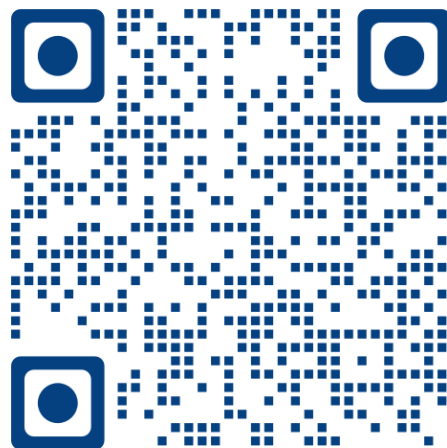




Family Transportation Services Handbook 2022 – 2023



PATHWAYS FOR CHILDREN
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION DIRECTORY

<u>GLOUCESTER</u>	<u>BEVERLY</u>	<u>SALEM</u>
Pathways Transportation Office – Cape Ann Lisa Gonzales, Transportation Manager 978-515-5359	Pathways Transportation Office – North Shore Lisa Gonzales, Transportation Manager 978-515-5359	Pathways Transportation Office – North Shore Lisa Gonzales, Transportation Manager 978-515-5359
Admissions Office – Cape Ann Theresa Folse – 978-515-5308	Admissions Office – North Shore Ana Cabrara 978-515- 5472	Admissions Office – North Shore Ana Cabrara 978-515- 5472
WHO DO I CALL?		
Where is the bus? 978-515-5310 Reception	Where is the bus? 978-515-5450 Reception	Where is the bus? 978-515-5290 Reception
<i>I have an issue with the pick-up or drop off time.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa	<i>I have an issue with the pick-up or drop off time.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa	<i>I have an issue with the pick-up or drop off time.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa
<i>I need to change my child's pick-up / drop-off location.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa	<i>I need to change my child's pick-up / drop off location.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa	<i>I need to change my child's pick-up / drop off location.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa
<i>I have a concern about a bus stop or route.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa	<i>I have a concern about a bus stop or route.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa	<i>I have a concern about a bus stop or route.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa
<i>I have a concern about a bus, driver, or monitor.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa	<i>I have a concern about a driver, or monitor.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa	<i>I have a concern about a driver, or monitor.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa
My bus is late? 978-515-5310 Reception	My bus is late? 978-515-5450 Reception	My bus is late? 978-515-5290 Reception
<i>I need to update pick up/drop off location.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa	<i>I need to update pick up/drop off location.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa	<i>I need to update pick up/drop off location.</i> 978-515-5359 Lisa
<i>I need to add someone to the pick-up list.</i> 978-515-5308 Theresa 978-515-5310-Reception	<i>I need to add someone to the pick-up list.</i> 978-515-5472 Ana or 978-515-5450-Reception	<i>I need to add someone to the pick-up list.</i> 978-515-5472 Ana
<i>I need to change my address.</i> 978-515-5308 Theresa	<i>I need to change my address.</i> 978-515-5472 Ana	<i>I need to change my address.</i> 978-515-5472 Ana

INTRODUCTION

It is the intention of Pathways for Children to comply with rules and regulations pertinent to the transportation of students. These rules and regulations are from the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles, and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and The Department of Early Education and Care. These shall govern any questions not covered by information provided in this handbook.

It is the mission of Pathways for Children to proactively work to remove obstacles to a student's ability to participate fully in school. We seek to accommodate families whenever possible, within our means, and to minimize the adjustment of school schedules to accommodate transportation needs and requests.

Vehicle routes have been established with safety, efficiency, and fairness in mind. They are designed to safely transport to school in the shortest possible time.

Please familiarize yourself with the following guidelines and policies. They are there to assist all who are involved in our transportation program.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY OVERVIEW

Pathways reserves the right to establish new routes throughout the year to accommodate the needs of the transportation department.

PATHWAYS FOR CHILDREN'S RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

Pathways for Children's transportation department is responsible for facilitating and coordinating the student transportation program offered by Pathways. This includes daily supervision of any and all Pathways transportation employees, processing of transportation requests and changes, managing the student transportation information system, and maintaining all necessary records and documentation related to the transportation program.

A. Transportation Changes

Parents and guardians should contact the Transportation Manager right away if they need to change the pick up or drop off location of their child(ren). These changes will typically be implemented within one week's notice the request being received. The Transportation Manager can be reached at 978-515-5359.

