

PARENT AND STUDENT TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Wabash City Schools Transportation Department. You have chosen the most safe, most efficient, and most environmentally friendly way to transport your student to and from school. At Wabash City Schools we strive to provide a safe and efficient school bus service that will enhance your student's education day.

Keeping everyone efficient and safe requires rules and procedures to be in place. Three rules sum up this entire handbook. BE KIND, BE ON TIME and BE SAFE.

For details regarding school transportation, please familiarize yourself with this handbook and please feel free to contact the transportation office if you have any questions.

Have a safe and great school year,

Rhonda Daniel, Transportation Director
Wabash City Schools

GENERAL RULES:

- ✓ Riding the school bus to and from school, to extra-curricular trips, and field trips is a privilege, not a right.
- ✓ School bus transportation is not required by the State of Indiana and therefore the services provided are an option chose by Wabash City School and subject to change.
- ✓ All bus riders are expected to demonstrate the same standards of conduct and citizenship as required on the school campus.
- ✓ All bus safety rules and policies must be demonstrated to maintain bus riding privileges for bus routes, extra-curricular trips and field trips.
- ✓ Drivers have the authority to direct the student in any reasonable manner to maintain order and safety.

ELIGIBILITY:

- ✓ Bus transportation may be provided for students who live within the Wabash City Schools District.
- ✓ There have been group stops created for students who live outside of the district. Please contact the transportation office for information/location of those stops.
- ✓ Some walk-zones exist. Please contact the transportation office for non-eligible areas.
- ✓ Failure to follow all safety rules or behavior expectations may result in the loss of riding eligibility to and from school, extra-curricular trips and field trips.
- ✓ Due to bus capacity, high school students are considered walkers or drivers unless they live on the south side of town.

SCHEDULING AND EXCEPTIONS:

- ✓ Transportation plans and changes must go through the Transportation Office not the individual buildings by using a transportation request form.
- ✓ All transportation plans must be scheduled and documented with the Transportation Office.
- ✓ Students will not be permitted to ride unassigned buses for any reason other than an emergency.
- ✓ Students will ride only their assigned school bus and will board and depart from the bus at their designated assigned stop.
- ✓ Telephone request for changes to a student's transportation will not be accepted. A transportation form will be required.
- ✓ Handwritten notes to the school office, teacher, or bus driver for a student to ride an UNASSIGNED bus are not accepted. A transportation form will be required.
- ✓ Due to bus capacity, request to ride on a temporary basis may not be approved.

TEMPORARY OR ONE-TIME SCHEDULE CHANGES:

- ✓ Same day/last minute transportation changes may not be approved due to bus capacity. Requests need to be made through the Transportation Office. The school offices do not know the numbers on each bus so they cannot determine available seating on bus routes.
- ✓ All request for an emergency pass or change on how the student gets home must be made prior to 2:00pm and be approved through the Transportation Office.
- ✓ No handwritten notes to teachers and/or bus drivers will be allowed. A phone call must be made through the Transportation Office.

GENERAL STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

All student rules can be summed up in these three points:

- ✓ Respect others
- ✓ Obey the Bus Driver
- ✓ Be responsible for your own safety and the safety of others

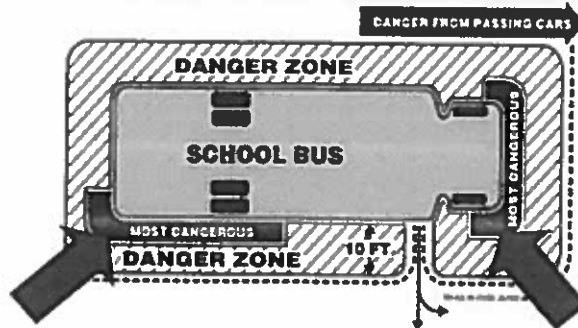
BUS STOP RULES:

