

REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS RIDING SCHOOL BUSES

1. Students living outside the walking limits to school, as established in RSA 189:6, are granted the privilege of riding the school buses to and from school
2. The driver is in full charge of the bus and the students. Students shall obey the driver promptly.
3. Students shall be on time at the point of pickup, arriving at least 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. The bus cannot wait for those who are not on time. If a student misses the bus, it is the parent's responsibility to transport the student to school.
4. To make the school day bus ride both enjoyable and safe, it will be necessary for both students and parents to cooperate with the bus driver and the school in adhering to the rules and regulations given below:
 - A. While waiting for the bus to arrive at the bus stop, stand ten (10) feet from the road edge in an orderly fashion, avoiding horseplay.
 - B. Approach the bus only after it has come to a complete stop, the door is open , and red lights are flashing.
 - C. Only authorized riders will be permitted on the bus.
 - D. Walk onto the bus with care and sit down in an assigned or available seat, moving in toward the window. There shall be no more than 3 persons to a seat.
 - E. Feet shall be on the floor and out of the aisle.
 - F. Hands, arms, and heads shall be kept out of the aisle and inside the windows. Students are not allowed to lower windows without permission of the driver.
 - G. Students are permitted to carry only objects that can be held on their laps. Musical instrument cases must be placed in the area designated by the bus driver.
 - H. Hazardous material, nuisance items and animals are not allowed on the bus.
 - I. Aisles and exits must be kept clear at all times. The emergency door will be used for emergencies only. Standing in aisles or jumping on seats is prohibited at all times.
 - J. Students are to remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
 - K. Throwing or passing objects on, from or into buses is prohibited.

- L. Physical abuse and/or use of abusive language to others or bus drivers will not be tolerated. Students shall refrain from profane language, obscene gestures, excessive noise, fighting, wrestling or acts of physical aggression on the bus.
- M. Talking should be limited to those in nearby seats. Refrain from loud talking, whistling, shouting or singing. Unnecessary noise is distracting to the driver.
- N. Students are prohibited from using tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or any controlled substance. The police will be notified whenever a student is involved with the possession and/or use of alcohol, drugs, or any illegal substance.
- O. Students/Parents will be held responsible for any and all damages to the bus perpetrated by the student.
- P. Once the bus is stopped, depart in an orderly and polite manner.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The primary concern of the school board and staff members is **safety** as we transport pupils. Cooperation from both parents and students is requested as we attempt to keep the buses safe for all concerned. Students using district provided transportation should understand that they are under the jurisdiction of the school from the time they board the bus until they are delivered at school (home to school), and again, from boarding the bus at school and are delivered at their designated stop nearest their home (school to home).

The district reserves the right to install video monitoring on buses to assist in maintaining compliance with disciplinary procedures.

The bus driver has the responsibility to maintain orderly behavior of students on buses and will inform the student if his/her misconduct is being written up and reported. The driver will then report the misconduct via the bus company manager to the student's principal. No student shall be put off the bus while traveling to and from school. Parents shall be notified and the daily trip completed before the student will be denied transportation service.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

I. There may be circumstances that could result in suspension from the bus – such disciplinary action to be at the discretion of the school administrator.

FIRST OFFENSE will result in a letter of warning with a copy sent to the student's parents/guardians, and a copy kept on file in the school administrator's office and transportation office.

SECOND OFFENSE will result in a discipline option developed by school administration and bus driver, e.g. seat relocation.

THIRD OFFENSE will result in an immediate five (5) day suspension from ANY bus. (This includes field trips, sports events or any other school-related activity).

All suspensions represent school days, not calendar days.

II. In cases of severe and/or gross misconduct on the bus (i.e. endangering the safety of other students on bus), the following course of action will be taken.

FIRST OFFENSE will be an immediate five (5) day suspension from ALL buses.

SECOND OFFENSE will be an immediate ten (10) day suspension from ALL buses.

THIRD OFFENSE will be an immediate twenty (20) day suspension from ALL buses. Any suspension to continue beyond twenty (20) school days must be approved by the school board. Said suspension shall not begin until the next school day following the day notification of suspension is sent to the pupil's parent or legal guardian.

I. If student has been denied the right to ride a school bus for disciplinary reasons, the parent or guardian of that student has right of appeal within ten (10) days of suspension to the head administrator of the school involved.

II. Until the appeal is heard, or if the suspension of student's right to ride the school bus is upheld, it shall be the parents' or guardians' responsibility to provide transportation to and from school for that student for the period of the suspension.

THE ROLE OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS IN TRANSPORTATION

1. Riding the school bus is a privilege. This privilege may be temporarily denied or permanently revoked if misconduct of a child jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus or the safety of the students riding the bus.
2. Parents are responsible for the safety of their children from the time they leave home in the morning until the time they board the school bus; and at the end of the school day from the time the children disembark from the school bus at the designated stop. Once the child enters the school bus, the authority lies with the bus driver and the school district.
3. Students should leave home early enough so that they arrive at the designated school bus stop point five (5) minutes before the scheduled arrival time of the school bus.
4. Parents should be aware of their responsibility not only for their child's behavior while on the school bus, but also their responsibility for damage caused by their child(ren) to the property of others, including the school bus. When a child walks to and from the bus

stop, and while he/she waits at the school bus stop, and when he/she walks home from the school bus stop at the end of the school day, he must show consideration and respect for the property of those citizens whose homes and places of business are located along these routes.

