
Pittsford Schools

PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK *for Student Transportation*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The Pittsford Transportation Department is pleased to provide you with information about student transportation in the Pittsford Central School District. School bus transportation is provided to students in the Pittsford District who attend both public and non-public schools. The district transports in excess of 6500 students approximately 7,000 miles daily.

Our school buses travel 1,300,000 miles every year. Student safety and welfare is our primary consideration in the implementation of transportation policies and procedures. When establishing school bus routes we consider safety, economy of operation and compliance with school time schedules.

We look forward to serving you and your student(s). You are welcome to visit us at the bus garage, located at 100 Mendon Center Road, anytime. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Transportation Department at 267-1480.

Carla Grove

Director of Transportation

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Pittsford Transportation Operations Contacts

Transportation operations consists of a Dispatch Office staffed by one dispatcher and two head drivers. They are responsible for orchestrating the daily operation of the district's buses and driving staff, routes and stop changes. Contact this office to deliver messages to your child's bus driver, report student absences, make inquiries about your child's arrival or departure, report that your child missed his/her bus or to check on lost and found items. The phone number is: **267-1480 option 1**

Administration

The administrative staff consists of the director of transportation and the assistant to the director of transportation. The phone number is: **267-1480 option 7**

Safety Office

The Safety Office consists of the safety coordinator/driver trainer and four driver trainers. They are responsible for driver compliance. Any safety concerns may be directed to this office. The phone number is: **267-1480 option 6.**

Eligibility for Transportation

Transportation is provided for only those students whose legal residence is in the Pittsford Central School District. Eligibility is based solely on this legal requirement. The district will provide each eligible student one round trip daily from a designated bus stop to school and back. If you have any questions regarding your address and the district boundaries, please call. The district will provide transportation for children in grades K - 5 who live .3 mile or more from their school, and for children in grades 6 - 12 who live .7 mile or more from their school. Students who live less than the designated limits from school will be permitted to ride if they walk to an established bus stop.

Private/Parochial Schools Transportation

State education law requires submitting an application for transportation to private and parochial schools **by April 1st each year** in order to provide transportation the following September. This form must be filed by the parent or guardian with the PCSD Transportation Department. Please submit an application whether acceptance by private or parochial school is certain or not. A separate application is required for each individual school requiring transportation.

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- Kindergarten or young-kindergarten transportation cannot be provided for children whose 5th birthday falls after December 1 of the year service is requested.
- Transportation in excess of 15 miles (measured from the student's home to the private or parochial school) cannot be provided.
- The parent or guardian of a child not residing in Pittsford Central School District on or before April 1 must file this request for transportation to non-public schools within 30 days of establishing residence.
- Applications **received after April 1 or more than 30 days after establishing residence within the district** will be considered late. Late requests are submitted to the Board of Education for review and approval.

Please mail/email completed applications to:

**Pittsford Central School District
Transportation Department
100 Mendon Center Rd.
Pittsford, NY 14534**

Transportation to private and parochial schools will be subject to the Pittsford Central School District calendar.

Child Care & Dual Residence Transportation

Students in grades K-8 will be transported to/from home, baby-sitters, day care centers or latch key programs, provided that the arrangement is on a regular basis to no more than two separate locations and that the locations are within the school district boundaries.

Requesting Dual Location Transportation

A Dual Location Request form for transportation services to dual family residences or daycare providers must be filed each year with the Transportation Department by the parent or guardian (one form per student). These applications must be received by April 1st of each year. If transportation needs change during the school year, applications must be re-filed with the Transportation Department to ensure that we are able to maintain accurate data.

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Dual location transportation request forms are available online, at the Transportation Office and at the elementary schools. Dual location transportation is complex to arrange and requires that schedules be shared with drivers and teachers; notifying them of what days students will or will not be riding certain buses. Therefore, please note that it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to inform the student's school of these arrangements.

Transportation Request for Injured Students

- Students needing the assistance of crutches to ambulate will be required to provide a doctor's note indicating they are capable of climbing the bus stairs with the crutches.
- Students requiring the use of a wheelchair need to provide a wheelchair that meets the criteria for school bus transportation. Please contact the transportation special needs liaison for information @ 585-267-3228.

