

Weston Public Schools

Transportation Protocols



School Year 2021 – 2022

August 2021

***These guidelines were updated by the Massachusetts
Department of Early and Secondary Education
on February 11, 2021.***

Core health and safety practices

Several core practices will support safe school bus operations this fall:

❖ **Masks**

All staff and students on the bus, regardless of age, are **required** to wear masks at **all** times. Exemptions for students due to medical and/or behavioral reasons – and associated protocols – are further described later in this guidance.

❖ **Distance**

As of February 2021, physical distancing guidelines and resulting bus capacities have been updated per the below.

o **Elementary schools:** Capacity limitations and physical distancing requirements for students on buses are lifted.

o **Middle and high schools:**

- ◆ Capacity limitations and physical distancing requirements for students on buses are lifted, except for middle and high schools in districts with high community prevalence.
- ◆ For middle and high schools in districts with high community prevalence, capacity limitations and physical distancing requirements on buses are amended to allow 2 students per bus bench.

❖ **Ventilation**

Keep windows open at all times during operation at least 2 inches. In adverse weather conditions, every other window can be opened.

❖ **Seat assignments**

Students will be assigned to a single bus and a particular seat. If need be, updated Assignments will be made on their first trip on the bus. The first student on will go to the farthest seat down and this will be their assigned seat for the upcoming school year. Students are not allowed to move their seats once assigned.

❖ **Bus monitors/Cameras**

Every bus is now equipped with cameras. The District is always looking for bus monitors (e.g., volunteer, student leader, or staff member) for the METCO elementary bus runs.

❖ Sanitation

Every bus is now equipped with a hand sanitizer dispenser. The Bus Drivers will periodically remind students of the location of the dispensers, but no Bus Driver can physically make students use the hand sanitizer.

The table below estimates the revised maximum capacity of school buses under the updated February 2021 guidelines from DESE (not including bus monitors). In the following section, we outline strategies for implementing this transportation guidance.

Bus model	Recommended occupancy (excluding students who could sit together from same household)	Percentage of full bus capacity
71-passenger bus	54 passengers	75%
19-passenger bus	14 passengers	75%

The Weston Public Schools Protocols will be as follows:

Masks

Everyone on the bus and waiting at bus stops must wear masks that cover the nose and mouth at all times.

- **Adults**, including drivers and other transportation staff (e.g., bus monitors), **are required to wear masks.**
- **Students are required to wear masks, regardless of age, when on the bus.**
 - **If a student is caught not wearing their mask:**
 - **First Time – Warning**
 - **Second Time – 1 day off the bus**
 - **Third Time – 1 week off the bus**
 - **Last Time – No bus privileges**
- **Masks should be provided by the student/family**, however, extra disposable masks are available on all buses for any student who needs them.

Physical Distancing

As of February 2021, physical distancing guidelines and resulting bus capacities have been updated per below. **In all cases, maximum distance between students should be maintained during boarding and transportation, and all other safety protocols are still required, including wearing masks and opening windows a couple of inches.**

The following distancing standards must be implemented in conjunction with strict adherence to health and safety requirements:

- Students should maintain a minimum of three feet of distance with masks on while waiting at bus stops.
- **Children from the same household and same classroom-based cohorts, should be seated together when feasible.**
- **Students should face forward at all times** and refrain from eating, shouting, singing, moving their seat, or sharing items while in transit. Students will be discouraged from moving their seats once assigned.

*Assigned seating is important because it effectively creates even smaller groups within cohorts which minimize transmission. Assigned seats can also assist with contact tracing.

- **If a student is caught switching seats or eating on the bus:**
 - **First Time – Warning**
 - **Second Time – 1 day off the bus**
 - **Third Time – 1 week off the bus**
 - **Last Time – No bus privileges**
- **Sanitation**
 - Every bus is now equipped with hand sanitizer dispensers. The Bus Drivers will periodically remind students of the location of the dispensers, but no Bus Driver can physically make students use the hand sanitizer.
 - The entire bus will be cleaned and disinfected every evening, and high touch areas will be disinfected between each bus run.
- **Health Checks**
 - If your child is not feeling well or has been diagnosed with Covid-19 or has been identified as a close contact of a person testing positive for Covid-19, please **DO NOT** send your child to school or the bus stop.
 - Seat assignments and ridership will be reviewed during contact tracing efforts if a student/bus driver tests positive for Covid-19 and was present on the bus during the infectious period (48 hours prior to symptom development or date of positive test diagnosis for asymptomatic students/staff).

Any questions regarding transportation can be directed to:

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