B. Bus Routes and Stops

1. The Transportation Manager shall establish vehicle routes over the most direct roads feasible for vehicle travel to serve those entitled to transportation service. Please note that bus routes and stops are designed to ensure that no student is riding on a bus for longer than 60 minutes.
2. Vehicle routes will be established so that an authorized vehicle stop will be available within a reasonable walking distance of the home of every resident pupil entitled to transportation service. **Pathways does not offer door to door service.**
3. Pathways for Children will notify parents and guardians of any bus schedule, bus route, or bus stop changes by phone and/or email as soon as possible.
4. Vehicles will not be expected to operate over roads that are not passable or on roads where adequate turnarounds are not provided. Buses will not be required to back down a street or execute a three-point turn while in route.

5. Walking to and from school when distances are reasonable is recognized as good for students' health provided, however, that safety hazards can be reasonably controlled. It is also recognized that there is no possible way to control hazards completely in a city even if the student lives only a few blocks from school. Risk is involved whether a child is transported or walks to school. Through cooperation with parents and guardians, Pathways for Children and other city personnel, risks will be controlled to the fullest extent possible.

C. Notification of Changes or Cancellation of Service

The Pathways for Children will notify parents and guardians of cancellation of transportation services via School Messenger at the earliest possible time. **It is essential that all guardians have the proper contact information (phone numbers and email) on file to receive urgent notifications regarding student transportation.**

Parents and guardians are responsible to contact the admissions staff to make any necessary updates/changes.

D. Safety Guidelines

Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of all students who are transported on Pathways for Children vehicles.

In the event of unforeseen circumstances (construction, weather, etc.), Pathways will notify parents of an alternate stop and will make every effort to meet families at the nearest and safest corner closest to the stop.

E. Reporting Transportation Concerns to Pathways

Concerns should be reported to the Pathways for Children's Transportation Manager via phone (978-515-5359) or email (lgonzales@pw4c.org) and the manager will follow up on all concerns with parents/guardians and will investigate and take appropriate action. The Transportation Manager will notify the parent or guardian of the resolution of the problem within five (5) school days.

GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES AND INVOLVEMENT

Normally, all students will be transported from Pathways directly to their regular bus stops.

- Guardians are responsible to update Approved Pick Up lists with our Admissions Department. Individuals approved to take children from the bus will be required to produce picture identification. Children will be released only to individuals on the child's pick up list.
- Guardians must not send children who are not enrolled at Pathways on the vehicle.
- Guardians should notify the Transportation Department if they wish to change or terminate transportation services. Not all requests can be accommodated. It may take five business days for changes to be made once approved.
- The Transportation Department may cancel transportation services for any student who does not ride the bus for five (5) consecutive school days without proper notification/approval. The Transportation Department will contact the guardian forty-eight (48) hours prior to cancellation of services. The transportation manager will notify the admissions manager when a child's transportation services are cancelled/terminated.

- Guardians may not ride on a student-occupied school bus at any time without prior permission of the Transportation Manager.
- Guardians must have students at the vehicle stop on time. Guardians should ensure the safety and proper conduct of the student going to and from vehicle stops and while waiting for the vehicle.
- Guardians of students should have their child(ren) ready 10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick up time and be prepared for the bus' arrival up to 10 minutes before or 10 minutes after the scheduled time. If the student does not board at the time of the bus's scheduled arrival, the driver will move on to the next stop.
- If your child will not be taking the bus on a particular day, please call the appropriate Transportation phone line for your site and leave a message. Children who are "no call/no shows" for pick up will receive a call to confirm why the child is absent.
 - If your child is a "no call/no show" for three days over a 30-day period, you may have your transportation service suspended or terminated.
 - Guardians should notify the Transportation Department at the appropriate phone number for your site (see page 2) before 6:30 A.M. if a student will not be going to school. Voice mail is available twenty-four hours a day.
- Guardians should understand that students must obey all regulations governing transportation on school vehicles or they will forfeit their right to transportation. Guardians must encourage the cooperation of students with the authorities responsible for transportation. In the event of a student's exclusion, advance notice will be given to a student's parent/guardian with an opportunity to discuss the matter with a school administrator, if possible.
- Guardians are responsible for the safety of the student while walking or riding on vehicles other than school vehicles (i.e. taxi cabs) between home and school or home and authorized vehicle stop.
- All children, kindergarten age and under, must have an adult waiting to receive them at the end of the school day. If the guardian is not at the stop when the bus arrives for afternoon drop-off, the driver will return the child to the center. Children Grade 1 and above, with written guardian permission may depart the bus and walk home by themselves.
- In the event of student misconduct on the bus, transportation staff will report such incidents using an Incident and Observation Report form. That report will be shared with the Pathways Transportation Manager and the classroom teacher and social worker if one is assigned. Incidents will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken as determined by the parties. Student incident reports will only be shared with parents or guardians of the involved students.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Bus Expectations for Students

- While waiting for or riding on the bus, students are expected to conduct themselves in safe and respectful manner. The vehicle driver and/or monitor have the obligation to judge conduct, to maintain order and to report students to the Transportation Manager and Teacher when necessary.

