

Each year elementary school principals and secondary school principals with PRK classrooms receive the policy and procedures pertaining to tagging of kindergarten and PRK students and providing transportation lists to bus drivers on a daily basis. In addition to PRK and kindergarten students, many elementary schools will tag younger students who are non-English speakers to ensure safe bus arrival at their destination.

Below is what is sent to all elementary school principals and secondary school principals annually:

There are procedures in place for all kindergarten bus passengers regarding tagging students and providing a list of kindergarten passengers to the bus driver. This procedure should be a year-long practice. Please review this procedure with appropriate staff to ensure that all kindergarten students arrive safely at their destination.

All kindergarten students riding school buses are to be given an ID tag by their schools. There is specific language regarding this in the student handbook:

“Students in kindergarten who are transported will receive an identification tag at their school to ensure that they are not discharged from the school bus without a parent/guardian being present. Students not released from the school bus because no parent/guardian is present will be taken to the Elm Park Community School, 23 North Ashland Street (telephone 508-799-3568) to be picked up by a parent or guardian”

Additionally, the schools are required to give the driver a listing of kindergarten students riding the bus with basic student information.

Per this policy, Durham School Services drivers are to make sure that all kindergarten students are matched to the proper parent/guardian at the school bus stop. If there is no parent/guardian present the driver is instructed to take the kindergarten student to Elm Park School until a parent/guardian can be contacted. Kindergarten students are allowed to exit the school bus with an older sibling riding the same bus, only with parent permission.

The district strongly recommends that kindergarten students are seated in the front of the bus for easier identification and awareness. However, we realize that some schools with parent permission may allow kindergarten students to sit with older siblings riding the same school bus in the middle/rear of the bus and if this is the case the driver is aware of this seating arrangement.

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Additionally, for at least the first week of school, the schools are to give the driver a form filled out with the student information for all kindergarten students riding their school bus.

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It varies by school and driver but kindergarten students are frequently kept in the front of the school bus for easier identification and awareness. Some with older siblings riding the same school bus sit with that sibling in the middle/rear of the bus.

Other than the student handbook language and the school list of Kindergarten students there is also an element of driver discretion that is relied upon to ensure student safety.