5. Parents, together with the child, should develop a route to and from the school bus stop, or school, which minimizes the exposure of the child to vehicular traffic. Shortcuts through isolated fields and woods or across streams or railroad tracks can often be dangerous. Entering of abandoned houses or deserted buildings by children on their way to or from school should not be condoned. The route should be direct and uninterrupted.
6. Parents should walk with younger children to and from the school bus stop, using this opportunity to teach the child(ren) proper pedestrian practice. If the parents cannot accompany their child(ren), arrangements should be made, if possible, for older children (brother, sister, or neighbor) to escort the younger children to and from the school bus stop or school.
7. Parents should develop in their child(ren) an awareness of the molestation (personal harassment) problem. Encourage children not to accept candy, soft drinks, money, toys or rides from strangers or to associate with anyone they do not know. If your child is confronted with these problems on his way to or from school, he should tell you or his teacher as soon as possible. This is a situation that should be referred to the police.
8. Parents should realize that weather determines how a child is to be dressed. Encourage children to wear the type of clothing that will not only keep them warm and enable them to see where they are going, but also permit them to be seen. If the children cannot be seen by the drivers of vehicles, they are in danger. For example, white clothing is difficult to see in snow, but makes one clearly visible at night. If the weather is inclement, children should be dressed for the occasion and leave a few minutes earlier than their normal starting time in order to reach the school bus stop or school safely and on time.
9. In inclement weather, announcements regarding the closing of schools or delayed opening begin at approximately 5:45 a.m. During severe weather conditions, pertinent information concerning the transportation program will be announced on the radio.
10. The application of common sense is the best method of determining the role of the parents regarding the safety of children traveling to and from school, either as a passenger on a school bus or as a pedestrian.

OPERATION OF THE SCHOOL BUS SYSTEM

- A. **Bus routes/stops** shall be established by the transportation coordinator in conjunction with school and SAU administrators. Routes will be over the most direct roads practicable for bus travel to serve those entitled to transportation service. Where an alternate route may be selected without sacrifice to efficiency or economy, preference will

be given to that route serving the larger number of pupils more directly. Routes will be designed to employ as nearly as practicable the full carrying capacity of each bus trip.

- B. **Bus schedules** shall be established by the transportation coordinator and school administration under the direction of the assistant superintendent of schools. The purpose of bus scheduling shall be to achieve maximum service with a minimum fleet of buses consistent with rendering reasonably equal service to all riders. The measure of service rendered shall be the total time between leaving a bus stop in the morning and returning thereto in the afternoon on a regular bus trip. To the greatest extent possible, routes will minimize and balance the time students spend on buses.

- C. **Bus stops** shall be established by the transportation coordinator and school administration under the direction of the assistant superintendent of schools. Drivers shall not load or unload students at other than authorized bus stops. Priority in distance to stops will be given to younger children to the greatest extent possible.

- D. Authorized bus stops shall be located at convenient intervals in places where students can be loaded or unloaded, cross highways and await arrival of buses with the utmost safety permitted based upon highway conditions, terrain, and visibility. The number of bus stops on each trip shall be limited, consistent with the policy, so as to enable buses to maintain a reasonable timetable and schedule.

- E. The process of establishing routes/stops is as follows:
 - 1. Bus coordinator obtains student enrollment list - early July.
 - 2. Coordinator evaluates past year's routes and stops, finds houses of new students, and drafts a route/stop proposal.
 - 3. Coordinator reviews routes with principals and assistant superintendent.
 - 4. In August, a final draft is reviewed by the coordinator/assistant superintendent and principal, and revised if necessary.
 - 5. Routes and stops are published in local newspapers.
 - 6. New regulations and other factors may necessitate alteration of newly established and publicized routes and stops.
 - 7. The coordinator reviews requests for route changes with the principal. Final approval of any changes rest with the assistant superintendent.

- F. Students entitled to transportation will be assigned to a school bus and will be expected to adhere to the assignment. Parent requests for changes in a child's regular bus assignment should be sent to the bus coordinator. Bus assignment changes will be made based on the following criteria:

1. Request must be written by parent or guardian.
2. Space must be available.
3. Change in a student's regular bus assignment may be approved for the year, the half year or the quarter. Changes for shorter periods will not be honored by the coordinator.
4. Emergency situations or one-day changes may be authorized on a case-by-case basis by the principal. Any such one-time change must be requested in writing and in advance by the parent/guardian. The principal will coordinate the change directly.

G. Conflict Resolution Process

1. Conflict, requests, and questions are presented to the coordinator for review.
2. If the coordinator perceives a safety concern or if there is agreement that a change or addition to the route/stop is justified, the coordinator will immediately make the change on a temporary basis. Changes will be brought to the assistant superintendent for confirmation.
3. If the coordinator does not approve the request, and the petitioner wishes to appeal this decision:
 - a. The coordinator compiles all appropriate data from his/her investigation for board review.
 1. The coordinator may request a meeting with petitioner and the principal to seek resolution.
 2. The coordinator may seek the advice/review of state officials.
 - b. The petitioner writes an appeal which is submitted to the assistant superintendent.
 - c. If petitioner is still not satisfied with response, petitioner appeals, in writing, to the school board. The board hears the appeal as part of its next available agenda.
 - d. The board makes a decision on the route/stop question after hearing all appropriate information.

Statutory References:

RSA 189:6 (Transportation of Pupils)

RSA 189:8 (Limitations and Additions)

RSA 189:9 (Pupils in Private Schools)

RSA 189:9-a (Pupils Prohibited for Disciplinary Reasons)

ADOPTION: