



South Orangetown

Central School District

K-12

Transportation Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Topic	Page #
Contact Information – Transportation Office/Schools	2
District School Information	3
Home to School Eligibility Requirements	4
Alternate Transportation Eligibility – Before and After Day Care	5
Crossing Guard Locations for walkers	6
Bus Stop Locations - Centralized	6
What determines a Safe Bus Stop	7
Parent Responsibilities	8
Riding the Bus is a Privilege	8
Danger Zone – stopped bus	10
School Specific Information	11
Student Discipline	12
Emergency Bus Drills	13
Emergency School Closings	14



TRANSPORTATION OFFICE

Hours of Operation: 7:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

Transportation@socsd.org

<http://www.socsd.org/transportation>

845-680-1662

845-680-1663

- The timeframe for returning calls and acknowledging e-mails should be within one business day. However, the two weeks prior and after the start of school are the busiest for the department, we transport approximately 3,000 students. **Therefore, we request that e-mail be used for non-emergencies.**
- Stop changes will not be considered until after the first two weeks of school.
- All phone calls to the transportation office will be returned in the order in which they were received.

SCHOOLS

Tappan Zee High School	845-680-1600
South Orangetown Middle School	845-680-1100
Cottage Lane Elementary School	845-680-1500
William O. Schaefer Elementary School	845-680-1300
Contact your school for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student to student issues• Discipline issues	

DISTRICT SCHOOL INFORMATION

- **First day of school:**
 - All grades will operate on a normal schedule **EXCEPT THE HIGH SCHOOL:**
 - 9TH grade orientation will be from 8:15 am to 10:15 am **NO BUS TRANSPORTATION WILL BE PROVIDED**
 - 10, 11, AND 12 GRADES will operate on a 2-Hour delay schedule, bus transportation will be provided two (2) hours after your normal pick-up time
- **Bus Information will be mailed out to families, please allow extra time for delivery via bulk mail service.**
- **Bus passes MUST be presented to the driver.**
- Please make sure your child's bus pass is safeguarded.

	William O. Schaefer	Cottage Lane	Middle School	High School
Grades	K, 1, 2	3, 4, 5	6, 7, 8	9,10,11,12
School Start Time	9:15 am	9:15 am	8:15 am	8:15 am
School End Time	3:30 pm	3:30 pm	3:00 pm	3:00 pm
Parent or Designee REQUIRED to meet the Bus	YES	NO	NO	NO
Universal busing at centralized stops	YES	YES	YES	NO Bus Services if within 1 ½ mile of HS, except designated Child-Safety Zones
Walkers Permitted	NO	YES w/permission	YES	YES
Late Bus	NO	NO	4:15pm T, W, TH	4:15pm M, T, W, TH

**Specific bus pick-up and drop-off times will be provided in the summer mailing. These are estimated pick-up and drop-off times will vary during the first two weeks of school as drivers and students become familiar with the routes and centralized stops. PLEASE BE AT THE STOP 10 MINUTES PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED TIME TO ALLOW FOR VARIANCES IN DRIVING TIME.*

HOME TO SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Resident students of the South Orangetown Central School District are eligible for transportation under the following mileage limitations:

Transportation to SOCSD Public Schools

SOCSD Provides all Grades K-8 Students with transportation from centralized, reasonable pick-up locations determined by the Transportation Department, regardless of distance from their school (South Orangetown Middle School, Cottage Lane Elementary, & William O. Schaefer Elementary).

Grades 9-12– transportation is provided at centralized reasonable pick-up locations determined by the Transportation Department if the student’s home address is located greater than 1.5 miles from Tappan Zee High School.

Exceptions:

- Child Safety Zones established by the District voters in accordance with state eligibility standards
- Students with approved IEP accommodations that indicate that they require transportation.

