

## **Sparta Area School District Student Conduct on School Buses**

The school bus is an extension of the classroom; therefore, the Sparta Area School District requires students to conduct themselves while on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior.

### **BUS RIDER RULES**

#### Before Boarding

1. Be at the bus pick-up point five minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. Both location of the pick-up and the time of pick-up are provided to parents/guardians by the bus contractor. The bus will stop only if there are students waiting at the designated pick-up point.
2. Stay off of the roadway at all times as well as practice safe and courteous behaviors to other riders and to passersby while waiting for the bus.
3. Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before moving toward the bus. Stand in a single file line while waiting to and entering the bus. If you must cross the roadway to get on the bus, wait for the bus driver to signal that it is safe to cross.

#### While on the Bus

1. Sit in an open seat as quickly as possible. Riders may be assigned to designated seats by a school administrator or the bus driver.
2. Remain seated while the bus is in motion and if you need to move, do so only after the bus has come to a complete stop.
3. Obey the bus driver. All school rules apply on the bus.
4. Keep books, backpacks, packages, coats and all other objects out of the aisles. Make sure that you have all of your items with you when you get off of the bus.
5. Keep the volume of your talking and laughing at conversational levels so they do not divert the driver's attention.
6. Be courteous to other riders, the bus driver, and others you meet on your ride. Be mindful to use appropriate language and/or gestures. Absolute quiet is required when approaching a railroad crossing so that the driver can listen for oncoming trains. Remain seated and absolutely quiet during the time the bus is stopped at railroad crossings.
7. Be respectful with food and drink wrappers, ensuring that any garbage is taken care of before exiting the bus. The bus driver reserves the right to discontinue allowing food and drink if garbage is not disposed of properly.
8. Do not extend head or limbs out of the bus windows. Do not throw anything out of bus windows.
9. In case of a road emergency, remain on the bus unless you are directed to do otherwise by
10. the bus driver.

11. Be respectful of bus equipment and help to keep the bus safe and sanitary. Follow the same standards of conduct and cleanliness that are expected at school.
12. Do not tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.

#### After Leaving the Bus

1. After getting off the bus and checking to be sure that no traffic is approaching, and after receiving the signal from the driver, cross the road at least 10 feet in front of the bus so that the driver can watch for other safety reasons.
2. Be alert to the danger signal, a steady blast on the horn, from the driver. Should that danger signal be sounded, return to curbside (the right hand side/door side of the bus).
3. Leave the bus only at your designated drop-off point.

#### **ASSIGNED BUSES ONLY**

Students are assigned to buses and bus stops. No change in either bus or stop is permitted without prior approval from the transportation contractor. Temporary changes may be made by school administrators for authorized emergencies only. Failure to ride the assigned bus from the assigned bus stop may jeopardize the safety of students and may result in disciplinary action.

#### **VIDEO CAMERAS**

Video cameras shall be used from time to time to observe student and driver behavior. The resulting video tape shall be viewed only by the bus contractor and school district administrators. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis and must have prior approval of the Superintendent.

#### **MISCONDUCT PROCEDURES**

In cases when a student violates any of the above bus rules, or conducts him/herself improperly, the bus driver shall discuss the incident with the student and make an effort to resolve it. The bus driver may assign seats on the bus, either temporary or permanent. If the student continues to conduct him/herself improperly, the bus driver shall write the student a bus referral. Bus drivers may not refuse to transport a student nor may they remove a student from the bus during transit.

The District retains the discretion to determine the severity of the incident and may skip one of more of the following steps in order to provide consequences that are appropriate for the referral. When continuing or extremely serious problems exist, the student's bus-riding privileges may be suspended.

#### 1st Referral

1. The bus driver will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the incident and inform them that a bus referral will be submitted for their student.
2. The bus driver will complete a bus referral and submit it to the bus terminal manager.
3. The bus terminal manager will enter the bus referral into the student's Skyward file, which will notify the building principal, or designee, and the parent/guardian. The building principal, or designee, will follow up with the student on an as needed basis.

## 2nd and 3rd Referrals

1. Steps 1 - 3 of 1st Referral.
2. The building principal, or designee, will meet with the student to discuss the incident. The building principal will contact the parent/guardian during the meeting to discuss the incident, if appropriate.
3. The building principal, or designee, will determine the appropriate action for the student based on the incident and the student's age/grade.
4. The building principal, or designee, will document the action in the student's Skyward file, which will also notify the bus terminal manager that the follow-up has been completed.
5. The bus terminal manager will notify the bus driver of the follow-up.

## 4th Referral (and all subsequent)

1. Steps 1-3 of 1st Referral.
2. The building principal and the bus terminal manager will hold a face to face meeting with the parent/guardian and student to find a solution. The student will have a minimum 3 day bus suspension with any additional actions to be determined by the building principal, based on the severity of the incident.

These discipline procedures do not override the Superintendent's discretion to take additional, separate action, or to impose more severe consequences in appropriate cases. Parents should also be on notice that, while efforts will generally be made to contact them as part of the above procedures, certain students, types of conduct, and related investigations may not always make immediate contact with parents possible or appropriate. Parental contact will be made as soon as appropriate and when matters such as pupil safety, law enforcement involvement, pupil confidentiality, and the integrity of related investigations are properly addressed.

Approved by the Board of Education on June 25, 2019.