Out of District Riders

Parents or guardians of private/parochial students wishing to bring a friend who resides in another district aboard a Pittsford bus must make sure permission is granted at least one day in advance by the PCSD Transportation Department. **The parent or guardian of the guest rider** must contact the Transportation Department and provide the name, address, age, parent or guardian name, and emergency phone number of the guest rider. If the requested authorization is granted, Transportation Department staff will ensure that the appropriate bus driver(s) are notified.

Bus Stops

The district does not provide door-to-door transportation service directly to and from the home of each student. Students may be required to walk to a central pick-up point. Pick-up and drop-off points are established annually for each bus route. The district will provide each eligible student one round trip daily from a designated bus stop to school and back. The distance between stops will be established and evaluated with regards to student safety. Bus stops will be determined by the transportation director in accordance with the following guidelines:

- **Centralized pickup points will be used.**
- **School bus stops shall be located in accordance with established regulations for placing school bus stops.**
- **Shuttle buses will be used where practical.**

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Buses will travel on private roads only when they are maintained by the towns. Special consideration may be given with regard to transportation services when streets are under construction or there are other extenuating circumstances.

If your child's bus absolutely cannot get through your street, for any reason, the Transportation Department may call your home to arrange for you to meet your child at a safe alternative location. If such an arrangement cannot be made, your child will be returned to school to await parent/guardian pick-up. Drop-off locations may differ from pick-up points. Some designated bus stops may not be visible from every household; therefore we recommend that students be escorted to and from the bus stop.

Requests to change the location of a student's pick-up or drop-off point must be submitted in writing by the parent or guardian to the director of transportation for consideration. When a request for a bus stop change is received by the Transportation Department and cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the Transportation Committee, a subcommittee of the District Health and Safety Committee, will review the request to ensure that the stop in question conforms to district transportation policies, NY SED transportation laws and the district objective of providing safe and efficient school transportation.

Student behavior at bus stops is the responsibility of the parents or guardians. Students should line up in single file when they see the bus approaching and should not start forward until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver has opened the door.

Pick-up/Drop-off Times

With the aid of a computerized routing program, your child will be assigned an approximate pick-up and drop-off time. Please understand that these estimated times are generated to aid students, parents/guardians and bus drivers in starting the new school year. Actual route times will be established throughout the first several weeks of school, after which time schedule variances will continue as a result of routing adjustments, weather, traffic and other unforeseen variables. For the safety of your child, we ask that your child be at their assigned bus stop five minutes prior to pick-up time and that you be home five minutes prior to the drop-off time to meet your child.

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Early Dismissal

As per the dates specified on your school calendar, your child's school will dismiss early. These planned early dismissals present a challenge for parents/guardians and transportation personnel. On early dismissal days, your child's bus driver may be someone other than your regular driver. Accordingly, it is our recommendation that parents and guardians plan to be home at the time that their child's school dismisses. This will help ensure that your child is not left unattended at home.

Late Buses

Daily late buses are scheduled to depart:

- **Barker Road Middle School at 3:50 PM**
- **Calkins Road Middle School at 3:25 PM**
- **Mendon High School transfer to Barker Rd. at 3:35 PM**
- **Sutherland High School at 3:50 PM**
- **All Elementary Schools at 3:50 PM**

The late bus service is available for **middle/high school** students requiring academic assistance or laboratory attendance and **elementary** students participating in band, orchestra, chorus or academic assistance.

The bus routes vary significantly each day and do not provide service equal to that of the student's regular bus.

When is a Student NOT Dropped Off

Whenever a driver senses that it may not be in the best interest of a child to be left at a stop, the child will be kept on board the bus and the Transportation Dispatch Office notified. The dispatcher will attempt to contact the parent/guardian and will notify the school office that the child has been kept on the bus and will be returned to school. Examples of such circumstances include:

- **The lack of adult presence at the bus stop.**
- **The presence of an unknown or suspicious adult at the bus stop.**
- **Any other condition which the driver deems to be potentially hazardous.**

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Student Absence

Parents or guardians of students in the following categories should **always** report student absences to the Transportation Department at 267-1480 option 1, prior to pick-up time:

- **Students that reside in remote locations**
- **Students attending private or parochial schools**
- **Any student anticipating an extended absence**

When reporting a student absence to the Transportation Department, please be prepared to give your child's bus number. As an alternative to reporting student absences to the Transportation Department, you may choose to arrange a signal with your child's bus driver, (e.g., porch light on/off, garage door open/closed, etc.)