Transportation to Non-Public Schools

Students who attend a non-public school outside the school district are eligible for transportation providing:

1. Section 3635 of the NYS Education Law requires all non-city districts provide transportation for pupils enrolled in kindergarten through grades 8 who live more than two miles from the school they attend and for pupils enrolled in grades 9-12 who live more than three miles from the school they attend **up to fifteen miles**. The distances in each case are measured by the nearest available routes from home to school. **This regulation pertains to transportation to non-public schools as well.**
2. To obtain transportation for their children, **parents must file requests with the district in which they live by April 1 of the preceding school year or within 30 days of moving to the district.**
3. Nonpublic school students bus stops will be assigned in the same manner as defined on page 6 for public school students.
4. Routes will be established in the most efficient and economical manner.
5. Please be advised that South Orangetown Central School District limits transportation for students privately placed out of the district to days in which SOCSO is open for staff and students.

Transportation of Students to Out-of-District Placements

Students attending an out-of-district placements are eligible for transportation to their programs provided that:

1. The school is an **approved special education program**, as per the Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services.

Divorced Parents Sharing Custody

1. Students can only have a single residence for school purposes per the New York State Commissioner of Education.
2. School districts are not required to provide transportation or save seats on multiple buses to accommodate alternating parenting schedules.

Alternate Site Day Care Transportation

Alternate Site Day Care Transportation is an alternate busing service for students who require transportation to baby-sitters or daycare centers before and/or after school. This is permitted according to the following guidelines:

1. For the purposes of these guidelines, a before and/or after school childcare location shall be defined as, a place other than the child's home, where care for less than 24 hours a day is provided on a regular basis for a child who attends school within the district.
2. Alternate Site Transportation arrangements will route students to the nearest existing bus stop for the bus route. All parents/guardians who wish to request alternate transportation must apply for the service in writing using the Alternate Site Request Form located under the transportation section of the school district's website.
3. All requests for Alternate Site Transportation must be received prior to July 15th annually, any requests made after that date will be honored on a case-by-case basis if there is space available on the bus.
4. **Students utilizing this service will *not be picked up or dropped off at different points on varying days of the week, it must be the same location five days a week per AM or PM Route. Only one pickup/drop-off point will be assigned by the school transportation office.***

5. **The deadline for application for Alternate Site Transportation is July 15th for the first day of school.** Applications received after that date may not be put in place until the completion of the first two weeks of school and will be based on space availability on the bus route. Any request for changes thereafter, upon receipt and approval of the application, may take up to three school days to put into effect.
6. Previous year’s childcare transportation arrangements do not carry over into the new school year, the **application process must be completed every year.**

Crossing Guards

In an effort to provide greater safety for our students who walk to and from school, the Town has approved crossing guards at the following time and locations:

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>AM</u>	<u>PM</u>
Cottage Lane & Erie Street	8:30-9:30	3:20 - 4:20
Orangeburg Rd. & Lester Dr.	7:30-8:30	3:00-4:00
Palisades Pkwy Exit (NW Entry)	7:30-8:30	3:00-4:00
Palisades Pkwy Entrance (NE Entry)	7:30-8:30	3:00-4:00
Orangeburg & Dutch Hill	7:30-8:30	3:00-4:00
Tappan Zee High School and Devon Drive	7:30-8:30	3:00-4:00

Bus Stop Locations – Centralized

- Centralized stops are created after balancing issues of safety, distances from home, routing efficiency, and total ride length for all students on board. Bus stop change requests should be submitted to the Coordinator of School Transportation and will be reviewed for safety, and equity for all riders. Bus drivers are not permitted to change or alter bus routes or stops without prior authorization from the SOCS D Transportation Department, except for emergency road closures or hazards beyond their control.
- Factors that affect the creation of stops:
 - School buses will not enter dead-end streets.
 - Buses will not enter a cul-de-sac, except when the distance exceeds one quarter mile from the entrance of the cul-de-sac or nearest central pick-up location to the student’s home.
 - Numbers of students at bus stops will vary according to the concentration of riders in an area, the degree of traffic, the presence of stop signs, speed limits, and bus turn-around requirements.

