

April 6, 2018

Notice of Transportation Policy Changes for 2018-2019

Change Involving Parents Requesting Multiple Pickup or Drop-off Locations:

The District has been evaluating several of our transportation services for the past few years and has decided to implement policy changes to align with Iowa Department of Education guidance. One of the changes involves parents requesting multiple pickup or drop-off locations. Example: A student is picked up at home in the AM but dropped off at different location on Monday-Wednesday-Friday, and 3rd location on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Starting with the 2018-2019 school year, parents will be limited to one AM pickup and one PM drop off location for each student. Parents may request a different/alternate drop off location for the Wednesday early-outs. The parent will determine the primary AM and primary PM location. The primary location may be the student's residence or it may be a daycare. The Wednesday early out PM "alternate" drop-off may be a different address.

Over the years, the District has tried to accommodate parents requesting multiple pickup and drop-off locations for students. Providing multiple pickup and drop-off locations is a safety concern for the students. This specialized service has become difficult to manage to insure students are being dropped at correct locations. The District's bus driver pool is continually changing with new hires and sub drivers. It is a struggle for new drivers to get to know the students and be aware of the individualized pick up and drop off locations for certain students. It is nearly impossible for a sub driver to know the special circumstances for all routes. Additionally, as student enrollment grows, the availability of seats on the bus routes is limited, making it difficult to shift students between routes to accommodate specialized pickups and drop offs.

Change Involving Pay-for-Ride Services:

Starting with the 2018-2019 school year, students residing outside the two mile parameter for students in grades K-8 or three mile parameter for students in grades 9-12 will be charged pay-for-ride fees IF they request a pickup or drop off at a daycare or child care facility within a Pay-for-Ride zone. The District is implementing this change to align with the Iowa Department of Education guidance and bring parity to students utilizing the same daycare but paying different rates due to their home address. Any parent utilizing a pickup or drop-off location within a Pay-for-Ride zone will be assessed transportation fees.

Iowa law does not require school districts to transport students that reside within two miles for grades K-8 or three miles for grades 9-12. To determine if your student's pickup or drop-off location is located in a Pay-for-Ride zone, please see the Pay-for-Ride maps located on the school district's website at www.norwalkschools.org under Parents and Transportation. You must utilize pickup and drop-off locations outside the Pay-for-Ride area to qualify for free bus transportation. If you request transportation and the school determines the requested pickup or drop-off location is in a Pay-for-Ride zone, transportation fees will be applied to your student's portal account soon after registering, and payment for the full year will be due.

The 2018-2019 online student registration is available at <https://www.norwalkschools.org/registration/> Transportation applications are due August 1, 2018. Applications received after August 1st will not be added to a route until September 4th. The District is offering Early Bird Discounts to parents that choose to register by May 31st. Payment is due by June 30th to retain the discounts.