



Illinois State Board of Education

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TRANSPORTATION FAQ

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1. Is every school district required to provide free transportation services to its students?

No. Per Section 29-3 of the School Code, only certain types of school districts are required by law to provide free transportation services. Specifically, community consolidated districts, community unit districts, consolidated districts and consolidated high school districts, and combined school districts (if the combined school district includes any district that was previously required to provide transportation) shall provide free transportation for students residing one and one-half miles or more from any school to which they are assigned for attendance maintained within the district. See [Illinois State Board of Education \(ISBE\) District Transportation Requirements](#) for a detailed list regarding which districts are required or not required to provide transportation for free.

2. Is a district required to transport students who live less than one and one-half miles from their assigned attendance center?

No. School boards **may** provide transportation for students living less than one and one-half miles as measured by the customary route of travel from the school attended and may make a charge for such transportation in an amount not to exceed the cost thereof, which shall include a reasonable allowance for depreciation of the vehicles so used.

3. Is a district required to reimburse a parent or guardian for their mileage if the parent or guardian elects to transport their children to school due to health concerns regarding bus transportation?

No. The district is not required to reimburse parents if free transportation is offered for all eligible students; however, districts may determine locally to offer such reimbursement.

Contractual agreements between districts and the student's parent or guardian are permitted per the Part 120 Transportation rules [23 Il Admin 120.50(b)(1)(B)].

The decision to enter into contractual agreements with parents or guardians is a local decision; however, districts must have a written policy to outline the basic requirements of the agreement, such as:

- Parent or guardian address and round-trip mileage to school must be verified each day.

- Utilize uniform federal mileage rate. The 2020 rate is 57.5 cents per mile.
- Consider a maximum reimbursement amount per parent or guardian. As a guide, the General Assembly last funded the parent guardian transportation program in fiscal year 2009. The maximum transportation reimbursement amount paid by ISBE for a parent or guardian at that time was \$102. Adjusting for inflation to FY 2020, the rate would be \$122.
- Payment process and frequency to the parent or guardian.

Contractual payments made to parents or guardians during the year may be claimed on the 2020-21 Pupil Transportation Reimbursement Claim on Line 14(d) - Contractual Transportation Services.

4. **Can districts claim full costs for a blended learning model, where one or more days of the week are remote learning and no or limited transportation is provided (i.e., pay transportation contractor for full routes even if not fully utilized on remote learning days)?**

Should the need arise for schools to provide full remote learning where transportation is not provided due to potential spikes in COVID-19 transmission, will the same claimable rules apply as in 2019-20 school year? (Updated 10/15/20)

Yes to both questions. Per final rule effective August 27, 2020, Section 120.30(e) of the Part 120 Transportation rules [23 Il Admin 120.30(e)] states:

During a gubernatorial declaration of a disaster under Section 7 of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act [20 ILCS 3305], to ensure the continuity of education, including the provision of any direct or related service for the health and well-being of all public school students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12, all transportation costs incurred that are beyond transporting students, such as costs paid by a local education agency for all employees related to the provision of transportation or a transportation provider under a written agreement, regardless of any service that may be provided, or costs related to the distribution of food, distribution and pick-up of student assignments and work, and use of vehicles to provide wi-fi and other similar costs, shall be allowable and reimbursed by the formula under Section 29-5 of the School Code.

ISBE will base transportation reimbursement on expenditures. All allowable transportation expenditures incurred during limited or full closure will be claimable for transportation reimbursement. Districts may work with their bus contractors to make payments to ensure that all personnel, including bus monitors and bus drivers, can continue to be paid. School districts that choose to negotiate and execute a contract amendment with their bus contractors to make payments to ensure transportation personnel will be paid in full will be reimbursed by the state for those expenditures. Consultation with the district's legal representation is advised.

- 5. How is student headcount reported on the Transportation claim if the district is blended or fully remote due to COVID-19? Do we report students only if they are transported based on where they live? (Updated 10/15/20)**

Student headcount should be reported based on their enrollment for transportation and their category regardless of the days a student is transported. Districts that are in blended or fully remote status should continue to report the headcount of students enrolled for transportation. Specifically, report students who live over 1.5 miles, under 1.5 miles without an approved hazard, or under 1.5 miles with either an approved vehicular safety hazard or gang activity-related hazard. Students are counted to ride the bus whether they chose to do so or not.

- 6. We have added bus monitors to our regular transportation routes to ensure that all students who get on the bus are self-certified, sit in assigned seats, keep masks on, etc. Is this added salary for bus monitors reimbursable? (Updated 10/15/20)**

No. Per Section 120.40(b) of the Part 120 Transportation rules [23 II Admin 120.30(b)], salaries for bus monitors for regular transportation are not reimbursable. However, personnel who are required per the Individualized Education Program for a student with a disability are claimable for special education transportation reimbursement.

- 7. We are using numerous school vehicles to deliver equipment, homework and meals to students who are remote learning. Are these miles and expenditures claimable? (Updated 10/15/20)**

Vehicles must be purchased for school transportation out of Fund 40 Transportation and listed on the district's depreciation schedule. Miles and expenditures for these vehicles may be claimed in the Regular Category of the Transportation Claim.

- 8. Are school personnel and expenditures for conducting symptom screenings and temperature checks of students who are loaded on a bus claimable? (Updated 10/15/20)**

No. Expenditures of this type are non-claimable for Transportation reimbursement.