Student Injury

Instruct your child to report any injury to the bus driver at the time of the incident. If your child is unable to discuss the incident with the driver, please contact the Transportation Office at 267-1480 option 1. Upon return, the bus driver will file an incident report. The Transportation Office will then follow up on the incident report with parents/guardians, school nurse, and any other involved parties.

Lost and Found

The Transportation Department highly recommends that student clothing and other belongings be clearly marked with the student's name for swift resolution of lost and found problems. Most unmarked items remain on the bus for one day, and then unclaimed items will be available at the Transportation Office's lost and found. Students should check with their bus driver immediately after discovering the loss.

Valuable items such as wallets, purses, keys, cameras, eyeglasses, cell phones, calculators and musical instruments are brought back to the Transportation Department for their security. Every attempt is made to locate and contact the owner of these items. Such items must be retrieved in person.

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You are welcome to stop by the Transportation Department at 100 Mendon Center Road to check for any lost items. Unclaimed lost and found items are donated to charity at the end of each semester.

Bus and Driver Assignments

Scheduled bus maintenance or New York State Department of Transportation inspections may make it necessary to assign a substitute bus to your child's route. When this occurs, a sign with the regular bus number will be posted in the side window next to the entrance door.

When a permanent bus driver change takes place on your child's bus route, the Transportation Department will provide written notification to all passengers. Should it become necessary to make a permanent vehicle assignment change, the same procedure will be followed. Occasionally your child's assigned bus driver may be unavailable to drive; therefore, a substitute driver will be assigned.

Weather Closings

The superintendent of schools makes the final decision and local radio and television stations are notified of any closing or delay. We consider many factors while making these decisions, including:

- **Current and projected weather conditions.**
- **Road patrols by the Town and District. These reports include the condition of local roads, sidewalks and parking lots, taking into account snow and ice, as well as other hazards such as downed trees or power lines. These reports also provide an assessment of the progress of snow clearing.**
- **Director of transportation report after gathering information about road conditions in local and surrounding areas.**
- **Temperature and wind chill factors. Monroe County Health Department recommends that we consider closing schools if the wind chill is expected to be -25 degrees or below.**

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When it is necessary to close or dismiss schools for any emergency, including inclement weather, announcements are made on local radio and television broadcasts by 6:30 a.m.

The District will also post a notice on the district website, send an email/text message to subscribers, send phone call/messages, and update the switchboard line.

Emergency Closings

In the event of an emergency closing of any of our school buildings, parent or guardian notification will take place via the same media sources as a weather closing. Students will not be taken home until such notification has taken place. If necessary, students may be relocated to an alternative safe place while such notification is being made. **In the event of such an emergency, inquiries should be directed to the District switchboard at 267-1001.**

Safety/Evacuation Drills

Three times each year, the Transportation Department conducts New York State mandated safety and evacuation drills. During these drills, students and drivers review safety procedures including exits and equipment. During the final exercise in each drill, all students must exit the bus through the rear emergency door.

Automobile Drivers

All motorists can help make the Pittsford Central School District safer for our students by watching for youngsters, especially in the morning and afternoon.

- **It is illegal, and very dangerous, to pass a stopped school bus when the red lights are flashing.**
- **You must stop for the red flashing lights on a street, multi-lane highway, divided highway and school grounds.**
- **Cars are not allowed in the school bus loops during the times posted at each school.**

School Bus Code of Conduct

Parents/guardians can help make their student's bus ride safer by reviewing the following "School Bus Code of Conduct" with

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their children, and reinforcing the need for on-going good behavior on the bus.