- A maximum of 25 students at a stop will be acceptable only where there is adequate waiting space away from heavy traffic areas. Approximately 10 to 15 students will be the usual number scheduled for pickup at any one point.
- Public Roads: Transportation will be provided on side roads that are maintained by town highway departments unless the lack of maintenance makes it unsafe for drivers and students to be traversing these roads. Examples of unsafe conditions are flooding, road erosion, ice, snow, and mud.
- **Private Roads: Transportation will not be provided on roads that have not been dedicated and/or maintained by town, county, and/or state highway departments.**

What determines a Safe Bus Stop?

- A safe bus stop is one where the bus driver has a good line of sight (both forward and back.)
- A safe bus stop is also one where other motorist can see the bus stopped in time to react appropriately.
- A safe bus stop is one that ensures the safety of ALL the students utilizing the stop, the students on board the bus, the bus driver, and other motorists on the roadway.
- A safe bus stop must provide students a minimum of 10 feet in front of the bus to cross the street at the direction of the driver, once all traffic has stopped for the students exiting the bus.
- A safe bus stop is our top priority for students, please follow the procedures below if you require a bus stop safety evaluation.

Requesting a Bus Stop Evaluation

- To review NY (New York) State bus stop guidelines, please visit the NY State Pupil Transportation website regarding safe bus stops
http://www.p12.nysed.gov/schoolbus/Parents/htm/school_bus_stops.html
- Prior to completing a Bus Stop Safety Evaluation Request, please review what constitutes a safe stop. Remember the District utilizes centralized stops that have been reviewed extensively and are considered safe. The request form is always available under the transportation section of the SOCSO website.
- Upon completing and submitting the form, the transportation department will acknowledge its receipt. **Bus stop safety evaluations will not take place during the first two weeks of the school year.**

Parent's Responsibilities:

- To ensure the student arrives at the bus stop at least **10 minutes prior** to the scheduled pick-up and drop-off times.
- Accompany children in grades K-2 to and from the bus stop, or elect a bus stop designee via a WOS Bus Designee Form available year-round on the transportation section of the SOCSO web site.
- **Transport large items to school such as, but not limited to instruments, athletic equipment, etc. that cannot fit on your child's lap since large items pose a safety hazard.**
- Please teach correct behavior on the bus:
 - Always use a seat belt.
 - Always remain in your seat, especially when the bus is in motion!
 - Keep the aisles clear.
 - No fighting, yelling, or throwing objects.
 - For safety reasons there is no eating or drinking allowed on any school buses.

A NOTE TO PARENTS

Please contact the School Principal if your child experiences a problem with another student while riding aboard our buses. Also, please notify us if anyone is observed in our school bus operation acting in an unsafe manner. Thank you for your continuing cooperation and assistance.

Important

- ☎ So that we might reach you if we need to, **please make certain we have current emergency numbers**, including accurate phone numbers to reach you at work, as well as alternate emergency phone numbers for relatives and/or neighbors.

Riding the Bus is a Privilege!

- **Students should arrive at the bus stop at least ten minutes ahead of the scheduled pickup time.**
- Line up at the stop, do not push or shove, and wait for the bus to come to a full stop before approaching it.
- Never throw snowballs or other objects at or around the bus.
- Don't fight with, tease, or bully other students at the bus stop, or while riding the bus.
- During the winter months students should never wait for the bus on snow piles. Students may slip under the wheels of the bus or another vehicle.
- **The school bus is an extension of the classroom, and all school code of conduct rules apply. Be courteous, use**



proper language, speak quietly, and do not be destructive.

