



Instructions for Completion of Distance Evaluation Requests – 2018 – 2019

Please read carefully and follow all instructions – incomplete or illegible requests or those missing required documentation cannot be processed and will be returned.

The Department of Education provides transportation to general education pupils who meet defined grade and distance requirements. Information on these requirements can be found at the following location: [DOE grade-distance eligibility information](#).

These requirements specify the following:

- Transportation is provided only to eligible pupils,
- In general, only K through 6th grade pupils are entitled to yellow bus,
- Public transportation (MTA bus or subway) is equivalent to yellow bus as a form of transportation.

Given this, requests for exceptions to the grade and distance requirements that apply to all general education pupils will only be approved when a clear and convincing reason is presented for the exception. Parents or guardians may use the Distance Evaluation Request form to apply for an exception when they believe that the DOE's measurement of the distance from home to school is incorrect. When doing so, parents should bear the following in mind:

- **A pupil's eligibility for transportation changes according to the pupil's grade level.** A pupil who may have been eligible by distance as a second grader (living between one-half mile and one mile from school) will no longer be eligible when they enter the third grade (when the distance requirement becomes one mile or more). A similar change occurs when pupils move from the sixth to the seventh grade (when the distance requirement becomes one and one-half miles or more),
- **The Department of Education does not rely on commercial software applications such as MapQuest[®] or Google[®] for distance measurements. OPT's distance measurements are based on data provided by the NYC Department of City Planning and are taken as definitive.** See page five, below, for an explanation of how the DOE determines your child's distance to school,
- **The DOE's distance measurement is extremely accurate:** of 187 requests for distance evaluations received in 2015 - 2016, only 1 was approved as a result of an error in the DOE's measurement.

The instructions below describe how each section of the Distance Evaluation Request form is to be completed. If carefully followed, this should permit a prompt and accurate assessment of the request. The instructions provided for parents and guardians are detailed both to minimize the need to request additional information, which will only delay the process, and to facilitate translation into multiple languages. **The forms themselves must be completed using the English language.**

Incomplete or illegible forms or those missing required documentation cannot be processed and will be returned to the pupil's parent or guardian. When complete information is provided, a decision on an exception can usually be provided within fifteen (15) days. In exceptional cases or during particularly busy times of the year, a decision may take up to thirty (30) days.

Instructions for completion of Distance Evaluation Requests

Forms may be submitted either by mail or by email. **Copies submitted by fax, whether from the parent or the school, will not be accepted.**

Instructions for parents or guardians for completion of Distance Evaluation Requests

At each of the numbered locations in **Section 1** on the form please **clearly** type or print the following **(all information is required)**:

- 1.1a Pupil's **last name** (surname or family name)
- 1.1b Pupil's **first name** (given name)
- 1.1c Pupil's **middle initial**, if any
- 1.2 Pupil's **date of birth** in MM-DD-YY format
- 1.3 Check to indicate the pupil's **gender** (1.3a for Male, 1.3b for Female)
- 1.4 Pupil's **student identification number** (OSIS number – contact the pupil's school if unknown)
- 1.5 Pupil's **grade** (grade number from K to 12 or NG for “non-graded”)
- 1.6 Check to indicate the pupil's **classification** (1.6a for General Ed, 1.6b for Special Ed)
- 1.7a **House or building number** of pupil's home address
- 1.7b **Street name** of pupil's home address
- 1.7c **Apartment number**, if any
- 1.8 **Borough** of pupil's home address (1.8a for Brooklyn, 1.8b for Bronx, 1.8c for Manhattan, 1.8d for Queens, 1.8e for Staten Island)
- 1.9 **City** of pupil's home address
- 1.10 **Zip code** of pupil's home address [“Zip + four” if known]

At each of the numbered locations in **Section 2** on the form please check the appropriate box:

- 2.1 Check [] here if [a] your **child is from Kindergarten through grade 2**, [b] to confirm that you understand that full-fare transportation is **only provided at distances greater than 1/2 mile**, and [c] to **confirm that you have reviewed the DOE's grade/distance eligibility requirements with your child's school.**
- 2.2 Check [] here if [a] **your child is between grades 3 and 6**, [b] to confirm that you understand that full-fare transportation is **only provided at distances greater than 1 mile**, and [c] to **confirm that you have reviewed the DOE's grade/distance eligibility requirements with your child's school.**
- 2.3 Check [] here if your child is between **grades 7 and 12**, [b] to confirm that you understand that full-fare transportation is **only provided at distances greater than 1-1/2 miles**, and [c] to **confirm that you have reviewed the DOE's grade/distance eligibility requirements with your child's school.**

Instructions for completion of Distance Evaluation Requests

Instructions for parents/guardians, cont.

