



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

Transportation for Students in Temporary Housing

ELIGIBILITY OVERVIEW

- **Busing**

- **In shelter**: Busing will be provided for students in grades K-6 and students with IEPs in 7th & 8th grade (if student doesn't already receive busing per IEP).
- **Other temporary housing situations** (e.g. temporarily doubled-up): Busing will be provided for students K-6 if appropriate route is available.
- **Remainder of the school year**: Busing will be provided if an appropriate route is available.
- **3-K and Pre-K**: Busing will be provided if an appropriate route is available.
- **Students with busing on their IEPs**: Busing will be provided to all students with specialized transportation listed on their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) regardless of their housing status.
- **Health and safety protocols** for busing are available [here](#).

- **MetroCards**

- **Student MetroCards**: full-fare cards are available to students in temporary housing from their school regardless of distance traveled.
- **Parent MetroCards**: **monthly** cards are available to parents of students in temporary housing (3K-12th grade) from their children's school to accompany their children to school, including summer school.

BUSING FOR STUDENTS LIVING IN **SHELTERS**

- **Busing for students in Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelters**. Students in grades K-6 and students with IEPs in 7th and 8th grade (if they don't already receive busing) who are in shelters overseen by DHS can be routed for busing after they have been found eligible for shelter or have been in shelter for 7 days. Parents who want busing should tell their shelter caseworker, and the caseworker should update the "Transportation Profile" in CARES (DHS' client management system).

- The transportation options in CARES are:
 - **Busing**
 - **MetroCard** (Note: this only refers to the student using a MetroCard to get to school. A parent can choose busing for their child and still get a parent MetroCard from their child's school)
 - **None/Self-Transport**
 - **Undecided**

The Department of Education's Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) will route busing for students who have "**Busing**" or "**Undecided**" in CARES.

- **Busing for students in Domestic Violence (DV) shelters and Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) shelters.** Students in grades K-6 (all students) and students in 7th and 8th grade (if receiving special education services and don't already receive busing) who are in DV and HPD shelters are eligible for busing. To request busing, [complete the Temporary Housing Exception Request Form and email the form to BusingExceptions@schools.nyc.gov.](#)
- It typically takes the Department of Education's Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) **5-7 business days to route a student for busing** after OPT get the information from CARES or the Exception Request.
- Parents can get bus route information by signing into their [NYC School Account \(NYCSA\)](#). [Students in Temporary Housing \(STH\) Regional Managers](#) can also look up busing information for parents.

BUSING FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE TEMPORARILY DOUBLED-UP AND FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Students who are temporarily doubled-up OR who were homeless and have moved into permanent housing may be able to receive busing if there is an appropriate bus route.

- To request busing, complete the [Exception Request Form](#) and submit the form to [BusingExceptions@schools.nyc.gov.](#)
- If busing is not available, the family can ask that the school give the student a full-fare MetroCard. Parent MetroCards are also available from the school (see below).

BUSING FOR CHILDREN IN 3-K & Pre-K

Busing may be available for a child in temporary housing who attends 3-K or Pre-K (for example, cases where the parent has a hardship taking their child to 3-K or Pre-K using public transportation or where the child has a sibling who attends school in the same building). OPT evaluates these on a case-by-case basis.

- To request busing for a child in temporary housing who attends Pre-K, fill out an [Exceptions Form](#) and submit it to [BusingExceptions@schools.nyc.gov.](#) Once OPT receives

the exceptions request, buses are routed within 5-7 business days if the student is eligible for a route.

- **Child's weight:** Parents need to include how much their child weighs on the Exceptions Request Form so OPT can determine whether a car seat is needed.

STUDENTS WITH *BUSING ON THEIR IEPs*

For busing to be re-routed for students who have busing on their Individualized Education Program (IEP) who are living in a shelter, the address information must be updated in ATS. To re-route special education busing:

- Parent requests that school **update address in ATS (BIO screen)**.
- School requests that [Transportation Liaison](#) in the Borough Office **update the address in ATS (STRE screen)**.
- OPT receives updated information within 24-48 hours.
- Student is typically routed within 5-7 business days. OPT contacts parent with updated busing info.
- To troubleshoot, parents can contact OPT customer service 718-392-8855

NOTE about District 75: The Transportation Supervisors at the Borough Offices do not need to be contacted update the STRE screen for students in D75 schools, because D75 schools have access to the STRE screen (unlike community school district schools) and should be updating both the BIO and STRE screens with the new address information.

Reimbursement for students with busing on their IEPs while busing is being re-routed:

- While busing is being re-routed, families can get MetroCards from the school or shelter (see below).
- Parents can get reimbursed for transportation expenses by filling out a **Travel Reimbursement Form**. For more information email TransportationReimbursement@schools.nyc.gov. Note: Families typically can't be reimbursed for MetroCards, because they should be able to get those from their child's school.

METROCARDS

Student MetroCards: The school will provide a free, full-fare MetroCard to students not receiving busing. Until the school gives the student a MetroCard, MetroCards are available from the [STH Family Assistant](#) or [STH Regional Manager](#).

Parent MetroCards: Free, monthly MetroCards are available to parents of students in temporary housing (3K-12th grade) from their children's school to accompany their children to school, including summer school.



- Parents do not need to show proof of being in temporary housing or how they will use the MetroCard.
- **Schools:** If a school needs MetroCards, email PublicSchoolMetroCards@schools.nyc.gov. Include the school's OPT school code or DBN and the number of MetroCards the school would like. *To check on the status of a MetroCard order, email the [City/Borough Transportation Liaison](#).*

Resources and Troubleshooting

- **Parents** can find bus route information on their child's [NYC School Account \(NYCSA\)](#), and **DOE staff** can find bus route information on the [Student Profile](#).
- Contact Office of Pupil Transportation Customer Service **(718) 392-8855 (parents)** or **(718) 482-3800 (DOE staff)** if:
 - Bus has not arrived at school in the AM/PM
 - Route change request
 - A student is placed on the wrong bus
 - Issue with a driver, attendant and/or bus company
- Contact the [Transportation Liaison](#):
 - If bus is arriving late to school
 - To check whether student is eligible for busing
 - For help with MetroCard Inventory
 - For help entering Stop or MetroCard information
- Contact the [bus company](#) if:
 - Bus has not arrived at the school AM/PM and school has already started/ended
 - A pick-up and/or drop-off time is needed for a specific student
- If issue with **MetroCard**, contact:
 - [STH Regional Manager](#)
 - If difficulty connecting with the STH Regional Manager, contact the STH Director of Regional Support (see [Central Staff](#))
- For more information, see:
 - [Transportation Resources for Schools](#)
 - [FAQs for STH Staff](#)

For questions, contact Jennifer Pringle at jpringle@advocatesforchildren.org or 212-822-9546