- **In the interest of safety, students must always cooperate with the driver, the bus driver may assign seats. Students may be denied the privilege of riding the bus because of unsafe behavior.**
- Stay in your seats. Do not change seats while the bus is in motion.
- Open windows only with the bus driver's permission.
- Do not block the aisle with your feet or other objects.
- Do not distract the driver. Do not talk to the driver unless it is necessary or in cases of an emergency.
- Do not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus. Help keep the bus clean.
- Do not throw papers, etc., on the floor or out the windows. There is no smoking, use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs of any kind on the school bus.
- Keep your hands, feet, arms, and head inside the bus.
- Emergency equipment and exits must not be touched unless they are needed.
- **No objects may be carried on the bus which interferes with passenger safety and comfort. All items brought on the bus must be carried on the student's lap in a standard-sized backpack. Examples of prohibited items include, but are not limited to: glass objects of any kind, pets, reptiles, or other caged animals, skis, ski poles, lacrosse sticks, baseball bats, skateboards, hand tools or power tools, chemicals of any nature, large musical instruments, (e.g. baritones, tubas, saxophone, baritone sax, string bass, timpani, bass drum) or any other object that would cause injury or is not related to instruction.**
- Anyone who damages school property will be required to pay for damages.
- Students may only ride to/from an assigned bus stop. The bus driver will only make stops that are authorized on their route sheets.
- Students who miss the bus at school should go into the school office and tell someone in authority. Parents will need to make other arrangements. Due to scheduling conflicts, the bus cannot return to the school.
- K-2 students must be met by an approved guardian, please contact our office with any questions.
- Seat belts are encouraged to be worn, please encourage your child to do so.
- **When crossing in front of the bus, be aware of the Danger Zones and always cross 10 feet in front of the bus ONLY AT THE DIRECTION OF THE BUS DRIVER.** The diagram on the following page illustrates the *10 Foot Crossing Rule* and the *Bus Danger Zones*. Please review this with your child/children.





**If you observe unsafe driving practices call the
Transportation Office at
845-680-1662/1663
The time, location and bus number are essential!**

School Specific Information



William O. Schaefer (K-2)

Please reinforce with your child that they must remain in their seats when the bus arrives at school. They need to listen carefully to the bus driver for instructions when to exit the bus. Buses are unloaded at the building two at a time upon instruction of the building staff.

All William O. Schaefer students will receive a bus pass prior to the start of school. When boarding the bus at the school, each student will be required to present their ID card to the driver

Please remember there needs to be someone to meet your kindergarteners, first graders, and second graders at the afternoon bus stop (including early dismissals). They should be at the stop at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time. **Parents should submit to the transportation office a list of up to 4 named designees who may receive their child in the event the parent is unable to be at the bus stop. Designees must be prepared to provide a government issued photo identification. This form is available on the SOCS D Web Site under the Transportation Department section.**

If a parent, sibling, or a parent approved designee is not present to meet your child at the designated bus stop, your child will be returned to the William O. Schaefer School on Lester Drive in Tappan. The school will call the parent and/or the emergency phone numbers to arrange for a pickup at school. Supervision after school is very limited, please make every attempt to have a bus designee at the bus stop for your child.

We strongly urge parents, sibling, or their adult designee to be at the bus stop at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time each day, as buses can run earlier than anticipated due to unforeseen circumstances along the bus route, including but not limited to road closures that would require students to be dropped off out of order.

Cottage Lane (3-5)

All Cottage Lane students will receive a bus pass prior to the start of school. When boarding the bus at the school, each student will be required to present their ID card to the driver.

*****Please note: Pick up and drop off of walkers is no longer permitted at the Greenbush Academy Building on Western Highway for safety reasons, parking in this location is for SOCS D faculty and staff only. *****

Students will be released from the bus at the afternoon bus stop even if an adult is not present. Children are not returned to school. It is important that parents make alternate plans if they will not be home when the bus arrives.

South Orangetown Middle School (6-8)

All South Orangetown Middle School students will receive a bus pass prior to the start of school. When boarding the bus at the school, each student will be required to present their ID card to the driver.

Tappan Zee High School (9-12)

All eligible Tappan Zee High School students will receive a bus pass prior to the start of school. When boarding the bus at the school, each student will be required to present their ID card to the driver. If a student does not have a pass, the student may be denied transportation.