Waiting for the Bus

- Students should be on time for the vehicle but not arrive at the stop earlier than 10 minutes before the time at which the vehicle usually arrives. Kindergarten age and younger children should always have an adult with them at bus stops.

- Students should observe all safety precautions while waiting for the vehicle:
 - a. Do not play in the street.
 - b. Do not play ball.
 - c. If possible, avoid crossing streets.
 - d. Whenever crossing the street, do so only if there are no moving vehicles approaching from either direction.
 - e. Do not push, pull, or chase any other pupil(s).
 - f. Avoid trespassing on private property and being noisy.

- As the vehicle approaches, students should STOP, then LINE UP at least six feet off the roadway, and NOT APPROACH the vehicle UNTIL IT HAS STOPPED and the driver has OPENED THE DOOR.

Loading the Bus

- Students should get on the vehicle as soon as the vehicle is stopped and be seated at once. All buses are equipped with seat belts that must be buckled.
- Students should listen carefully and obey any and all directions issued by the driver/monitor.
- The assignment of seats is left up to the discretion of the vehicle driver or monitor. A student may be assigned a seat in certain cases.
- Students should be sure to observe all safety precautions.
- Violation of vehicle rules may result in loss of transportation privileges.

Unloading the Bus

Students should not leave their seat until the vehicle has come to a complete stop and the driver has opened the door. The monitor may assist with unbuckling to aid with dis-embarking.

Students will only be let off the bus at Pathways programs when met by Pathways staff.

Students should follow all directions issued by the driver or monitor. Students should not push or play around on the way off the bus. Students should exit the bus in a quick but safe manner.

Students should use handrails to avoid falls.

****Students should watch that straps, drawstrings, and clothing don't get caught in the handrail or door**

After exiting the bus, students should move 10 feet away from the bus at once. If a student must cross the street as they leave the school vehicle, they should be sure to walk in **front** of the vehicle, at a distance of at least 12 feet away from the vehicle so they are able to see the driver's face. Students shall wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross and should cross to the outside edge of the bus and check both ways for traffic. If they get too close to the front of the vehicle, the driver may not be able to see them and a serious accident could occur. Once a student is off the bus, the student should go directly home.

Student Behavior

All students must behave appropriately as passengers on a school vehicle. Clearly understood and well-enforced expectations are necessary for the successful management of students who ride school vehicles.

- All children must wear their seat belts when on Pathways vehicles
- Use of cell phones are prohibited on the school vehicle. Any pictures or videos are NOT ALLOWED to be taken on the school vehicle.
- Students transported in a school vehicle are under the authority of and directly responsible to the driver of the vehicle and the monitor.
- Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to obey rules is sufficient reason for a student to be denied transportation on a school vehicle by the Transportation Manager. Guardians will be given prior notice before exclusion, if possible.
- No school vehicle can stop to load or discharge students except at stops regularly designated by Pathways. An exception would be granted in the event of an emergency (road closed, accident, etc.).
- No student can engage in unnecessary conversation with the driver while the vehicle is in motion.
- Smoking/vaping in a school vehicle or at the bus stop or Pathways property and within sight of our children in our care is prohibited.
- No intoxicating liquor or drugs may be transported at any time in a school vehicle.
- No weapons of any type, except firearms carried by police officers, may be transported on a school vehicle.
- No person is allowed to occupy a position in a school vehicle that interferes with the vision of the driver either to the front, the side, through the mirror to the rear, or with the operation of the vehicle.
- Nothing may be thrown inside the vehicle or outside of the vehicle. Windows may be opened or closed only with permission from staff.
- Any action by a student that in the judgment of the driver or monitor compromises the safety of others is prohibited.
- No student should touch the rear (emergency) door and emergency window for any reason except in an emergency.
- Eating and drinking are prohibited on the vehicle.
- Students should not extend arms or any other parts of their body out of the windows.
- Changing seats is not allowed unless the driver or monitor requests the student to do so. This is only allowed when the vehicle is not in motion.
- No standing while bus is in motion, all children must remain seated,
- No shouting and other excessive noise will be allowed.
- Students are expected to be courteous to and respectful of others.
- Students are expected to help keep the vehicle clean and sanitary. Please remove all belongings and trash from the vehicle upon exiting.

- Students may not leave the vehicle except when arriving at their designated pick-up and drop-off points.

G. Student Bus Expectations in Brief

1. Use of cellular phones is not allowed. Cell phones carried on the vehicle must be in the OFF position
2. Remain seated.
3. Obey the driver and monitor.
4. Walk – do not run.
5. Keep arms and head inside the vehicle.
6. No eating, drinking or smoking.
7. Do not disturb others.
8. Speak quietly.
9. Respect public property.
10. Keep hands, feet and other objects out of the aisles.