Any conduct that endangers the safety and welfare of other students or the bus driver could result in the loss of bus riding privileges. To avoid losing bus-riding privileges, each student is expected to:

1. Observe the same conduct as in your classroom.
 - Speak in a normal conversational tone of voice. No screams, shrieks, handclaps or other sudden loud noises.
 - Do not throw anything.
2. Be courteous, use no profane language.
 - Treat others with respect. Do not harass your fellow passengers.
 - Keep your hands and feet to yourself do not hit, kick or trip anyone.
3. Do NOT eat or drink on the bus - this includes chewing gum.
4. Keep the bus clean. Please put all trash in the waste basket.
5. Cooperate with the driver.
 - Be at your assigned bus stop at least five minutes before your pickup time. Never approach the bus until it has come to a complete stop. If you are late and see the bus pulling away, **do not run after the bus.**
 - When you board the bus, go directly to an empty seat and sit down. Always face forward with both your feet on the floor. Remember, seats are for people and not for backpacks, musical instruments or sporting equipment. When you exit the bus, please move away from the bus as quickly as possible. The bus may not resume motion until you are **at least 15 feet away**. Please don't stop to check the mailbox until the bus has departed your stop. If you get off the bus and realize you left something behind, **do not run after the bus**. Instead, call the Transportation Operations Office.

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- If you must cross the street before you board or after you exit the bus:
 - ✓ **Be alert.**
 - ✓ **Look at the bus driver and wait for driver signal before crossing.**
 - ✓ **Follow standard safe crossing procedures.**
 - ✓ **NEVER walk behind the bus.**

- Backpacks, book bags, etc., must have all loose straps shortened or removed to eliminate the danger of getting them caught when getting on/off the bus. The driver may also request that you remove excessive key chains from your backpack if they constitute a safety hazard.

- Only small/medium size musical instruments or class projects may be transported on the bus. These items must be able to be placed on the floor between the student's knees, or held on the student's lap without taking any space from another seat. The student must be able to manage boarding and exiting the bus without trouble while bringing these items on the bus. Musical instruments that are not allowed on the bus regardless of student's ability to handle the instrument are the cello, bass, baritone or tuba. If you have any questions, please talk with the driver BEFORE you attempt to bring your instrument or project on the bus.

- You are responsible for keeping any musical, athletic or other equipment, such as toys or stuffed animals that you may bring on the bus under your control. Any such item that escapes your control may be confiscated by the driver.

- Fluids must be kept unopened and in your backpack at all times.

- Follow the bus driver's instructions.

- **Items not allowed on the bus include:**
 - ✓ Skateboards, sleds and skis
 - ✓ Birds, insects, animals, fish, reptiles, etc.
 - ✓ Glass or other sharp objects
 - ✓ Water Guns
 - ✓ Weapons of any kind (includes knives)
 - ✓ Ammunition or other potentially explosive substances
 - ✓ Basses, baritones, cellos and tubas

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6. Do not smoke - Flame from any source is prohibited.
7. Do not be destructive.
Do not cut, puncture, tear, mark on or otherwise damage seats or any other part of the bus. Parents/guardians are liable for repair or replacement cost.
8. Stay in your seat.
 - You are expected to remain seated especially when the bus is in motion.
 - Don't leave your seat until the bus comes to a complete stop at the school or at your bus stop.
 - Keep the aisle and emergency exits clear AT ALL TIMES.
9. Keep head, hands, feet and personal belongings inside the bus at all times.
 - Do not throw anything out the window.
 - Do not yell at or make gestures to pedestrians or motorists.
10. Bus Driver is authorized to assign seats.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these rules, please discuss them with your bus driver, your teacher or your principal.

Video Cameras on School Buses

Video cameras are used on school buses as a tool to aid school bus drivers and school administrators in monitoring misbehavior, thereby improving the over-all safety of the school bus and its passengers.

The bus driver's main focus must always be on the road and traffic around the bus. When the driver becomes distracted because of student misbehavior, it ultimately jeopardizes the safety of everyone on the bus.

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Disciplinary Action:

Riding the school bus is a privilege!

If a student's conduct warrants disciplinary action, the following procedures take place:

- The bus driver completes a Bus Conduct Report, identifying the incident in which the student was involved.
- The student's parents or guardians will receive a same-day phone communication from the Transportation Department as notification that the incident occurred.
- The report is sent to the building or grade level principal who discusses the incident with the student.
- The principal may take appropriate disciplinary action.
- If the principal suspends the student's bus riding privileges, the parents or guardians will be notified.