STUDENT DISCIPLINE

School bus safety is paramount. Students who violate the School Bus Safety Rules will be written up by the driver. The principal will be notified, and the student may have their school bus privileges suspended. Because we seek to assure uniform treatment of our

students, the following Schedule of Disciplinary Actions will be followed throughout the District by the building administration:

- 1st Violation - Parent notified of violation.
- 2nd Violation- Parent notified, conference via phone or in person with parent, pupil, and Principal.
- 3rd Violation-Parent notified, bus privileges suspended for up to five (5) school days.
- 4th Violation-Parent notified, bus privileges suspended for up to ten (10) school days.
- 5th Violation-Parent notified, bus privileges suspended for up to twenty (20) school days.
- 6th Violation-Parent notified, bus privileges revoked for remainder of the school year.

NOTE: If a violation, even the first, constitutes a danger to any individual, then a conference shall be required as outlined under 2nd Violation above, and bus privileges may be suspended immediately for a minimum of five (5) days.

Video Cameras:

In accordance with Board Policy 8210.1, video cameras may be used on school buses. Video may be used to monitor, support, and further document reports of incidents on a school bus. Viewing of school bus video footage will only be permitted at the student's primary school, transportation office, or at the central administration offices by approved school district staff and faculty.

*It is extremely important for all parents and students to note that students will be held accountable to the **Code of Conduct** in effect at the school which they are attending. This pertains to **any** South Orangetown student whether attending a school in the district **or** out of the district.*

EMERGENCY BUS DRILLS

The South Orangetown Central School District annually complies with Section 156.3 (H) of the Commissioner's Regulations which requires that a minimum of three (3) emergency drills be held on each bus during the school year. The Commissioner's instructions specify that the first drill is to be conducted during the FIRST SEVEN DAYS OF SCHOOL, the second drill is to be performed between November 1st and December 31st. The final drill must be

performed between March 1st and April 30th.

conducted within the time limits and scope as prescribed by the State Education Department.

The Emergency Bus Drills include practice and instruction in the location, use and operation of the emergency door, fire extinguisher(s), first aid, and windows, as a means of escape in case of fire or accident.

Care is exercised to avoid delay of buses during times of drill activities. The provisions for emergency bus drills are clearly outlined by law. The drills must be



**When accidents happen, there is often confusion.
Above all else stay calm and follow the directions of the driver, school staff and
emergency services.**

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The District's primary concern at all times is the safety and welfare of the children. Sometimes it is necessary to close schools or delay opening of school due to unforeseen circumstances. **When weather conditions are adverse, parents will be contacted via the District automated messaging system, and the school district web site. Please do not call the transportation office for details, as the phone lines should remain open for emergency communications with the bus providers and district buildings.**

When transportation is provided on days of extreme cold, ice, heavy rain and/or snow, delays should be expected. Drivers are repeatedly instructed to drive at a speed commensurate with the prevailing road and/or weather conditions. Also, the number of mechanical problems may increase when the weather is cold and/or wet.

Schools may be closed at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools. If the closing occurs before the start

of the day, families will be informed at approximately 5:30 A.M. whenever possible. Predicted timing of the weather event can affect the timing of notification to families. When weather conditions are threatening, please consult the school district website, and or listen to radio and television stations for school closing information. If schools are closed during the school day, the YMCA after school care will be cancelled at William O. Schaefer and Cottage Lane Elementary for the afternoon.

Alternate Site Child Care transportation arrangements will be honored in the event of an emergency dismissal from school at the discretion of the Superintendent or their designee, so long as we are not notified that the program is closing. Please make sure that you have a bus designee assigned for William O. Schaefer students to meet your child at their bus stop for emergency dismissals, as the school may not have the staff resources required to receive any students returned to the school. Cottage Lane Elementary School students can exit buses at their stop without an adult, therefore they should be prepared for the eventuality of arriving home earlier than expected.

Notifications for closings, delays and early dismissals are sent to staff and families via Parent Square by phone, text, and/or email messages. Notifications will also be added to the SOCS D Website

Alerts are also posted on the District website (www.socsd.org), Facebook and Instagram(@southorangetowncsd), and X (formerly Twitter) (@southorangetown) feeds, and submitted to the following media outlets:

Radio: WHUD/100.7 FM, WRCR/1700 AM, and WCBS/880 AM TV: News12