DRIVERS AND MONITORS RESPONSIBILITIES

Any significant violations of the rules and regulations for student behavior on school vehicles must be reported on an Incident and Observation Report form as soon as possible to the Transportation Manager. The Transportation Manager will send a copy to others as appropriate. A severe incident should be reported immediately.

- A. Drivers must not remove any child from the vehicle as a disciplinary measure.
- B. Drivers must not touch a child, except to assist them or to render first aid.
- C. Vehicle drivers have no authority to appoint students as vehicle monitors and must not do so. If repeated misbehavior problems arise, they may take any or all of the following actions (SAC program specific):
 1. Stop the vehicle and remain standing until order is restored.
 2. Report each incident to the designated authority.
 3. Request that the designated Pathways staff ride on one or more trips to observe the problem.
 4. Request that the Transportation Manager or School Age Manager board the vehicle and talk to the students.
 5. Require individual passengers to sit in the front seats so they can be observed.
 6. Pull over, Call Pathways or the guardian and ask for someone to remove the student.
- D. Although maintaining order on the vehicles is a driver's responsibility, the main job is to drive the vehicle safely and in accordance with rules and regulations while ensuring that all students are transported in a safe manner. Drivers should never compromise the safety and security of students while operating the vehicle.
- E. Extreme misbehavior problems affecting the safe operation of the vehicle shall result in procedures as follows by the driver aiding the monitor:
 1. Stop the vehicle on the side of the road.

2. Secure the vehicle by placing it in neutral, engaging the emergency brake, turning off the ignition and securing the keys. Engage hazards.
3. Separate the students (if applicable) and restore order.
4. Call for assistance, if needed.
5. The school authority may have the student removed to another vehicle.
6. As a last resort, the police may be called to come to the scene.

The Transportation Manager and or program supervisors are authorized to administer suspension of a student's transportation.

- G. When present, the monitor will assist the driver in all student-related factors outlined above.
- H. Significant cases of misbehavior on the vehicle or at vehicle stops should be reported to the Transportation Manager. The Transportation Manager may then contact Pathways support staff for additional support.
- I. Upon completion of the route, the driver will perform a visual inspection of the vehicle by walking from the front to the rear and back to assure that there are not any students on board, and then complete the post trip.
- J. When dropping children off at the Pathways center the monitor and/or driver will ensure that all children have safely entered the building and are under the supervision of the appropriate program staff before driving away from the school entrance.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

A. Any violation of behavior standards on the vehicle is expected to be resolved the day of the occurrence. Bus drivers or monitors must report any serious infraction to the Transportation Manager who will share the report with the appropriate parties no later than the same day in writing. Discipline will be imposed for violations of these rules of behavior.

B. Depending on the seriousness of the behavior:

Mild: Talk with child about their behavior. Report the behavior to the classroom teacher.

Moderate: Talk to the child about the behavior. Transportation Manager or bus driver will speak with the parent about the behavior. An Incident and Observation Report will be submitted to the Transportation Manager who would contact appropriate parties and file a report in the child's school file.

Severe or Ongoing: A meeting with the parents would be scheduled and further steps taken which may include the development of a Behavior Support Plan for the child before transportation is re-instated. In the event a behavior plan is unsuccessful or not feasible, we reserve the right to terminate transportation services to ensure the safety of all children.

C. Guardians are urged to cooperate in the transportation of the student by explaining the importance of good behavior while they travel between home and school.

ACCIDENT REPORT

Accidents are to be reported immediately by telephone to the Transportation Manager and the local Police Department where the accident occurred and followed up by a full, detailed written report within 24 hours.

If an accident occurs, the monitor will immediately call the Police and then Transportation Manager by telephone. The Transportation Manager will then notify the President and CEO or designee.

MEDICAL POLICY

Please see Pathways Health Policy and Guidelines for a complete list of exclusions.

For the 2022-2023 School Year, the following COVID-19 bus protocols will be followed:

All students and staff will be expected to wear masks at all times when on the bus.

- All windows on buses will remain open at least 2" during operation. Please make sure students are dressed appropriately, particularly during inclement weather.
- Guardians will be notified if a student or employee on the bus tests positive for COVID-19. The name of the student or employee will not be disclosed. For close contacts on buses, testing is not required but encouraged.
- Pathways will review its guidelines periodically throughout the school year.

AUTHORIZED ACCESS TO VEHICLES

No one is to enter a school bus for any reason except for police officer or other emergency personnel, who, in the case of an emergency, presents him or herself in uniform and with proper identification. The driver is fully responsible for the safety of the children in that vehicle and drivers have been instructed to not allow anyone to enter their vehicle.

The Transportation Manager will identify Pathways staff who are authorized to enter a school bus. No other person will be allowed to board a school bus.