

Procedure - Student Safety Walking, Biking, and Riding Buses to School

Student Conduct on Buses

Any misconduct by a student, which in the opinion of the bus driver or Transportation Director, is detrimental to the safe operation of the bus may be cause for the principal to suspend the transportation privilege.

Rules of conduct for students riding buses: All district policies, rules, and procedures will be applicable to the school bus as they are for any student on campus and during the school day.

- A. Students will obey the driver and any staff assigned to the bus by the district. The driver is in full charge of the bus and passengers and will be obeyed. If the district assigns staff to the bus, they will be responsible for maintaining the students' safe behavior. When transporting classes or teams, the teacher or coach will be primarily responsible for the behavior of the students. However, the driver will have ultimate authority over the bus and students.
- B. Students will ride only on their assigned bus unless prior permission to do otherwise has been received by school officials.
- C. Students will not be permitted to leave the bus except at their regular stop unless prior permission to do otherwise is received by school officials who have communicated this to the driver.
- D. Students assigned seats will use only that seat unless permission to change is authorized by the driver.
- E. Students will observe rules of classroom conduct while riding on buses. Noise will be kept down to avoid distracting the driver. Audio speakers of any kind are prohibited from being used while on the bus. Students will refrain from the use of obscene language or gestures.
- F. Prohibited items: Students will not be permitted to bring projects to or from school on the school bus that are oversized or deemed unsafe in a school bus transporting students as these items can become projectiles in a collision. This includes but is not limited to: large poster boards or art projects, plants/flowers, gingerbread houses, items in clay or glass containers, and live insects. State law prohibits certain items on school buses, including all forms of animal life (except documented service animals), firearms, weapons, breakable containers (glass), latex balloons, flammables, perfumes, and aerosol cans. Longboards are NOT permitted on school buses. Skateboards MUST be completely secured to or encased in a backpack. Backpacks and musical instruments should be small enough that they can sit on the student's lap or between their legs on the floor.

- G. Students will not smoke, vape, or ignite lighters or matches on buses. All district policies, procedures, and rules related to drugs, alcohol, or tobacco are applicable on district-provided transportation.
- H. Students will not eat on buses except when specifically authorized and supervised by an accompanying teacher, coach, or other staff member. Buses will be kept clean.
- I. Students will not open bus windows without the driver's permission.
- J. Students will not extend any part of their body out of bus windows at any time.
- K. Students will not carry or have in their possession items that can cause injury to passengers on the bus. Such items include, but are not limited to, sticks, breakable containers, weapons or firearms, straps or pins protruding from clothing, large, bulky items which cannot be held or placed between legs, etc. Books and personal belongings will be kept out of the aisles. All items prohibited on school premises are also prohibited on district-provided transportation.
- L. Students will not sit in the driver's seat or to the immediate right or left of the driver.
- M. Students will refrain from talking to the driver unless necessary.
- N. Students will go directly to a seat once inside the bus and remain seated at all times unless the driver instructs otherwise.
- O. Students will get on/off the bus in an orderly manner and will obey the instructions of the driver or school safety staff on duty. There will be no pushing and shoving when boarding or leaving the bus. Once off the bus, students will adhere to rules for pedestrians.
- P. Students will never cross the roadway behind a bus unless they use pedestrian crosswalks or traffic lights.
- Q. Students will stand away from the roadway curb when any bus is approaching or leaving a stop.
- R. Students going to and from their bus stops where there are no sidewalks will walk on the left-hand side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic. Students will go directly to their homes after leaving the bus.
- S. If a bus is equipped with seatbelts, all passengers must wear them.
- T. Students will follow emergency exit drill procedures as prescribed by the driver.
- U. Students will not tamper with emergency doors or equipment.

- V. Students will remain quietly seated, not exhibit disruptive behavior, and turn off all noise-making devices while on the bus.
- W. Parents of students identified as causing damage to buses will be charged with the cost of the incurred damage. Students who cause damage may be suspended from transportation.
- X. Student misconduct may constitute sufficient reason for suspending transportation privileges.
- Y. Students who are visibly upset or dysregulated will be picked up when they are ready to learn and attend school in a positive manner or be transported home.
- Z. Parents must remain outside of the bus to ensure proper bus procedures and liability concerns.
- AA. Each student is required to use their district-issued photo-ID card to scan on and off the school bus each time they embark or disembark from the bus, including on athletic and field trips. Replacement cards may be obtained in the school office for a \$5 charge.

