

• Expectations for USD 320 Bus Passengers

I. STUDENT READINESS

While safety is our top priority, anyone in the transportation industry would have to admit that time is also a major concern. To provide good service, we must keep route times as short as possible and avoid any unnecessary delays.

1st: Passengers are expected to be ready to load on time. Having the bus wait for students at each stop may sound like a good idea, but it really isn't in the best interests of our students. For instance, if a bus route has 22 stops and the driver waits 1 minute at each stop, the first child on the route would have to board the bus 22 minutes earlier and ride the bus 22 minutes longer each day. The same route, even with just a 30 second wait at each stop, would require the first child on the route to board the bus 11 minutes earlier and ride the bus 11 minutes longer. The fact is, everyone on the bus, except the last passenger, would have to get up earlier and ride the bus longer, just for the *privilege* of being waited on.

2nd: Passengers are expected to take a seat quickly after loading and be ready to unload before arriving at their destination. Passengers should never cause delays or safety risks by taking excessive time loading or unloading. Before the bus reaches the stop, and has traffic backed up, students should make sure they have all their property together and they are ready to unload.

II. STUDENT SAFETY COMPLIANCE

Each year in the United States, an average of 19 children forfeit their lives in accidents connected with loading or unloading from a school bus. The following basic preventative measures should help to insure that none of the children in our district should ever become a part of such unfortunate statistics.

1st: Arrive at your designated bus stop early. Students rushing to catch a bus seldom pay attention to oncoming traffic and often get too close to the bus without making sure that the driver sees them.

2nd: Stay at least ten feet away from the bus. Students must never get within ten feet of the bus, unless it has completely stopped and the driver has motioned them to approach the front door. Students should never walk behind or along the sides of the bus. If students need to cross the street, they should walk at least 10 feet ahead of the bus, and wait until the driver motions for them to cross.

3rd: Remain seated and facing forward while on the bus. Although school buses don't have seat belts, through the use of compartmentalized seating and other safety features, they have proven to be several times safer than regular passenger automobiles. To best take advantage of this design, it is important for all passengers to remain seated until the bus makes a

complete stop and the driver instructs them to begin unloading.

III. STUDENT BEHAVIOR

There are four basic principles that should govern the conduct of school bus passengers. These principles are easy to understand, and when observed, negate the need for a lengthy list of rules.

1st: Behaviors which are not appropriate in other places are most likely not acceptable on the bus or at the bus stop. Each year, most misconduct reports are written for behaviors that are inappropriate anywhere and at anytime. For example, most of the bus misconduct reports in 2012 were for behaviors such as fighting, scuffling, spitting on or bothering others, profanity, vandalism, stealing, excessive noise and the throwing of objects on the bus or out of the bus windows. Behaviors that are unacceptable both at school and in the family car will not be tolerated on the school bus either.

2nd: Behaviors that infringe upon the rights of others are not acceptable on the bus or at the bus stop. Students should be able to wait at the bus stop or ride a relatively quiet bus home, without other passengers bothering their person or property. Anyone expecting to utilize the USD 320 bus transportation system must behave respectfully toward others.

3rd: Behaviors that distract the bus driver are not acceptable. Bus drivers need to have their attention focused on safely driving the bus. With the safety of passengers, pedestrians and other motorists at stake, it is important for each student to create and maintain a relatively quiet and non-distractive environment on the bus.

4th: Behaviors that create unsafe conditions are not acceptable. For their own safety, and the safety of other students, it is important for students and other riders to fully cooperate with all safety instructions—whether written or given verbally by the driver. The driver is “in command” of the bus and his or her instructions must be complied with by all persons on board.

USD 320 School Bus Discipline Plan

When students misbehave on the bus or at bus stops, it not only creates an unsafe condition by distracting the driver, it also infringes on the rights of other passengers. For this reason, misconduct will not be tolerated. The following briefly outlines and explains the procedures that will be used when students misbehave on the bus.

***Verbal Warning**

Good behavior on the bus is the responsibility of each rider. While bus drivers will attempt to help resolve minor infractions, each student is still responsible for their behavior on the bus and at bus stops. In the event of misbehavior, the driver will give the student a verbal warning and call their parents. Any further disregard for rules or misbehavior regardless of the nature will require that a written misconduct report be turned in.

