

Who is eligible for school transport assistance?

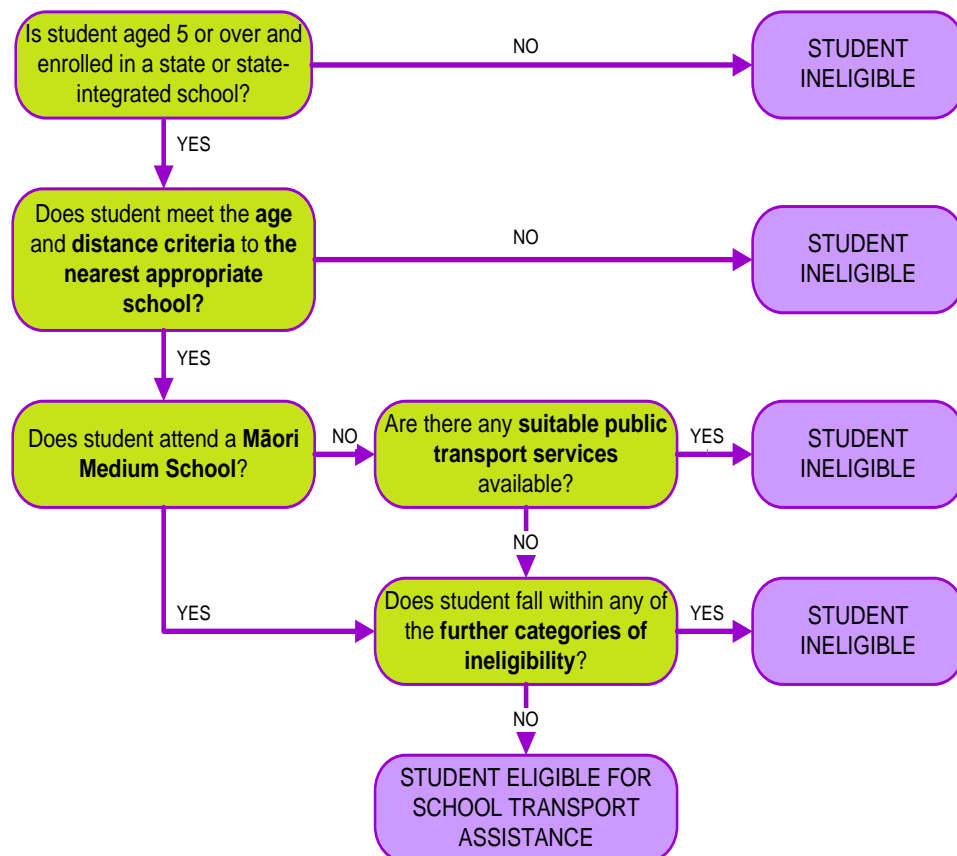
This fact sheet outlines the school transport assistance eligibility criteria. It applies to all students except those with special education needs. For information about special needs transport assistance see **Fact Sheet 5: How is transport assistance provided for students with special needs?** The information in this fact sheet is current as at June 2009.

Overview

Mainstream school transport assistance is designed to help caregivers with students in state and state-integrated schools who, because of distance or lack of public transport services, do not have ready access **to transport to and from** their nearest school. School transport assistance is a **shared responsibility** between the government and the caregiver rather than a door-to-door service. Types and amounts of assistance can vary from situation to situation.

Who is eligible for school transport assistance?

The diagram below will help you see if a student may be eligible for assistance. **Notes on the terms in bold type can be found overleaf.**



FACT SHEET 1 of 12

School Transport: What You Need To Know

The following fact sheets about school transport are available:

1. Who is eligible for school transport assistance?

2. What if a student doesn't attend the nearest school?

3. What if the nearest school doesn't offer education in the desired language?

4. What types of assistance can a student get?

5. How is transport assistance provided for students with special needs?

6. What should I know about school bus services?

7. Student behaviour on buses: What is expected?

8. What is good practice for school bus safety?

9. Who has a responsibility for school bus safety?

10. What is a Conveyance Allowance and who can receive it?

11. Who can I contact about school transport?

12. How are bus routes designed?

For more information visit our website at:

www.minedu.govt.nz/schooltransport

What are the age and distance criteria?

To meet the age and distance criteria a student must live further than a certain distance from the **nearest appropriate school**, regardless of whether it is the school the student attends. The distance is measured over the shortest public road or public pedestrian route from the home roadside gate of the student to the nearest appropriate school.

The distances are:

- ◆ *More than 3.2 kilometres for students under 10 years of age;*
- ◆ *More than 4.8 kilometres for students 10 years of age or over.*

What if there are suitable public transport services available?

If suitable public transport is available, students are not eligible for school transport assistance (note that this criterion does not apply to Māori Medium School students). A public transport service is suitable if it:

- ◆ Travels within 2.4 kilometres of the student's home; and
- ◆ Travels within 2.4 kilometres of the nearest appropriate school; and
- ◆ Has a suitable timetable; and
- ◆ Does not require the student to change buses more than once on a journey.

What is the nearest appropriate school?

Transport assistance helps a student reach the nearest school, usually:

- ◆ The school closest to the student's home; or
- ◆ The Māori Medium School closest to the student's home (if the caregiver wants the student to attend a Māori Medium School); or
- ◆ The mainstream school closest to the student's home (if the caregiver wants the student to attend a school other than a Māori Medium School if this is the closest); or
- ◆ The closest integrated school having the same special character with which the caregiver identifies.

If the nearest school is unsuitable for the student, the nearest appropriate school is used instead. For this purpose, unsuitable schools are:

- ◆ Schools of another gender or the wrong year level for the student;
- ◆ Schools of special character with which the caregiver does not identify;
- ◆ Private schools;
- ◆ Schools that do not provide education in the chosen language (rules apply – see **Fact Sheet 3: What if the nearest school doesn't offer education in the desired language?**);
- ◆ Schools with enrolment schemes that exclude the student.

What is a Māori Medium School?

A Māori Medium School is a Kura, Kura Kaupapa Māori, Wharekura or designated character school providing education in Te Reo Māori established under Section 155 or Section 156 of the Education Act 1989. All eligibility criteria except availability of public transport services apply to Māori Medium School students.

What are the further categories of ineligibility?

Students falling into any of the following categories are not eligible for school transport assistance:

- ◆ Any student who is not aged 5 and over;
- ◆ Students whose home or normal place of residence is not New Zealand (this includes foreign fee paying students, but excludes foreign exchange students);
- ◆ Private school, home-schooled, or Correspondence School students;
- ◆ Students who are excluded or suspended.