Disciplinary Procedures

Principals are responsible for correcting students whose behavior results in a bus incident report or violates the rules above. The principal or designee will provide supervision during bus arrival and departure times and receive reports (written and oral) from the drivers.

The principal will ensure that students comply with the specified regulations. Principals must maintain open lines of communication among school officials, bus drivers, and the transportation department.

When waiting for a bus or going to and from a bus stop, students are responsible for conducting themselves according to the social and legal mores that apply to adults in public. That is, they must not abuse or cause damage to private or public property; they must not use obscene language or gestures; they must not engage in criminal activity. Failure to adhere to these standards may result in formal complaints by citizens, which may be forwarded to principals for possible corrective action.

Students provided with transportation are responsible for complying with the district's rules of conduct for students riding buses. Failure to adhere to these rules, or disruptive or unsafe behavior towards the public, driver, fellow passengers or the vehicle constitutes justification for initiating corrective action against a student.

Disruptive or unsafe behavior on the part of a student riding a bus may result in a written report when, in the opinion of the driver or bus supervisor, there has been an infraction of the rules applicable to student conduct. The written report is the primary means by which a driver or bus supervisor communicates a student's conduct to the school and transportation department. This report, in most cases, reflects an infraction of rules that is repeated by the student after he/she has

received previous oral warnings from the driver or bus supervisor. In order for drivers and bus supervisors to effectively maintain control of their buses, it is expected that action be exercised by principals when receiving such a report.

This section details the communication methods & flow for student conduct on buses. Please follow the procedures below to keep the communication loop intact.

1. Bus Drivers will submit the conduct report form to the Transportation Director.
2. The Transportation Director or Designee will review the incident.
3. Based on the severity of the incident, the following actions will be taken:
 - a. The Transportation Director or Designee will contact the parents of the student to inform them of minor first offenses and related actions. This will be documented on the Transportation Behavior Form.
 - b. The Transportation Director will contact the School Principal and communicate the need for further action on repeated or severe offenses. The school principal or designee will contact parents to inform them of the offenses and related actions. This will be documented on the Transportation Behavior Form.
 - i. If any school disciplinary action is taken, it will be noted in Skyward.

Corrective action, if necessary, should be consistent throughout the district as follows:

- A. **Warning with Parent Contact:** When a student's misconduct is of a minor nature which does not jeopardize the safety or welfare of other students or the operation of the bus.
- B. **Assigned Seat with Parent Contact:** When a student's misconduct is deemed to jeopardize the safety of bus passengers and operation, or when repeated warning notices fail to correct abusive behavior, or when a student incurs damage to the bus.
- C. **Suspension with Parent Contact:** When a student's misconduct is deemed to jeopardize the safety of bus passengers and operation, or when repeated warning notices fail to correct abusive behavior, or when a student incurs damage to the bus.
- D. **Removal with Parent Contact:** When a student's misconduct is of such nature that the safety of the bus operation and/or of the occupants was willfully and seriously threatened (i.e., e.g. student assaulting the driver).

Drivers may be advised to file assault and battery charges against students who physically assault them. Under no circumstances will the driver retaliate in kind and physically assault the student as this conduct may subject him/her to legal action.

The student or parent of a student who has been suspended from receiving transportation entitlements may appeal the principal's decision by submitting a written statement to the superintendent or designee. The superintendent will render a decision after evaluating the issues and facts involved.

Emergencies

The Transportation Director will review the contents of the School Bus Driver's Handbook with each driver prior to the beginning of each school year. Each driver, in turn, is expected to follow the procedure as outlined in the handbook. At the start of each field trip or extracurricular trip, the school bus driver will review with all passengers the location and use of the emergency exits, emergency equipment and any district emergency procedures.

In the event of a collision, the driver will make contact with the Transportation Director who will:

- A. Determine the nature of the collision;
- B. Contact emergency services if there is reason to believe that there are injuries which require immediate attention;
- C. Contact the state patrol regarding the accident;
- D. Advise the superintendent of schools;
- E. Investigate the collision and gather the names of all students and witnesses;
- F. Dispatch another bus to transport the student to their destination; and
- G. Contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) of any students who are injured.

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