

SIMSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2021-2022

TRANSPORTATION AND INFORMATION BOOKLET FOR KINDERGARTEN FAMILIES



Welcome Students!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Page</i>
Alternate Transportation Requests	7
Bus Conduct and Safety Rules	10
Connecticut State Statute	15
Frequently Asked Questions	12
Kindergarten Bus Stops	6
Registration Steps	5
Responsibilities of Parent/Guardian, State, and Town	8
School Hours	4
School Openings and Closings	4
SPS Central Offices and Elementary School Personnel	3
Transportation Board Policy	9
Transportation to Other than Legal Residence	9
Walking Distances	10

THIS BOOKLET CONTAINS IMPORTANT TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION. PLEASE BE SURE TO READ THROUGH THE BOOKLET IN ITS ENTIRETY.

SIMSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF ED. OFFICES

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Superintendent of Schools

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*Assistant Superintendent for
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SIMSBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, Grades K-6

Central School

Ms Beth Hennessy, Principal
Mrs JoAnne Chase, Secretary
Mrs Lora Rancourt, Nurse
860-658-4732

Latimer Lane School

Mr. Michael Luziotti, Principal
Mrs Beth Jarvis, Secretary
Mrs Maryellen Leathe, Nurse
860-658-4774

Squadron Line School

Mrs Meg Evans, Principal
Mrs Jacqueline Petrella, AP
Mrs Michele Rowe, Secretary
Mrs Krista Richardson, Secretary
Mrs Karen Gallagher, Nurse
860-658-2251

Tariffville School

Mr Steve Matczyk, Principal
Mrs Sharon Mutch, Secretary
Ms Kathryn Rothstein, Nurse
860-658-5825

Tootin' Hills School

*Ms. Anjanette Belmonte,
Principal*
Mrs Lori Blomberg, Secretary
Mrs Ginny Durst, Nurse
860-658-7629



KINDERGARTEN SCHOOL HOURS

Regular Day

Central, Latimer, Tariffville, Tootin' Hills ~ 8:15 am – 2:50 pm

Squadron Line ~ 8:45 am – 3:20 pm

Scheduled and Emergency Early Dismissal Days

Central, Latimer, Tariffville, Tootin' Hills ~ 8:15 am – 12:00 pm

Squadron Line ~ 8:45 am – 12:30 pm

First Day of School ~ August 25, 2021

Dates School Will Not Be In Session in 2021-2022

Sept 6	Labor Day	Dec 24-Jan 1	Holiday Recess
Sept 7	Rosh Hashanah	Jan 17	Martin Luther King Day
Sept 16	Yom Kippur	Feb 21-22	Winter Recess
Oct 11	Columbus Day	Mar (TBD)	Prof. Development
Nov 2	Elect. Day/Prof. Dev.	Apr 11-15	Spring Recess
Nov 25-26	Thanksgiving Recess	May 30	Memorial Day

SCHOOL OPENINGS

On regular days, buses start picking up students approximately 40-45 minutes before school opening. Please adjust that time accordingly when late openings occur. A two-hour delay means your bus comes two hours later than your usual pickup time.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Announcements of school closings, delays or early closings are made on the following stations: CBS / WFSB; ABC / WTNH; NBC / WVIT

School closing information is also posted on the [Simsbury Schools Website](#) using the link for Emergency on the home page.

If schools are dismissed early because of weather conditions, there will be no afternoon/evening activities.

REGISTRATION STEPS

1. You will receive a letter in January and pick up the Kindergarten Registration Packet in February from the elementary school to which your child is assigned.
2. The packet contains forms to be completed and instructions for the online registration. Please adhere to the dates for returning the completed packet. *All documents should be returned to the Board of Education Enrollment Office, 933 Hopmeadow Street. **Please do not hold up registering your child because you don't yet have the completed medical paperwork.*** If your child's physical is scheduled after the April 1 due date, you can submit that paperwork at a later date, but before the first day of school.
3. You will need to supply proof of residence (see options in your packet) and a copy of your child's full size birth certificate. If you do not have a copy, you can obtain one in the town where your child was born or the town where you were residing at the time of their birth.
4. If you are **not** registering your eligible Kindergartner for the school year 2021/22 in the Simsbury Public Schools, you must sign the "Acknowledgement of Option to Exempt Attendance of Child Five or Six Years of Age From School". This applies to you if you plan to have your eligible student attend another Kindergarten program as well as if you do not plan to enroll your child in any program at this time (please see page 14). The form is included with your registration packet and is also available at your elementary school office or at the Board of Education offices.



KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION MEETINGS

Virtual parent/guardian orientation meetings are held during the month of February at the elementary schools, and the registration process is explained. Please feel free to call the Enrollment Office at 860-323-8140 or your school office if you have any questions about the registration process or kindergarten transportation.

KINDERGARTEN MEET AND GREET

Each of the schools will hold a Kindergarten Meet and Greet session, during which time all children who have registered for Kindergarten will meet their teacher, visit their classroom, and take a short bus ride. You will also meet the Principal and school nurse, and receive additional transportation information. Kindergarten Meet and Greet is typically held at each school one or two days before the first day of school. **Each elementary school will notify the registered families in their district with the exact date and time once it has been determined.**

KINDERGARTEN BUS TAGS

Kindergartners will receive a nametag with their bus assignment at their Meet and Greet session. Please have your child wear the tag during the first couple weeks of school, as it enables drivers and teachers to identify your child as a Kindergarten student. If you are unable to attend this session, your child will receive the tag on his/her first day of school.

KINDERGARTEN BUS STOPS

Kindergarten children are assigned to the neighborhood bus stops with other area children. **It is our expectation that parents/guardians will assist their children during this formative school year by walking to and waiting with or waiting for their children at the bus stop.**

Release of Kindergarten students to Adults: At the beginning of the school year or within the Registration Process, parents/guardians must identify appropriate adults to whom they will allow their child to be released. If, in the judgment of the driver, there is a question about the release of a Kindergarten student, the driver is to radio dispatch and return the child to his/her school.

Occasionally, specific daycare needs, required because of parents'/guardians' work schedules, necessitate modifications to a student's transportation between school and home. Whenever possible, transportation is provided to daycare facilities or to an additional parent home. **Our practice is to provide transportation to day-care providers and multiple parent homes within the school district to which your child is assigned *only* when it is on the bus route. We will not re-route buses to pass day-care providers not already on the bus route.**

REQUEST FOR ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION

If your request is related to a daycare situation, you must submit it in writing. You need to inform us of the daycare address and whether your child is at that location before and/or after school. You also need to tell us what days your child attends his/her daycare. Please realize that if your child is attending your daycare less than a full week, your child may be assigned to more than one bus route.

An arrangement that is not the same for five days can be confusing to all involved – teachers, drivers, and children. It is common to have substitute drivers and/or substitute teachers who need to rely on approved information to control the whereabouts of Kindergarten students. When there is a change in bus route assignment at the end of the day, it is the teacher's responsibility to place the child on the correct bus. Please note that the end of a school day is not a good time to make multiple changes in a teacher's classroom procedures.

If your request is for a daycare provider who is not in your elementary school boundary, you are responsible for arranging transportation to and from that provider. Some daycare providers have made their own arrangements for transportation to and from school. Please check with your provider.

A "Request for Alternate Transportation" form is provided in the registration packet for use if your child needs to go to daycare or to an additional parent home.

SAFETY INCLUDES A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS, SCHOOL AND STATE.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/guardians are responsible for the conduct of their children while they are waiting for the bus and returning home from the designated bus stop. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to assure that the student is waiting at his/her designated stop on time. *Students should be at their designated bus stop 10 minutes before the posted time.* Should a student miss the bus, the parent/guardian must find alternate means of transporting the child to school.

Parents/guardians of kindergarten students must make their presence known to indicate they are home when the school bus returns the student to his/her home, or must designate a person responsible to receive the child, unless the kindergarten student has an older sibling getting off with them. If the person designated to receive the student is other than the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must notify the school office in writing. **Kindergarten students whose parents/guardians are not home will be brought back to their school.** The school office will contact the parent/guardian at their work or emergency number to pick up their child.

During inclement weather, a bus driver may determine that a hill or street cannot be negotiated safely. Buses may also run later because of inclement weather and traffic. It is the responsibility of parents to make alternate arrangements to assure that their children get to school.

STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Connecticut Motor Vehicle Department establishes rules and regulations on equipment and operation of buses and makes annual inspections.

TOWN RESPONSIBILITIES

Simsbury Town government is responsible for town roads and local police are responsible for crossing protection, and enforcement of traffic regulations.

SIMSBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

5147 TRANSPORTATION

Responsibility - The Board of Education shall provide safe and adequate transportation for students in grades kindergarten through twelve. However, transportation shall not be provided for such students who reside within a reasonable distance from the school they are to attend, and students shall be expected to walk a reasonable distance to a scheduled bus stop. "Reasonable distance" shall be specified in the policies, and the bus schedule shall be based on these specifications, with special consideration being given where hazardous conditions exist.

5147.1 Definitions

- A. "School transportation" means the procedure, program, or implemented plan by which a pupil is transported to and/or from school from his/her residence or the bus stop at public expense, whether by use of publicly owned equipment or by contract.
- B. "Walking distance" means the linear measure of a prescribed or authorized pedestrian route between the student's residence and his/her school from a point at the edge of a public or private road nearest the student's residence to a point at the entrance of the school, or a safe entrance to the school grounds located within one hundred feet of the school building entrance or the bus pick-up area, or the route from the point on the public thoroughfare nearest the residence to the school bus or vehicle, embarkation point established by the Simsbury Board of Education.
- C. "Hazard" means a thing or condition that affects the safety of students walking to and from school and/or a designated bus pick-up area.

Walking Distance

- A. Maximum walking distance authorized by the Board:
 - Kindergarten students, up to one-half mile
 - Grades 1-6 students, up to three-quarters of a mile
 - Grades 7-12 students, up to one and one-half miles

Transportation to Other Than Legal Residence

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to permit transportation to and/or from destinations other than the legal residence of a student when such transportation is required by regular day care needs, student employment, or unanticipated family emergencies. The Superintendent is authorized to permit such transportation, provided that:

- A. there is sufficient room on another bus
- B. the alternative pick up or delivery is at a regular stop on a regularly scheduled bus route, which is determined on an annual basis
- C. the purpose of the alternate transportation is not recreational, social, or related to after-school youth activities



BUS CONDUCT AND SAFETY RULES, GRADES K-12

1. The driver is in complete charge of the bus and the children being transported. He/she is required to enforce all rules and regulations adopted by the school authorities for the conduct of students riding the bus, as well as all DMV rules. The driver may make changes in seating, arrange for discipline as it is required, and may take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of his/her bus and its passengers.
2. Students should be at the bus stop approximately 10 minutes before the scheduled time. While waiting for the bus, respect your neighbor's property – don't play tag or run into the street. Inappropriate behavior of a student at a bus stop may result in disciplinary action.

3. Line up single file in front of the bus door. Always use the handrail when boarding the bus and avoid crowding or disturbing others. Students must take a seat when they enter the bus, and remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
4. Students must not, at any time, extend their arms or head out of the bus window, nor may they open a window without the permission of the driver.
5. Indecent or profane language, loud or disturbing talking, or unnecessary conversation with the driver is expressly prohibited.
6. Students must not throw any articles in or out of the bus.
7. Students shall enter and leave the bus only at the front door except in cases of emergency.
8. Upon arrival at school, let your classmates at the front of the bus get off first.
9. When exiting the bus, move away from the bus where the driver has a better view to see you. Students may, after exiting the bus, cross the street, if necessary, in front of the bus. We ask that both you and your child wait for the driver to signal the time to cross. The mirrors on the bus have been placed so that the driver can view the traffic behind him/her and coming toward him/her. **NO ONE SHOULD MOVE UNTIL THE DRIVER SIGNALS.** The drivers are trained in this procedure, and this procedure is in effect on ALL streets in Simsbury. It is the responsibility of the pupil to cross the street safely, after the driver's signal, looking both ways, while the bus remains stationary.
10. Students are not permitted to possess or transport on school property any firearm, knife, explosive, martial arts weapon, other dangerous instruments, or facsimile of any firearm or knife. School property includes any authorized vehicle used by the Board of Education for school transportation.
11. The use of tobacco, drugs or any controlled substance in any form on a school bus is prohibited by state law.

12. All rules and regulations pertaining to bus behavior and procedures are also in force for any school field trips, athletic trips or any other school-sponsored activities.
13. Students who damage or deface any bus or equipment on the bus will be held liable for such damage.
14. **Students are not permitted to eat or drink while riding the bus.** This is because of choking hazards as well as food allergies. Parents/guardians of students with diabetes should contact their school nurse.
15. The possession of laser pointers on school grounds, school-operated vehicles or school-related functions is prohibited. Students who violate this rule are subject to disciplinary actions.
16. On buses that are equipped with seat belt systems, seat belt use shall be mandatory for all riders. Repeated refusal to wear seat belts will result in suspended riding privileges from the bus.

