS ROUTES AND BUS STOPS

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

1. Bus stops and routes are established on the basis of safety, efficiency, the age of students, and in accordance with the State laws and recommendations and School Board policy. Bus stop locations must avoid as much traffic as possible. Stops shall not 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 200 feet apart.
2. It is each parent's responsibility to get her/his student to and from the school bus safely.
3. Bus stops shall not be located on cul-de-sac streets. The Michigan Department of Education recommends that backing of a school bus shall be avoided whenever possible.
4. Bus stops shall not be located within newly developing subdivisions until the construction is 90% complete. This may be implemented by "phases" as appropriate depending on specific traffic flow patterns. It is very difficult to navigate in subdivisions under construction as we compete with contractors and their equipment. Therefore, bus stops will be located on the main road(s) at the entrance(s) to the subdivision for all students while construction is taking place.

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6. Students should arrive at the bus stop **five** 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. Bus departure times are subject to change. **PARENTS/GUARDIANS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR STUDENTS UNTIL THE BUS ARRIVES.**
7. By state law, students **SHALL** cross in front of the school bus. They will receive instruction on proper crossing procedures from bus drivers. **PARENTS/GUARDIANS WHO MEET STUDENTS AT THE STOP SHOULD SET THE EXAMPLE AND ALSO FOLLOW THIS IMPORTANT SAFETY RULE.**

Please note: **Due to circumstances that may or may not be under the control of the school district:**

- The district reserves the right to change stops and routes when necessary:
- Walking distances and bus routes may be adjusted temporarily if necessary by reason of unsafe or impassable roads.
- If your child is more than 15 min. late for their scheduled drop-off time, please feel free to call the transportation department at 997-3299. Because we may be addressing the problem at hand, please understand that your call may go to voice mail but we will return your call.

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, Coopersville Area Public Schools walk/ride policy is:

- Elementary school students, grades K-5, may be expected to walk up to 1-1/2 miles to school or up to 1/2 mile to a bus stop.
- Middle and senior high school students, grades 6-12, may be expected to walk up to 1-1/2 miles to school or up to 1 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 as deemed by the district 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

It is not possible to provide transportation to childcare facilities located outside of the district boundaries. Because routes are established based upon residence and/or childcare, changes of pick-up or drop-off during the year are difficult to accommodate. Requests for change must be made in writing, a minimum of **three (3) days** in advance.

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TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

When appropriate, a committee shall review special transportation requests regarding bus stops and routes, evaluate the circumstances and make a final decision. The committee shall be composed of the Director of Transportation, a law enforcement representative, a school board member and a parent/community representative. Such requests must be in writing and sent to the Transportation Director. The request should include detailed information describing the situation and the desired remedy, whenever possible. If circumstances change, special requests may be reevaluated.

SPECIAL HEALTH ISSUES

Parents/guardians of students with unique health issues that could become safety issues on the bus are encouraged to ask their bus driver for a "Confidential Special Needs" form. Completion of this form will allow you to provide us with the information necessary to take appropriate care of students riding our buses.

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, the medical issues and needs of others.

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PROCEDURES FOR CHANGING BUSES

At Coopersville Area Public Schools we are responsible for the safe and orderly transportation of your children. 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 from the parent/guardian. Direct your changes to your child's school office and the transportation office

Temporary Changes to the scheduled transportation for a student may be made upon request under special circumstances. Students in grade 6-12 are not allowed to ride the K-5 run unless they have 48 hours prior notice and are staying after for academic purposes. No student is allowed to ride another bus unless it is for daycare or emergency purposes. The note must include your student's name and destination and be signed by a parent/guardian.

Call the Transportation Department in advance to verify seating availability. Bus capacity and assignment may limit changes. 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 other potential problems can be prevented. In the rare event that a bus has more students than available seating, students may temporarily be moved to an alternate bus without advance notice.

Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation.

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SCHOOL DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

The School District will:

1. Establish the policies and procedures by which the pupil transportation program functions.
2. Establish pupil regulations governing the behavior and safety of students while on the bus and at bus stops.
3. Institute and administer an instructional program that teaches students proper conduct and safety procedures.
4. Conduct a training program for school bus drivers to ensure that all policies, procedures, regulations and the enforcement of such are understood.
5. Ensure that parents receive written copies of transportation safety rules and regulations that clearly establish their roles and obligations with respect to student promptness, attitude and behavior.
6. Initiate procedures to open lines of communication and cooperation between school administrators, transportation staff and state agencies.
7. Provide training in pupil management skills that extend beyond the scope of enforcing rules and regulations.
8. Ensure that administrators provide support for discipline and stand behind bus driver's reasonable enforcement.
9. Notify schools if the bus will be late in arriving.
10. Formulate and implement early dismissal and "snow day" policies.