***First Written Misconduct Report**

Hopefully most discipline problems will be resolved with the combined efforts of the driver and the parents. But in the event that a student's behavior does not improve, the driver will fill out a written misconduct report and call the parents. The safety and the personal rights of other passengers cannot be forfeited because of the misconduct of a few. After receiving the first written misconduct report, the transportation director will meet with the student at the school and also call the parents. A copy of this discipline plan, bus expectations and the completed misconduct report will be mailed to the parents. A meeting with the parents, the driver and the transportation director may be scheduled if necessary or requested by the parents.

***Second Written Misconduct Report**

After receiving the second written misconduct report, the director will meet with the student at the school and call the parents. A copy of this discipline plan, bus expectations and the completed misconduct report will be

mailed to the parents. The student will lose bus-riding privileges for 5 school days. A meeting with the parents, the driver and the transportation director may be scheduled if necessary or requested by the parents.

***Third Written Misconduct Report**

Same as the second report, but the student will lose bus-riding privileges for 15 school days and a meeting with the parents, the driver and the transportation director will be scheduled.

***Fourth Written Misconduct Report**

Same as the second report, but the student will lose bus-riding privileges for 45 school days and a meeting with the parents, the driver and the transportation director will be scheduled.

***Fifth Written Misconduct Report**

Same as the second report, but the student will lose bus-riding privileges for the rest of the year and a meeting with the parents, the driver and the transportation director will be scheduled.

***Immediate Action**

Behaviors listed below will result in an immediate written report and a 5 day loss of bus-riding privileges or the next level of consequences, whichever is greater.

- Fighting
- Obscene language or behavior
- Throwing objects in or out of the bus
- Possession of weapons (Treated according to USD 320 Weapons Policy)
- Destroying bus property
- Refusal to obey the driver
- Use or possession of tobacco, drugs or alcohol
- Abuse or harassment directed at the driver or students (Physical or Verbal)

Remember, bus service is a privilege and not a right. In fact, the cost of transportation for most USD 320 passengers is a service for which the district does not receive any funding from the state or federal government.

BUS REGULATIONS AND RULES

Bus Regulations (Policy JGG-Q)

Bus transportation shall be provided to and from school for those students who qualify. The district may provide transportation for all school activities. Transportation will be denied to students who are detained after school for disciplinary reasons.

Students who use school-provided transportation shall be under the jurisdiction of the vehicle driver while in the vehicle. Students shall be subject to the district's student behavior code and other regulations.

A bus driver shall not knowingly discharge riders at places other than the regularly scheduled bus stops unless the parent and the principal give prior authorization. No student may ride on a school bus as a guest of another student unless previous arrangements have been made by written authorization from parents and the principal and seating is available.

The parent should communicate in writing any change in after-school bus transportation or the parent is to call the school office. This information will be given to the bus driver at the end of the day. If a student misses the afternoon bus because of a lack of parental communication or students do not follow the appropriate dismissal procedures, it will be the parent's responsibility to make transportation arrangements. The school will make every reasonable effort to notify the parent of the situation.

The shuttle bus is available to all students whose parents sign up for the service. All bus rules apply to those students who use the shuttle service.

Bus Rules

- Students must be on time at the designated pick up location.
- Students are to conduct themselves in a safe and orderly manner in accordance with school rules, while waiting for the bus.
- Students are not to carry anything on to the bus that will impede foot traffic in the aisle. All feet and legs are to be kept out of the aisles.
- Food, drinks, balloons, weapons and animals are not allowed on the school bus.
- Students are not to get out of their seat while the bus is in motion.
- Students will place all trash in the trash container as they exit the bus. **HELP KEEP THE BUS CLEAN.**
- Students are not to extend their arms or heads out of the bus window.
- When leaving the bus, students are to follow the directions of the driver. If students cross the road, cross in front of the bus after making sure the highway is clear of traffic.
- Students who ride the bus to an event must ride the bus back to school, unless parents/guardian have contacted the school and sent a note. **Students may ride back with only their parents/guardian.**

The transportation director administers consequences for misbehavior on the buses that transport students to and from school. Behaviors that will result in an immediate suspension from the bus for 5 days (or more depending on previous behavior reports) includes fighting, obscene or vulgar behavior or language, throwing objects inside the bus or out the windows, use or possession of tobacco or drugs, vandalism, possession of weapons (knives, guns, sharp objects), refusal to obey the driver.

Other actions will result in:

- First Offense: Warning will be given, parents will be notified and the transportation director will meet with the student.
- Second Report: 5-day suspension from the bus.
- Third report: 15-days off the bus.
- Fourth report: 45-days off the bus.
- Fifth report: suspension from the bus for the rest of the year.

Incidents involving initiations, hazing, intimidation, and/or related activities which are likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm, or which affect the attendance of another student, are prohibited.