- ✓ Be out at the bus stop waiting for the bus at least 5 minutes prior to the published time. Wait 10 minutes past the published stop time before leaving the stop or calling the school office or the transportation office.
- ✓ Bus drivers cannot wait for students who are not at the bus stop.
- ✓ Stay out of the road waiting for the bus.
- ✓ Stay in a single file line 10 to 15 feet off the roadway or away from the curb while waiting to board the bus.
- ✓ Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before moving toward the bus.
- ✓ Never run toward the bus. If you miss the bus go home and call your school office or transportation office.
- ✓ Wait to cross the road until after the bus driver gives you the signal to cross.
- ✓ Cross the road at least fifteen (15) feet in front of the bus. Never cross behind the bus.
- ✓ ALWAYS look both ways when crossing the street.
- ✓ Be alert for a possible danger signal (horn) from the driver.
- ✓ When boarding the bus go immediately to your seat and be seated.
- ✓ Stay out of the danger zone around the bus.
- ✓ Do not bend down and/or reach for anything under or around the bus. Get out of the danger zone and notify the driver or another adult if you have dropped something.
- ✓ Toys and balls should be secured in the student's book bag. If they don't fit, don't bring them to the bus stop. These items will roll under the bus and distract students to go after them.

Be Safe: Know the Danger Zone!

Stay out of the Danger Zone!!!

- The most dangerous areas are close to the tires and right in front of the bus.



REMEMBER! The driver can not see you in the "danger zone!"

RIDING RULES:

- ✓ The driver may assign seating for all students on the bus.
- ✓ Riders are to follow all rules and be courteous to drivers and others.
- ✓ Remain seated, facing forward while the bus is in motion.
- ✓ Remain seated until the bus has stopped.
- ✓ While the bus is in motion, never cross the line into the driver area.
- ✓ Remain quiet. Noise on the bus shall be kept to a minimum with students speaking in reasonable conversation voices.
- ✓ Become silent at all railroad crossings, school bus stops and other danger zones as designated by the bus driver.
- ✓ No window will be lowered past the half-way point.
- ✓ Do not put anything or any body part out of the window.
- ✓ Do not tamper with any of the bus equipment.
- ✓ Keep all objects out of the aisle at all times.
- ✓ Understand the driver is concentrating on the roadway and traffic. Do not distract the driver.
- ✓ Do not distract the driver during a student stop. Understand that the driver must concentrate on students outside of the bus.
- ✓ Report problems to the bus driver when the bus is parked in a safe location, contact the driver at a later time, or call the transportation office.
- ✓ Remove all trash. Do not leave it on the bus or throw it on the floor. Do not litter.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE:

- ✓ The use of video recording devices may be installed and used to assist the driver in providing for the safety and well-being of the students while on the bus.
- ✓ Video and audio surveillance data is the property of Wabash City Schools and not available for viewing by parents, students, or community members.
- ✓ Video and audio surveillance data may be used during the discipline process.

PROPERTY DAMAGE:

- ✓ School buses are considered school property and therefore government property.
- ✓ Riders who cause damage to school property will be responsible for repair cost and may experience school discipline action, school suspension or expulsion, loss of riding privileges, and/or legal action.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS:

- ✓ The following cargo is forbidden to be transported on a school bus: pets, alcohol, drugs, ammunition, explosives, firearms, knives, tobacco, nicotine-containing products, or any other dangerous or objectionable materials or objects.
- ✓ Large and/or loose items are not permitted on the bus. All items must fit in a bag or case. All items must fit on the student's lap or between their feet on the floor.
- ✓ Use of school computers is not allowed on the buses during routes. Understand that routes are short and when students get things out of their bag it takes time to gather their belongings up at the bus stop and put everything back in. Things also get lost or broken. It is better for all concerned that items stay secured in the student's bag. Other electronic devices (phones) may be used at the discretion of the driver for middle or high school students. Please note: If a student has headphones on and their music is heard throughout the bus the driver may refuse future use of headphones or electronic device.
- ✓ Use of any type of electronic devices for elementary students is not allowed.
- ✓ All belongings must be placed in a zipped bag while boarding and unloading the bus. Loose items are a safety hazard.
- ✓ The school corporation is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal belongings.
- ✓ Both the use of the bus radio and the station or programs which students listen to must be approved by the bus driver.
- ✓ Bus drivers may confiscate any object that has been deemed questionable or causing disruption and submit the item to the principal.
- ✓ Shoes must be tied and bag and clothing strings must be tucked away.

