Transportation Guidelines for English Language Learners

ELA, Newcomer Program, TNLI

The following transportation guidelines apply to students who qualify for and participate in the English Language Acquisition (ELA) program. Programs include:

- Elementary& Secondary TNLI – Transitional Native Language Instruction
- Elementary & Secondary Newcomer
- Secondary ESL – English as a Second Language

These guidelines are based on the Denver Public Schools Board of Education transportation policies including policy EEAA (“Walkers and Riders”). Policy EEAA establishes the walk zone criteria for students at elementary school at 1 mile, middle school at 2.5 miles, and high school at 3.5 miles walking distance from the student’s home to the school.

The “walk zone” standards shall apply equally to ELLs and non-ELLs. Bus transportation services will be offered to students living outside the walk zone distance to either:

A) Their neighborhood school (regardless of that school’s ELA Program service status) when the student’s parent/guardian opts for them to actually attend the neighborhood school.

B) A designated ELA Zone School or Newcomer Center when the parent/guardian opts for their student to attend the Zone School offering services not available in the neighborhood school. Eligible ELL students shall receive transportation services to Zone Schools or Newcomer Centers accordingly.

Exceptions are provided to students with disabilities, where bus transportation is a related service.

The requirements of Policy EEAA will be reevaluated annually to determine the most safe, and reliable options, and the best interests of all DPS students.

Transportation & Zone School Designations

Transportation to Zone Schools shall be made available to ELL students with the goal of transporting students to the district identified Zone School closest to their neighborhood school. The ELL student will not be provided transportation if they are within the walk zone and attend their neighborhood school where they are receiving service.

The Transportation Department reserves discretion, based on operational, bus utilization, planning, and economic considerations, to determine which designated Zone School can be served. This planning is done in conjunction with ELA department to include new, existing or adjusted locations. However, it is expected that the selected Zone School will in most cases be the closest or among the closest to the ELL student’s neighborhood school and align with the Feeder Map. In the event the selected Zone School is outside your neighborhood school,
transportation will be provided based on board policy guidelines EEAA. If the student opts out of the neighborhood Zone School options buses are not added to create a route.

**Transportation & Choice Options**

*If I desire TNLI services but decide to choice out of my neighborhood school and Zone School, what are my transportation options?*

Transportation would become the responsibility of the parent/guardian of a student who selects to choice out of their neighborhood school and designated ELA Zone School where the ELL student would have received ELA program services had the parent/guardian selected the services offered in the neighborhood or Zone school for their student.

**Transportation Exception Procedures**

*What if I don’t’ meet the eligibility criteria for Transportation?*

The parent/guardian of students wishing to use district transportation and who do not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria approved by the Board of Education and the Transportation Department guidelines may apply to the Transportation Department for a *Transportation Exception*. A *Transportation Exception* may be granted if there is “space available” on a bus. If space is available at the time of the parent/guardian’s application submission, the student will be allowed to board the district bus and obtain transportation as soon as possible; Transportation will require 1-2 weeks for processing and to notify the family via phone call to begin transportation. Buses are not added to a route and bus stops cannot be changed in order to accommodate *Transportation Exceptions*.

**DPS Transportation Options for ELL**

*English Language Learners attending Neighborhood or Zone School for Elementary, Middle or High*

- ELL students who request TNLI services, and attend his/her neighborhood school where TNLI/ ELA/ESL, Newcomer services are offered. Transportation **will be provided if you live outside of the walk zone distance from your neighborhood school**.

- ELL students who request TNLI services and his/her neighborhood school **does not** offer TNLI services. Students can elect to attend the *ELA Zone School designated* for your neighborhood. Transportation **will be provided according to district guidelines including walk zone provisions**.

**Examples:**

If your neighborhood school is Valdez, TNLI services are provided at Valdez, and you live 1.1 miles or more from Valdez. **Transportation will be provided according to district guidelines for elementary, middle and high.**
If your neighborhood school is Fairview, TNLI services are not provided at Fairview, and you still desire TNLI services. You can elect to attend your ELA Zone School. If your ELA Zone School is Valdez, transportation will be provided according to district guidelines for elementary, middle and high school.

Newcomer Zone Policy and effective 8-2016:

- Newcomer placement will change to follow the same placement procedures as other ELA center programs:
  - The district is zoned for Newcomer programs, and students are placed according to the zone in which they live. Transportation will be provided to the zone Newcomer program only.
  - If the student moves to a new zone within a school year, the student will be allowed to remain enrolled at the same school with transportation provided through the end of the school year. The following school year, the student will be offered placement at the Newcomer in the new zone of residence.
  - Siblings who elect to be placed in a Newcomer center with an eligible Newcomer sibling follow the same placement guidelines as above.
  - Note: Newcomer Eligibility determination not changing this year. However a future scope of work is to clarify the exit criteria for when a student no longer needs Newcomer services.

- Far North East Newcomer Zone 2016 -2017 change
  - Due to housing pattern changes, the FNE no longer needs a Newcomer elementary center program as originally forecasted.
  - Isabella Bird will serve as the Newcomer Center for FNE as well as supporting as far south as 8th ave. and east to Colorado. Planning Dept will develop a Newcomer Zone map.

- 2016-17 Transition Plan:
  - DPS will provide transportation for newcomers already enrolled in Isabella Bird newcomer program that live north of I-70. There are approximately 8 students in this category.
    - The plan is to add a new bus or transportation by contract transportation service.
  - FNE families can elect to stay at Place bridge for the 2016-17 school year with transportation, and they will be notified that all FNE newcomer students and siblings will be zoned to Isabella Bird starting 2017-18 if it is determined that they need continued Newcomer services, or to a FNE TNLI or ELA-E program.
  - All FNE newcomer students that are 2016-17 midyear transfers or late arrivals will go to Isabella Bird.