

RSCO TRANSPORTATION NEWSLETTER

Back to School 2026-27

August 2026



Hello, RSCO families!

As we prepare for the upcoming school year, we want to extend a warm welcome to both new and returning families in the RSCO School Choice programs. Inside, you'll find important updates and reminders to help ensure a smooth start this August. Be sure to review the information and take any necessary steps as we gear up for a successful year ahead!

Bus Route Notifications for the 2026-27 School Year

Your student's bus route information will be sent electronically through School Messenger **the week of August 10, 2026**. Please be sure that your address and all contact information, including your email address, has been updated with your student's school.

Join us at the 12th Annual CREC Back-to-School Block Party!



Children ages 3-17 will receive free backpacks filled with school supplies!

All guests are required to complete a check-in process, so **pre-registering for the event is strongly recommended**.

Note: Children must be present and checked-in to receive backpacks.

When: Wednesday, August 12, 2026

Where: CREC Central Headquarters, 111 Charter Oak Ave., Hartford, CT

Time: 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

[Pre-register for the event](#) or visit www.crec.org/c/btspre.



Parent/Guardian Transportation Informational Sessions

RSCO Transportation is hosting four (4) virtual informational sessions for all **NEW RSCO FAMILIES** via Zoom. Please see the schedule below.

Date	Time
Wednesday, July 29	5:00 p.m.
Monday, August 10	5:00 p.m.
Tuesday, August 18	5:00 p.m. (Spanish only)
Wednesday, August 19	5:00 p.m.

During these sessions, a family liaison will be available to answer any questions and provide important information about the upcoming school year. *The Spanish-language session will take place on Thursday, August 20th, at 5:00 p.m.*

Be sure your contact information is up to date, especially if you've moved to a new address. This ensures you receive your route information and other important transportation notices. Please contact your student's school over the summer to make any necessary updates.

Zoom links will be sent to incoming families via email in mid-July.

Keep Track of Your Child's Bus



All RSCO bus contractors (DATTCO, First

Student, and Transportation Management Solutions [TMS]) have GPS bus tracking apps. The bus tracking apps are a family-friendly tool that lets you track your child's school bus in real-time right from your smartphone or computer. The apps provide live updates on the bus's location, sends notifications when the bus is nearby, and allows you to set up custom alerts to stay informed about your student's transportation. To register for your tracking app once you have received your bus route information, please go to crec.org/transportation/rSCO.php and select your child's assigned bus contractor.

Transportation Reimbursement Stipend Eligibility & Deadline



For the 2026-27 school year, families whose students are enrolled in a RSCO School Choice program where transportation is not provided may be eligible for a \$5.00 per day reimbursement stipend, if they meet eligibility requirements.

Eligibility Requirements

- Prekindergarten students who reside outside of Hartford.
- Students who live outside of the RSCO Transportation Zone.

Note: Families must transport their student to and from school for the entire school year. The stipend is not available to families who transport students to a magnet school located in their town of residence.

How to Apply

Online reimbursement applications will open in October 2026. **Parents/guardians must complete and submit the [Parent/Guardian Transportation Reimbursement Form](#) by June 15, 2027.** A new application is required each school year if the family remains eligible.

2025-26 School Year Stipend Reimbursement Payments

Returning eligible families who completed and submitted a reimbursement form by the deadline June 15, 2026, will be receiving their reimbursement checks late August/early September.



Types of Bus Stops

RSCO Transportation uses **centralized or neighborhood bus stops** for pickup and drop-off of students to and from magnet schools, Open Choice schools and Hartford Region technical high schools.

Centralized Bus Stops Locations

Centralized stops provide a central location in a town as a bus stop for students in the area. These stops are typically 1–3 miles from a student's home and are not located in a student's neighborhood. Centralized stops are not walkable and require students to be dropped off and picked up at the central location. Centralized stops are often located in a public place, such as schools or libraries, and in some cases, large shopping complexes provide a safe location for students and their families to access transportation to and from school. **Parents/guardians must arrange for students' timely arrival to and pick up from the bus stop.**

Neighborhood Bus Stop Locations

Neighborhood stops are located in or near a student's neighborhood at a location that is safe and best serves multiple students on the bus route. These stops are generally within walking distance of students in the neighborhood area and are often located at street corners. RSCO Transportation follows these walking distance guidelines when establishing neighborhood bus stops based on the student's grade level:

- **Grades PK3–3:** Student resides **one mile or less** from their assigned stop.
- **Grades 4–8:** Student resides **one and a half miles or less** from their assigned stop.
- **Grades 9–12:** Student resides **two miles or less** from their assigned stop.

