

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

The primary goal of the Transportation Department is to provide safe and efficient transportation to all eligible students. To help us accomplish this goal, parents/guardians should read through this document and encourage their children to follow the bus rules.

Bus Stops

Bus stops are placed at centralized locations that can be safely accessed by a significant number of students. Wherever possible, bus stops are placed within a half mile of student residences.

Students are to use the stop closest to their home. Bus stops are created based on a student’s residence. Stops will not be moved or created to accommodate alternate drop off locations.

Students may be allowed to ride to or from an alternate existing stop with the approval of the transportation department.

Parents/guardians who have concerns about their child's safety while waiting at the bus stop are encouraged to accompany their child to the bus stop or arrange for a neighborhood buddy to walk with the child.

Students should dress appropriately for the weather, be at the bus stop at least five minutes before the regular arrival time of the bus and wait at least ten minutes before returning home. Buses that arrive at stops within five minutes of the scheduled time will not be sent back to a stop and students will need to find another means of getting to school.

Bus Discipline

A student’s behavior on the bus directly impacts the safety of all other students on the bus, as well as the safety of other drivers. To safely transport students, the bus driver must be able to concentrate on driving the bus without distractions. Therefore, unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated and could result in the loss of bus transportation privileges.

Parents/guardians should also be aware that the inside of a bus is a confined space where children are sitting close together, often with several age groups mixed together. This creates an atmosphere where even minor misbehavior can be an unsafe distraction to the driver. Also, since so many children are together at the same time, peer pressure can cause a child to exhibit behaviors that are not typical for that child. As a result, children may not exhibit the same behaviors on the bus as they do in the classroom, at home, or in a less stressful environment. Parents/guardians are requested to instruct their children to exhibit appropriate bus behavior.

Drivers are trained to recognize and deal appropriately with misbehavior. They do not arbitrarily choose a student to “pick on”. Many times, the best way to keep a child out of trouble is to separate him/her from other children who cause trouble or cause the child to act out. For this reason, the bus driver’s first level of preventive action is an assigned seat. Parents/Guardians, or students, may request an assigned seat to keep the student out of trouble. **SAFETY IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY!**

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES (Cont.)

The driver's attention is divided between the traffic outside the bus and the children inside the bus. A driver can only monitor students through a mirror while maneuvering a large vehicle through traffic. Misbehavior, which distracts the driver, could result in a catastrophe while the same behavior in the classroom may result in only a slight disruption of the learning process. Parents/Guardians should keep these factors in mind when instructing their children in bus behavior or in dealing with bus misbehavior. **THIS IS A TEAM EFFORT**...and we appreciate the support we receive from parents/guardians.

For minor disruptive misbehavior, the procedures below will be followed.

Driver's action

1. Verbal warning.
2. Assigned seat. The duration of the seat assignment to be determined by the driver. Bus drivers have the authority to assign seats to any student for any length of time for any reason.
3. A "Bus Rider Conduct Report" will be submitted to transportation department office for bus discipline.

Transportation Office action

First Bus Rider Conduct Report: Transportation staff will attempt to notify the parent/guardian of inappropriate actions, so they can be corrected before the student loses riding privileges.

Second Bus Rider Conduct Report: Transportation staff will attempt to notify the parent/guardian that inappropriate behavior is continuing and the student will be denied transportation if the behavior is not corrected immediately.

Third Bus Rider Conduct Report: Student will be denied bus transportation for three days.

Fourth Bus Rider Conduct Report: Student will be denied bus transportation for five days.

Fifth Bus Rider Conduct Report: Student will be denied bus transportation for the remainder of the year. This will also include class trips and extra-curricular activities.

The discipline steps listed above are normally followed to correct inappropriate behavior. However, steps may be skipped if the behavior merits a more severe disciplinary action to insure the safety of other passengers.

Students whose behavior jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus, or challenges the authority of the driver or school personnel, may lose their bus transportation privileges without receiving previous warnings. Immediate loss of bus transportation privileges may also result from vandalism, fighting, abusive language or gestures, failure to cooperate with the driver or other school personnel, possession or use of drugs, weapons, throwing/spitting objects or any action that jeopardizes the safety of passengers, school personnel, or the public.

When bus transportation privileges are forfeited, there will be no flexibility regarding the consecutive days involved. Parents/guardians will be responsible for their child's transportation while transportation privileges are suspended.

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES (Cont.)**Bus Rules for Students**

All students must follow these rules for the safety of everyone on board. Students not observing these rules will be subject to loss of bus riding privileges.

1. The bus driver has the authority to enforce all bus rules and may add additional restrictions to insure the safety of all passengers or for disciplinary reasons. The driver may also assign seats for any reason. Any student refusing to obey the driver's instructions may be removed from the bus and lose his/her transportation privilege.
2. Students should be at the bus stop and ready to board at least 5 minutes before the scheduled stop time. They must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before boarding and, if crossing a road is necessary, they must wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross. The road must be crossed at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
3. Students must remain in their seats, facing the front of the bus, until the bus reaches their designated stop.
4. Students must use their designated stop or have prior approval from the transportation office to use a different stop.
5. Keep the aisles clear. All personal items carried on the bus must be able to fit in the student's lap. Musical instruments, school projects, and anything else that cannot be safely carried in the student's lap should not be brought on the bus. Flowers, balloons, and other party favors are not permitted on the bus.
6. At no time should a student put hands, head, other parts of the body, or any object out the window. Students should not talk to individuals outside of the bus.
7. Suckers are not to be sold or consumed on the bus as they present a choking hazard.
8. Wireless Telecommunication Devices, including cell phones, are permitted to be carried under the terms of school policy. Use of these devices on the bus is a privilege that may be revoked by the bus driver at any time. Students are to end calls when asked to do so by the driver, regardless with whom they are talking. If parents need to talk to the driver, they need to call the district office and schedule an appointment. Discussing student bus behavior while being transported is not appropriate.
9. Any damage to bus fixtures or equipment must be paid for by students responsible for the damages. Students may be denied transportation until payment is made.
10. Fighting, abusive language/gestures, failure to cooperate with school personnel, possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or weapons are major violations that will result in automatic bus suspension.
11. Students must not argue with the bus driver. Students who disagree with the driver's actions should discuss the problem with their parent/guardian at home and have them call the district office at (580) 336-4511 to resolve any disputes.

NOTE: BUS RIDERS ARE SUBJECT TO BEING VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDED WHILE ON THE SCHOOL BUS. Students observed violating the rules are subject to loss of riding privileges.