

STUDENT SAFETY WALKING TO SCHOOL AND RIDING BUSES

A comprehensive school trip safety program shall address school walk routes, bus safety and route plans, vehicle access to the school, circulation and parking at the school, pedestrian circulation on and around the school campus and safety education and enforcement.

Bus Safety

The superintendent shall develop written rules establishing the procedures for bus safety and emergency exit drills and for student conduct while riding on buses.

The bus driver is responsible for the safety of his/her passengers, particularly for those who cross a roadway after leaving the bus. No bus driver shall order or allow a student to disembark at other than his/her customary boarding or alighting place unless so authorized by the superintendent or his/her designee. In order to assure the safety of all, the bus driver may hold students accountable for their conduct during the course of transportation and may recommend corrective action against a student. Bus drivers are expressly prohibited from using corporal punishment.

Emergencies

In the event of an accident or other emergency, the bus driver shall follow the emergency procedures in accordance with the School Bus Driver Handbook (SPI). A copy of the emergency procedures shall be located in each bus. To insure the success of such emergency procedures, each bus driver shall conduct an emergency evacuation drill within the first six weeks of each school semester. The district shall conduct such other drills and procedures as may be necessary.

Student Conduct on Buses

The superintendent shall establish written rules of conduct for students riding school buses. Such rules shall include as a minimum the requirements of WAC 392-145-035 and shall be reviewed annually by the superintendent and revised if necessary. If the rules are substantially revised, they shall be submitted to the board for approval.

At or near the beginning of each school year, the classroom teacher and/or bus driver shall review the rules with the students at each school. A copy of the rules shall be available upon request at the district office.

Cross References:	Board Policy 3310	Student Discipline
Legal References:	RCW 28A.600.010	Government of schools, pupils, employees, rules and regulations for—Due process guarantee—Enforcement
	WAC 392-144	School Bus Driver Qualifications
	392-400-225	School district rules defining misconduct—Distribution of rules
	392-145	Transportation—Operation rules
	392-145-15	General Operating regulations
	392-145-35	Rules for students riding school buses
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Student Safety Walking to School and Riding Buses

Student Conduct on Buses

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

Rules of conduct for students riding buses:

- A. Students shall obey the driver and any aide assigned to the bus by the district. The driver is in full charge of the bus and passengers and shall be obeyed. If an aide is assigned to the bus by the district, he/she shall be primarily responsible for the behavior of students on the bus. When transporting classes or teams, the teacher or coach shall be primarily responsible for the behavior of the students. Students shall obey both the driver and the teacher, coach or other staff member.
- B. Students shall ride only on their assigned bus unless written permission to do otherwise has been received by school officials.
- C. Students shall not be permitted to leave the bus except at their regular stop unless written permission to do otherwise is received by school officials.
- D. Students assigned seats shall use only that seat unless permission to change is authorized by the driver.
- E. Students shall observe rules of classroom conduct while riding on buses. Noise shall be kept down to avoid distracting the driver. Students shall refrain from the use of obscene language or gestures.
- F. Students shall not smoke or ignite lighters or matches on buses.
- G. Students shall not eat on buses, except when specifically authorized and supervised by an accompanying teacher, coach or other staff member. Buses shall be kept clean.
- H. Students shall not open bus windows without the driver's permission.
- I. Students shall not extend any part of their body out of bus windows at any time.

- J. Heavy, sharp, bulky, and or other articles which may be hazardous in the event of an accident or an emergency stop shall not be transported unsecured in the passenger area of any school bus. In no case will items be secured in such a manner as to impede access to any exit. Items which shall not be transported within the passenger area of the bus include, but are not limited to, firearms, weapons, breakable containers, flammables, and all other articles which could adversely affect the safety of the school bus and passengers.
- K. Students shall not have animals on buses, except-“service animals”.
- L. Students shall not sit in the driver’s seat or to the immediate right or left of the driver.
- M. Students shall refrain from talking to the driver unless necessary.
- N. Students shall go directly to a seat once inside the bus and remain seated at all times unless the driver instructs otherwise.
- O. Students shall get on/off the bus in an orderly manner and shall obey the instructions of the driver or school safety patrolmen on duty. There shall be no pushing and shoving when boarding or leaving the bus. Once off the bus, students shall adhere to rules for pedestrians.
- P. Students must not cross a roadway until given consent by the bus driver. When boarding or leaving the bus, students should be in view of the driver at all times. Students shall never cross the roadway behind a bus unless they use pedestrian crosswalks or traffic lights.
- Q. Students must not stand or play in the roadway while waiting for the bus. Students shall 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 shall walk on the left-hand side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic. Students should leave home early enough to arrive at the bus stop five minutes before the bus is due. Students shall go directly to their home after leaving the bus.
- S. Students shall use lap belts on buses when available.
- T. Students shall follow emergency exit drill procedures as prescribed by the driver.
- U. Students shall not tamper with emergency doors or equipment.
- V. Students shall remain quietly seated, not exhibit disruptive behavior and turn off all noise-making devices at highway rail grade crossings.
- W. Parents of students identified as causing damage to buses shall be charged with the cost of the incurred damage. Students causing the damage may be suspended from transportation.
- X. Student misconduct shall constitute sufficient reason for suspending transportation privileges.

Disciplinary Procedures

Principals are responsible for correcting those students whose abusive behavior results in a bus-incident report or violates the rules above. The principal shall provide supervision during bus arrival and departure times at his/her school and receive reports (written and oral) from the drivers. The principal shall insure 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 mores may result in formal complaints by citizens that 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 abusive behavior towards the public, driver, fellow passengers, or the vehicle constitutes justification for initiating corrective action against a student.

Abusive 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, which is repeated by the student after his/her having received previous oral warnings from the driver or bus supervisor. In order for drivers and bus supervisors to effectively maintain control on their buses, it is expected that appropriate action will be taken by principals when receiving such a report.

When a student's conduct constitutes an infraction of the rules, the driver or bus supervisor shall complete a report on the student describing the incident or damage that occurred. A copy of the original report will be provided to the principal and the transportation supervisor. The copy of the report concerning special education students shall be given to the principal for disposition.

The principal upon receiving the report shall investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident and take action according to the procedures set forth in the district's policies pertaining to corrective action and punishment. (See policy 3300.) When investigating the incident, the primary concern must be with respect to the safe transport of students.

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

- A. **Warning:** 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. Suspension: 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. Expulsion: 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., student assaulting the driver).

The action taken by the principal shall be annotated on the report and forwarded to the student's parent for signature. The transportation department shall be notified.

Drivers shall be advised to file assault and battery charges against students who physically assault them. Under no circumstances shall 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. The superintendent shall render a decision after evaluating the issues and facts involved. If the decision is based on issues unrelated to those described in the district's rules of conduct for students riding buses, the decision shall require board concurrence before implementation.

Emergencies

The transportation supervisor shall 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 extra-curricular trip, the school bus driver shall review with all passengers the location and use of the emergency exits, emergency equipment and any district emergency procedures.

In the event of an accident, the driver shall make contact with the transportation supervisor who shall:

- A. Determine the nature of the accident;
- 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 accident and gather the names of all students and witnesses;
- F. Dispatch another bus to transport the student to their destination;

G. Contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) of any students who are injured.

To facilitate the responsibilities assigned to the transportation department, the supervisor, in cooperation with the building principals, will compile a list of students, including addresses and phone numbers that are authorized to ride each bus route.