FAQ – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

To help you better plan for the first day of school, we have compiled some of the most frequently asked questions and answers.

Where will my child's bus stop be located?

Our practice is to assign K students to a neighborhood stop when they are riding with the rest of the school population, grades 1 through 6. Kindergarten students will receive bus information at their Meet and Greet sessions in August.

Are bus seats reserved for Kindergartners?

We ask the drivers to try to reserve the front few seats for the kindergartners. However, the drivers don't know how many kindergarten students to expect as their route sheets list only the stops and not the students or grade levels, and some kindergartners prefer to sit with older siblings. After the first few days of school, the drivers should start to get a better idea of the amount of space needed.

Will you transport my child to his/her daycare provider?

Wherever possible, we will transport children to authorized stops on our regularly traveled routes within the same district as the school your child attends. According to Board of Education policy, we will not re-route buses to pass daycare providers that are not already on the bus route.

Are there other carriers who can transport my child to daycare?

There are private carriers who will provide transportation for students. Parents/guardians are responsible for arranging that transportation and for its cost. Some daycare centers have their own vans; please check with your facility. Other carriers our families use are:

Salter's Express	860-651-3311
Dattco	860-673-7231

Who should I notify about my child's daycare needs?

Your child's daycare needs should be made **in writing** to his or her teacher/school office and to the Transportation Coordinator at the Board of Education office. This includes notification about children who will split their time between two parent's homes. Once we know where and when your child will be going, we can assign him/her to the proper bus. If your child is going to daycare via private transportation rather than school bus, we need to know so we can remove them from the bus assigned to take them home. Your alternate arrangement requests should be made no later than August 1, 2020 in order to be assigned the proper bus before orientation day. Forms are included in your registration packets and can be returned with your registration forms to the Board of Education Enrollment Office. You may also email your requests to shellman@simsburyschools.net. Please be sure to include your child's name, daycare provider name and address, and the days your child needs to be picked up and/or dropped off there. Due to the large volume of phone calls received prior to the start of school and the margin for error during that rush, verbal daycare notice will not be accepted.

If I don't send my child to Kindergarten, but intend to send him/her to first grade in Simsbury, will you notify me of registration dates?

We will not have record of your child if you send him/her to Kindergarten elsewhere. Please call the Enrollment Office at 860-323-8140 during March or April of your child's kindergarten year and arrange for registration for entry into grade one.

What if I am unsure as to the readiness of my child to enter this year's kindergarten class?

Please call your elementary school and speak with the Principal to express your concerns. He/she will be able to advise you of the options and personnel available to you in determining this choice.

What should I do if I suspect that my child has a developmental delay or disability?

Preschool screenings are held four times a year. Parents/Guardians can request more information by calling the Simsbury Public Schools Department of Special Services at 860-658-3873.

The preschool screening process takes 45 minutes to an hour and involves both you and your child. Your child will play "games" (which target articulation, language, reasoning and motor skills) with members of the Preschool Team. At the same time, you and another staff member will discuss your child's self-help skills and social-emotional development as well as review the group experience form.

The Simsbury Preschool Team includes a Speech/Language Pathologist, an Occupational Therapist, a Physical Therapist, a Preschool Special Education Teacher, a School Psychologist and an Administrator.

This is just a screening, *not an evaluation*. It screens for the presence of possible developmental delays. This screening will result in a determination as to whether your child is functioning within normal limits or is in need of further evaluation.

Sometimes a visit to your child's nursery school or daycare setting is needed to complete the screening process. You will be asked to sign a permission form before this can be done. Direct contact from your child's pediatrician is always welcome.

CONNECTICUT STATE STATUTE PA 98-243

If you are not planning to enroll your child in next year's Kindergarten class in The Simsbury Public Schools, you should be aware of state legislation, Public Act 98-243, An Act Concerning Early Reading Success, which lowers the compulsory education age from age seven to age five.

It also permits parents/guardians to withhold their child from a formal education program at age five for one year, and then again at age six for one year. At age seven, the child must be enrolled in an education program as described in Section 10-184 of the Connecticut General Statutes; no additional delays are permitted.

To exercise the option, the parent, or legal guardian of the child, must personally appear at the elementary school office and sign an option form and the district must provide the parent/guardian with information on the educational opportunities available in the district.

Please understand that even after signing this form, you are still free to change your mind at any time and enroll your child in this year's kindergarten class.