Home Stops

In general, RSCO Transportation **does not provide pickup or drop-off services from students' residences**. However, there are two limited exceptions to this general policy:

Special home bus stop request based on a student's health condition — In certain circumstances, a student's health condition may require a home stop to and from school. Home stop requests are reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis. Families should follow these steps to request a special home stop based on a student's health condition:

- Families must submit a completed **RSCO Medical Transportation Request Form through a three-step process**. The RSCO Medical Transportation Request Form is available at crec.org/transportation/rsco.php or by calling our customer service call center at 860-524-4077.
- The parent/guardian completes the first half of the form and then forwards the form to the student's doctor for final completion. The RSCO Medical Transportation Request Form can only be submitted by the doctor, not the parent/guardian.
- The student's doctor submits the RSCO Medical Transportation Request Form to RSCO Transportation via fax to 860-509-3725.
- RSCO Transportation will review each request and determine if an accommodation will be made. RSCO Transportation will contact the family with the final determination.

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Out-of-Zone Transportation Options

Families whose students attend a RSCO Choice school but live **outside** the RSCO Transportation Zone have two options:

1. **Transport their student to and from school for the entire school year** — families choosing this option may be eligible for the Transportation Reimbursement stipend.
2. **Transport their student to an existing bus stop within the RSCO Transportation Zone** — families choosing this option must contact their student's school to report that they live outside the zone and request to be assigned to a bus stop within the RSCO Transportation Zone.

Types of Bus Stops, continued

Specialized student transportation based on an IEP or 504 Plan

- If the student qualifies for door-to-door transportation through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 plan, transportation is provided by the student's town of residence through the local board of education transportation services.
- Families should contact their local school district's board of education or their magnet school for contact information for specialized transportation services.

Important note: Home stops are not allowed within a cul-de-sac. A home stop will be located at the nearest street corner. Buses are not allowed to enter an apartment complex or travel on private condominium roads.

Bus Stop Tip/Reminder

RSCO Transportation uses a "20-minute window," also known as the "10/10 window," for bus pick-ups and drop-offs. This means that the bus can come at any time between **10 minutes before or 10 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time**. Therefore, families should allow an extra 10 minutes before and 10 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time for the bus to arrive in the morning.

For example: If the scheduled bus assigned time is 8:15 a.m., the bus can come as early as 8:05 (10 minutes before) and as late as 8:25 a.m. (10 minutes after), and still be considered on time. **Note:** The bus does not wait for the student; the student should be at the stop waiting for the bus.

Student Safety on the Bus

Student behavior plays an important role in making sure the ride to and from school is safe for everyone. Please help us by reminding your students of the following bus safety rules. Students must:

- **Be visible and ready** at the assigned bus stop location when the bus arrives.
- **Find a seat quickly.** Take their seat promptly and stay seated while the bus is in motion for the entire trip.
- **Assigned seating:** Sit in your assigned seat, if seats have been assigned. Note: To keep the ride safe and comfortable, the driver may assign seats as needed.
- **Keep it quiet.** Normal conversation is allowed, but loud or distracting behavior is not.
- **Be respectful.** Behave responsibly and follow the bus driver's and/or bus monitor's instructions
- **Avoid inappropriate or offensive language.**
- **Respect personal space** and keep hands to yourself at all times.
- **Never throw objects** inside the bus or out of bus windows.
- **No food or drinks.** Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus due to food allergies and choking hazard.
- **No boarding the bus.** Parents/guardians are not allowed to board the bus unless it is to buckle in your PreK student.



Thank You!

Thank you for supporting a safe and respectful environment for all students.

Please note: For any behavioral issues with students, parents, or our bussing staff, refer to the RSCO Transportation Family Information Handbook and contact one of the family liaisons.

Please refer to the RSCO transportation Family Handbook for answers to the most commonly asked questions.



Questions? We're Here to Help!

RSCO Transportation Office
155 Wyllys Street
Hartford, CT 06106
860-524-4077
www.crec.org/transportation/rsco.php

Family Liaisons: Magnet Schools

Barbara Burke
bburke@crec.org

Shawnette Taylor
shtaylor@crec.org

Family Liaisons: Open Choice

Cassie Little
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