- 2.4 Check here to **confirm that you have attached documentation to support your belief that the DOE's distance measurement is incorrect.**¹ Describe that documentation or explain why you believe the measurement is in error.

At each of the numbered locations in **Section 3** on the form please **clearly** type or print the following:

- 3.1a Parent or guardian's **last name** (surname or family name)
3.1b Parent or guardian's **first name** (given name)
3.1c Parent or guardian's **middle initial**, if any
- 3.2 Indicate parent or guardian's title by checking [✓] 3.2a for Mr., 3.2b for Mrs., 3.2c for Ms., or 3.2d for "other". Use the space following "other" to indicate this title.
- 3.3 Enter the parent or guardian's **primary telephone number**
- 3.4 Enter an **extension** associated with the primary telephone number, if any
- 3.5 Enter the parent or guardian's **alternate telephone number**, if any
- 3.6 Enter an **extension** associated with the alternate telephone number, if any
- 3.7 Enter the parent or guardian's **e-mail address**, if any
- 3.8 The parent or guardian must **sign** the form in the space provided.
- 3.9 **Date** the form in the space provided.

After you have completed page 1 of the Distance Evaluation Request, bring the form, **along with the documentation required to demonstrate why you believe the DOE distance measurement is in error**, to your child's school so that the school can review that documentation and complete page 2 of the form. When both pages have been completed, the request and accompanying documentation should be mailed or emailed to the Office of Pupil Transportation at the address shown below. **Do not fax forms to OPT.**

Instructions for schools for completion of Distance Evaluation Requests

Please carefully review the information provided by parents on page 1 of the request and assist them, if necessary, in identifying the student's grade, identification (OSIS) number, and GE or SE classification. Please also review the documentation they have provided to explain why they believe the DOE's distance determination is incorrect. **Forms that do not provide complete student identification information or fail to identify a legitimate question regarding the distance determination will be returned.**

¹ Chancellor's Regulation A-801 §1, 3 (3.3), p. 6, specifically provides "The Office of Pupil Transportation will evaluate all appeals to a pupil's calculated distance from their home to the school when there is a legitimate question concerning student eligibility." In 2015 – 2016, 124 of 187 requests (66%) were returned to parents due to lack of documentation.

Instructions for completion of Distance Evaluation Requests

Instructions for schools, cont.

Please **clearly** type or print ALL of the information required in Section 4 (page 2) of the form. **Illegible, incomplete or unsigned forms cannot be processed and will be returned to the pupil's parent or guardian.** Please be particularly attentive to the following:

- Please provide the **name, primary telephone number with any required extension and e-mail address of the school's transportation coordinator** or pupil accounting secretary and the **name, primary telephone number with any required extension and e-mail address of the school's principal.**
- Please be sure to **review the DOE's grade/distance transportation eligibility rules with any parent who wishes to dispute the distance measurement.** As indicated above, the DOE's distance measurement is extremely accurate: 187 requests for distance evaluations were received during the 2015 - 2016 school year and, of those, only 1 was approved as a result of an error found in the DOE's measurement.
- **Please be sure that parents have included some form of documentation that demonstrates that there is a reasonable basis for them to believe that the DOE's distance measurement is incorrect.** Documents such as utility bills that merely confirm an address, or letters that simply assert that the parents feel a mistake must have been made, are inadequate for this purpose. While the DOE's measurement does not rely on and frequently varies from MapQuest[®] or Google,[®] we will process requests with such documentation. **Requests completely lacking any documentation, however, will be returned.** During the 2015 – 2016 school year, 66% of all distance requests received were returned for this reason.
- **The request form must be signed by the school principal or the principal's designee** and, together with the additional required documentation, should be returned to:

NYC Department of Education
Office of Pupil Transportation
Exception Review Unit
44-36 Vernon Boulevard
Long Island City, NY 11101-7006

Forms may be returned by email to:

OPTDistanceTransportationRequests@schools.nyc.gov

or by mail. DOE interoffice mail or "regular" US mail is adequate. Certified, express or overnight delivery is not required. Please **DO NOT FAX** forms to OPT.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Instructions for completion of Distance Evaluation Requests

How does the DOE determine the distance from home to school?

The Office of Pupil Transportation measures a student's walking distance from home to school using precise map data including home address locations and school front entrance locations identified by latitude and longitude at a point perpendicular to the street centerline. The shortest pedestrian accessible walking path between these points is measured using a street map called LION that is maintained by the New York City Department of City Planning. Since the measurement is through the street centerline, it does not include any distance that would be travelled to cross property to reach the street or any vertical distance that would be travelled from the upper floors of a building to reach the street. LION is a highly detailed and accurate map used by many NYC municipal services, including the NYC Police and NYC Fire Departments.