MEDICATION:

- ✓ For safety reasons, there will be no transporting medication on the bus.
- ✓ It is the responsibility of the parent to get the medication to school and give to the appropriate personnel at the building.
- ✓ In the event of an emergency need to use or take medication during the bus ride, the parent must notify the school nurse and the nurse will notify the bus driver.
- ✓ Parents must inform the transportation office, in writing, of lifesaving emergency medication needs and provide instructions on how and when to allow or administer the medication.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES:

- ✓ No hard candy is allowed to be eaten on any school bus.
- ✓ Only water is allowed on the school bus. All bottles must be spill proof.
- ✓ Individual drivers may allow food on their bus with certain requirements. If your driver allows this, any trash must be removed when you get off. Failure to do so or if food is found on the floor this privilege could be taken away.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ✓ Know and understand transportation scheduling requirements. (see scheduling)
- ✓ No one is allowed on school buses except those who are invited. Uninvited persons who enter a bus may be guilty of criminal trespassing laws and therefore may be punished by law. Do not board a school bus for any reason unless invited to do so by the driver.
- ✓ For safety reasons, do not approach the bus doors to talk to the driver. Either speak to the driver through the driver window or wait to communicate by phone or other means at a later time. For safety reasons, drivers are directed to shut the door if an adult approaches the bus and if he/she feels safety may be in question.
- ✓ Discuss all transportation rules with your child(ren).
- ✓ Support the bus driver by teaching children to respect and obey those in authority.
- ✓ Support discipline decisions by the school principal/transportation department.
- ✓ Teach your children respect for others.
- ✓ Supervise travel to and from school bus stops. Parents are responsible for their child while going to or from the bus stop and while waiting on the school bus.
- ✓ Wabash City Schools will not take responsibility for or enter into disputes involving parents and/or students concerning matters that take place prior to the student boarding the school bus or after the student has disembarked from the bus on his/her way home.
- ✓ Bus stop conflict should be handled by the parents, and if necessary, local law enforcement.
- ✓ Ensure children are out and waiting for the bus 5 minutes prior to their published stop time. Understand that bus drivers cannot hold traffic or delay routes while waiting on students to arrive at the stop.
- ✓ Allow 10 minutes from the published stop time before leaving the stop and calling the school or the transportation office. Various factors may cause a delay in bus routes.
- ✓ Ensure all student belongings are securely placed in a zipped bag. Please do not send toys and balls that are not secure. These objects are safety hazards when brought on the bus. Students want to play with them. They drop them and go after them under the bus. They roll down the aisle of the bus and distract the driver.
- ✓ Do not send large items on the bus.(i.e. school projects, large band instruments, unsecured food products for parties, balloons.)
- ✓ Do not enter school bus parking areas used for drop off/pick up points for students. Use the school's designated area for car riders.
- ✓ Parents will be held responsible for damage caused by their child to school property.

DISCIPLINE PROCESS:

- ✓ The school bus driver is in charge. Students must follow bus and safety rules to maintain bus riding privileges.
- ✓ Drivers will work with students to ensure safe and courteous behavior.
- ✓ Drivers will document concerns on a verbal warning log.
- ✓ Drivers will communicate with parents regarding inappropriate behavior.
- ✓ If a student's behavior warrants a bus referral form the driver will submit the form to the transportation office. The transportation office will meet with the student and confer with the building principal for final discipline outcome. Parents will be notified.
- ✓ If a student is removed from riding the bus, the student may not ride any Wabash City School bus during the time of the bus suspension. This includes all extra-curricular and field trips.
- ✓ When asked to address a behavior problem, parents should remember that school personnel have all of the student's best interest in mind.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

- ✓ All drivers are trained in emergency procedures.
- ✓ All buses have assigned 4-5 student emergency helpers.
- ✓ Bus evacuation drills are conducted once each semester on school grounds.
- ✓ All students are trained in emergency procedures each school year in preparation and during those evacuation drills.
- ✓ Parents: In the event of an emergency, the school or administration office will make contact with parents. For safety reasons, do not go to the scene of an accident.
- ✓ In the event of an emergency, students will only be released to parents after proper documentation and approval by school administration.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES:

- ✓ Drivers may contact parents directly to relay information or concerns regarding students or the route.
- ✓ Parents may contact the driver directly, or the transportation department in regards to questions about their child.
- ✓ Should conflicts arise; parents and transportation will work jointly to resolve issues.
- ✓ Threats to any school employee are considered, by law, a Class D felony. IC: 35-44-2-1.