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PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/Guardians will:

1. Support safe riding practices and reasonable discipline practices.
2. Model, teach and hold their children accountable for appropriate behavior.
3. Make certain that their students arrive at the bus stop on time and be responsible for their student's behavior until the bus arrives. Parents/guardians are responsible for their students going to, from and at the bus stop.
4. Provide alternative transportation for their students if oversized objects or live animals must be transported to or from school, or when a student's bus riding privileges are suspended for cause.
5. Ensure that payment is made for damages resulting from vandalism to the bus.
6. Work with school personnel to reinforce appropriate bus rider behavior.
7. Have a family emergency plan if the student arrives home early or if parents/guardians are not present at the time of their arrival.
8. Support emergency evacuation drills and other emergency procedures as set by the school district.
9. Respect the rights and privileges of others.
10. Become familiar with district policies, regulations and principals of school bus safety.
11. Be willing to show a photo ID when picking up students at other than regularly scheduled locations, when requested by a transportation staff member.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Observe appropriate classroom behavior in order to protect their riding privileges.
2. Be courteous to others. Demonstrate responsible citizenship through positive social interactions while on the bus. Do not use profanity or be verbally abusive.
3. Chewing gum, drinking, smoking, and possessing illegal substances, weapons or obscene materials are not allowed on the bus.
4. Cooperate with the bus driver and follow the bus driver's instructions at all times.
5. Remain seated while bus is in motion.
6. Extend nothing, including head, hands and feet out of the bus windows. Open windows only with permission.
7. Are responsible for intentional damage to the interior or exterior of the bus and are expected to pay for such damages.
8. Display proper respect for the rights and comfort of others on the bus.
9. Be on time at bus stops and stay off roadways while waiting. **Buses cannot wait for late students.**
10. Cross in front of the bus at all times.
11. Limit objects that are brought on the bus to those items that can be safely held by the student. **Do not** bring or use any items on the bus that could affect health, safety and security of any passengers. Examples: scooters, skateboards and live animals may not be transported on the bus.

STUDENT “DO NOTS”

1. Do not display aggressive, disruptive, disorderly behavior or fighting. **Bus driver is authorized to assign seats.**
2. Do not use profane language or gestures.
3. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
4. Do not destroy or steal school, driver or other students’ property.
5. Do not harass, threaten or cause bodily harm to others.
6. Do not enter the driver’s area at any time.
7. Do not possess illegal/dangerous objects or possess tobacco, alcohol, or narcotics in any form.
8. Do not spit, inside or outside the bus.
9. Do not use electronic communication devices (cell phones/pagers) while riding the bus.
10. Do not use loud voices.
11. Do not ride a different bus without prior granted permission from the transportation department.

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive-Other safety rules may apply at the discretion of the school district.

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BUS DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Bus Driver will:

1. Provide safe and orderly transportation for students.
2. Establish proper rapport with students, parents/guardians and building administrators and work to ensure proper conduct and communications.
3. Establish and enforce reasonable bus rules in accordance with appropriate district policy and procedures. This includes teaching students the rules for safe bus riding and street crossing and enforcing these rules in an equitable manner.
4. Stay on the scheduled route and time each day providing conditions allow.
5. Pick up and discharge students only at their designated stops except with written permission to do otherwise. Request a photo ID of parents/guardians picking up students at other than regularly scheduled locations as necessary.
6. Assign seats as necessary.
7. Notify the office if the bus will be late in arriving.
8. Check the bus by walking from front to back to make certain it is empty at an appropriate location after the last child exits the bus and between all runs before parking the bus.
9. Notify parents/guardians, transportation director and building principal of student behavior concerns.
10. Make every effort not to leave the bus unattended with students on board.
11. Provide for school bus emergency evacuation drills on a regular basis as required. Follow appropriate procedures in dealing with dangerous situations.
12. Build positive relationships in a professional, ethical manner by honoring diversity, modeling life skills, and meeting the physical and emotional needs of all passengers.

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KINDERGARTEN AND SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

In addition to the above responsibilities, the following procedures have been established in order to provide for the safe and orderly transportation of students who may have a difficult time communicating information or making appropriate personal safety decisions.

Responsibilities

Parents/Guardians will:

1. Have the student ready at least five minutes prior to the bus arrival time.
2. Escort the student to the bus and assist with boarding as required.
3. Be at home when the bus arrives at the student's home. If not,
 - a. The bus driver will take the student back to school or to the Daycare at Community Services.
 - b. The parent will be called and be responsible for picking up the student and paying any childcare fees due.
4. Escort the student off the bus.
5. Notify Transportation, Special Education and school office promptly of any address or phone number changes.
6. Participate in the IEP meeting that decides the student's unique transportation needs.

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The Special Needs Bus Driver will:

1. Carry the bus list of special needs pre-primary students on the bus.
2. Be responsible to see that the student is appropriately secured in the bus.
3. Release the student to authorized adults.
4. Be certain students leave the bus at the appropriate school.
5. Take the student back to school or to the Daycare at Community Services if the parent is not at home.
6. Collaborate with parents/guardians and staff in developing behavioral intervention plans as necessary.
7. Report medical issues and serious behavior issues to the principal, parents/guardians and Transportation Director.

Teachers or Paraprofessionals will:

1. Meet the bus promptly at school.
2. Escort the student to and from the bus.
3. Assist with boarding at the end of the school day.
4. Collaborate with transportation staff and parents/guardians in designing appropriate behavioral intervention plans.

The Special Education Department will:

1. Conduct IEP meetings to determine the need for Special Education transportation.
2. Notify the Transportation Department of any changes in address, phone or pertinent medical information.

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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 an inside 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 “DANGER ZONE!” (See inside back cover)
4. Do not stop in the middle of the street or cross behind the bus.
5. Bus stops will be placed at legal locations consistent with Board policy or if required by I.E.P.

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”

GREEN

“STOP”

RED

INCLEMENT WEATHER

School Cancellation

While every effort is made to inform parents/guardians of a sudden unscheduled need to close the schools, there is no way to assure that every parent will receive information in a timely manner to respond in their student's best interest. School personnel make every effort to avoid sending students home outside the normal schedule.

During periods of inclement weather, parents/guardians and students are advised to monitor local radio and television stations for changes in school schedules. The media are contacted as soon as a decision is made to vary from the regular school schedule in order to notify parents/guardians as quickly as possible. If the weather looks threatening, parents/guardians are encouraged to stay tuned to the local news media for updates.

Family Emergency Plans

Students and parents/guardians should develop family emergency plans. In the event of an early dismissal or other unscheduled event, Kindergarten and Young 5 students may be riding on regular bus routes to regular bus stops and will arrive at a different time than normal. Does your child have a house key or know where to find one? Does your child have a neighbor to go to in case no one is at home? Have you discussed several possibilities so your child knows what to do? Do a drill or at least a periodic verbal check to be sure your student knows what steps to take. Keep the plan updated as personal circumstances change.

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School Closing Hotline

Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to call the Coopersville Area Public Schools Hotline for up-to-the-minute school information. The number is 997-3333.

Severe Weather Procedures

When tornado watches or warnings are issued by the U.S. Weather Bureau, Coopersville students will be retained in school until dismissal time or until such time that, in the judgment of the Superintendent or designee, they may be safely dismissed.

1. If a tornado watch is announced during the day, students will be dismissed at the regular time.
2. If a tornado warning is in effect, students will not be dismissed and will be moved to designated areas within each school.
3. Extra-Curricular Activities: When adverse weather conditions close school or a tornado warning or watch is in effect, after school, evening educational or athletic events are permitted only when a building administrator is on site to monitor the situation and when authorized by the Superintendent or designee. If no building administrator is on site, the extra-curricular activity will be stopped and any Coopersville Area Public School employee has responsibility for dismissing the activity. This will normally be the adult in charge of the activity. The employee will make a responsible and reasonable effort to move visitors within buildings to an appropriate designated shelter. Any adult visitor or student accompanied by an adult that decides to leave during this situation will be allowed to leave the building at their own risk.

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BUS CONDUCT REPORTING PROCESS

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

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, a video camera may be used to monitor student behavior while riding on Coopersville school buses.

Bus discipline is progressive and cumulative and will normally start at “*Step 1*” listed below. Any infraction can be processed immediately at “*Step 5*” when approved by an administrator. Immediate suspension will occur for any infraction involving fighting or possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons or 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. In cases involving vandalism to school buses, restitution for damages will be required prior to students regaining their bus riding privileges.

Bus Drivers Actions:

Step 1- Verbal warning

Step 2- Parent contact

Step 3- Written notice sent home by office

Administrative Actions:

Step 4- Three (3) day suspension

Step 5- Five (5) day suspension

Step 6- Ten (10) day suspension

Step 7- Up to remainder of school year

COOPERSVILLE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Transportation Department

Receipt of Handbook and Bus Rider Information

(Pull out this page, complete requested information and return to your bus driver. Thank you.)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are sending you this handbook in the interest of safety for your children. Riding the school bus is a privilege. Students are expected to exercise proper conduct at all times on the bus. For the safety of all passengers and the driver, misconduct will not be tolerated. Students who misbehave or place the bus or its passengers in any jeopardy will lose their bus privileges. **Please review this important safety information with your children, sign the lower portion of this letter indicating that you have received this information, and return it to each child's driver the first week of school.** Please use the back of the form if you need more space and have more information. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support of safe pupil transportation.

Sincerely,
Your Bus Driver

We have received the Coopersville Area Public School Pupil Transportation Handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date	Home Phone
Home Address	Work Phone	
Emergency Contact	Phone Number	
Home e-mail address	Business e-mail address	

Child #1 Name	School	Grade	Bus #
Child Care Provider	Address	Phone	

Child #2 Name	School	Grade	Bus#
Child Care Provider	Address	Phone	

Child #3 Name	School	Grade	Bus#
Child Care Provider	Address	Phone	