Though the process by which OPT determines the shortest walking path to school for each student may be similar to that used in Google Maps and other mapping products, the underlying map is different and a distance determination by OPT may vary from the result obtained by Google Maps or other commercial products such as MapQuest, BING, etc. The vendors of commercial products such as Google do not make the procedure by which they determine distance available to the public, so OPT cannot evaluate their results in comparison to LION and, since this is not publically available, OPT also cannot evaluate why they may arrive at one measurement while LION provides another. LION is the NYC standard: it is the DOE's "official map" for distance determinations for transportation eligibility, and many other City agencies also rely on it when providing public services. For more information on LION, please visit the New York City Department of City Planning's LION webpage at this location: [NYC DCP LION information](#).



OFFICE OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION
 44-36 Vernon Boulevard
 Long Island City, NY 11101
 Telephone: 718-392-8855

**Distance
 Evaluation Request
 2018 — 2019**

PRINT CLEARLY IN DARK INK — ILLEGIBLE OR INCOMPLETE FORMS WILL BE RETURNED

Please read and follow directions carefully when completing this form

1. PUPIL INFORMATION

1.1 Pupil Name 1.1a Last name 1.1b First name 1.1c MI			1.2 Date of birth (MM-DD-YY)			
1.3 Gender 1.3a <input type="checkbox"/> Male 1.3b <input type="checkbox"/> Female		1.4 Identification Number		1.5 Grade	1.6 Classification 1.6a <input type="checkbox"/> General Ed 1.6b <input type="checkbox"/> Special Ed	
1.7 Home address 1.7a House/building number 1.7b Street name 1.7c Apt. #				1.8 Borough 1.8a <input type="checkbox"/> BK 1.8b <input type="checkbox"/> BX 1.8c <input type="checkbox"/> M 1.8d <input type="checkbox"/> Q 1.8e <input type="checkbox"/> SI		
1.9 City			State NY	1.10 Zip Code		

2. REASON FOR REQUESTING DISTANCE EVALUATION (Information provided here must be reviewed by the pupil's school)

2.1 <input type="checkbox"/> Check here if [a] your child is from Kindergarten through grade 2 , [b] to confirm that you understand that full-fare transportation is only provided at distances greater than 1/2 mile , and [c] to confirm that reviewed the DOE's grade/distance eligibility requirements with your child's school.
2.2 <input type="checkbox"/> Check here if [a] your child is between grades 3 and 6 , [b] to confirm that you understand that full-fare transportation is only provided at distances greater than 1 mile , and [c] to confirm that you have reviewed the DOE's grade/distance eligibility requirements with your child's school.
2.3 <input type="checkbox"/> Check here if [a] your child is between grades 7 and 12 , [b] to confirm that you understand that full-fare transportation is only provided at distances greater than 1-1/2 miles , and [c] to confirm that you have reviewed the DOE's grade/distance eligibility requirements with your child's school.
2.4 <input type="checkbox"/> Check here to indicate that you have attached documentation to support your belief that the DOE's distance measurement is incorrect. Please review the attached instructions. DOE distance measurements are based on map data provided by the NYC Department of City Planning and may differ from other software applications.

3. PARENT / GUARDIAN INFORMATION

3.1 Name of parent or guardian 3.1a Last name 3.1b First name 3.1c MI			3.2 Title 3.2a <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. 3.2b <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. 3.2c <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. 3.2d <input type="checkbox"/> Other		
3.3 Primary telephone number		3.4 Extension	3.5 Alternate telephone number		3.6 Extension
3.7 E-mail address of parent or guardian					
3.8 Signature of parent or guardian				3.9 Date	

SEE PAGE TWO FOR ADDITIONAL REQUIRED INFORMATION



OFFICE OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

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PRINT CLEARLY IN DARK INK — ILLEGIBLE OR INCOMPLETE FORMS WILL BE RETURNED

4. SCHOOL-RELATED INFORMATION

Form with fields for Pupil name, School name, Address, City, State, Zip Code, Transportation coordinator's name, Primary telephone number, Principal's name, etc.

Please email completed exception request forms to: OPTDistanceTransportationRequests@schools.nyc.gov

Or mail to: Office of Pupil Transportation
Exception Review Unit
44-36 Vernon Boulevard , 6th Floor
Long Island City, NY 11101

For assistance, contact OPT Customer Service at 718-392-8855