

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES BUS BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

August 12, 2019

To Parents and Families of Bus Riders:

A safe, reliable, efficient and on-time student transportation system depends on a strong partnership between parents, guardians, school administration, and the Department of Transportation Services.

Good student behavior while entering, riding, and leaving the bus contributes in many ways to safe transportation. Such conduct makes it possible for the driver to give full attention to the roadway and other drivers.

Parents can also play an important role in creating a successful transportation experience by having their child arrive early to his/her assigned bus stop. When drivers have to honk and wait for students, it not only delays the pick-up times for all remaining students on the route, but can also result in late arrival to school, cutting in to valuable teaching and learning time. Please ensure your child is at the bus stop at least ten (10) minutes in advance of his/her scheduled pick up time.

Please take a few minutes to review the information below with your child concerning student behavior on the bus. The primary purpose of rules and procedures on the buses are for the safety of all students.

Please note that Special Needs student behavior concerns will require an effective individualized intervention plan documented in each child's IEP.

Expectations of School District Transportation Staff:

The driver of the bus has the responsibility and authority to maintain order and a safe environment. A bus driver who observes student misconduct or determines an unsafe condition exists has the authority to stop the bus and administer corrective action steps in order to ensure the safety of all passengers. The bus driver will document the misconduct on the Bus Behavior Referral form and submit the form to the School Administration for review. The School Administration will investigate the incident and determine the corrective or disciplinary action based upon the severity of the action.

Bus Attendants are assigned to buses that have Special Needs students. Bus Attendants help the bus driver ensure safe and orderly transportation of students with disabilities in addition to all other students on the bus.

Student Bus Behavior Guidelines:

The mission of the School District of Philadelphia Department of Transportation Services is to provide safe, reliable and fiscally responsible transportation services to all eligible students. The District has established the Student Safety Rules and Regulations listed below to ensure that all of our students are transported in the safest environment possible. Students provided with transportation are responsible for complying with the Bus Behavior Guidelines. We ask for the cooperation of parents and guardians with the Department of Transportation Services and school personnel in developing and supporting good student behavior at the bus stop and on the bus.

While riding on the bus, students are encouraged to read quietly, talk quietly with friends in their immediate area, or sit quietly. Students are strongly encouraged to report bullying or problems to their Bus Driver or Attendant immediately.

Each student has an individual responsibility to help ensure the safety of all students on the bus by following the rules. A student's failure to adhere to these rules and expectations provided in these guidelines, including but not limited to abusive behavior towards the public, the school bus driver, fellow passengers, or the vehicles, will result in corrective or disciplinary action that may lead to suspension of bus riding privileges.

Student Safety Rules and Regulations:

Students are to obey the following Safety Rules and Regulations at the Bus Stop and while riding the Bus:

- Upon entering the bus, students will immediately find seats. They will remain in their seats. No one will be standing while the bus is moving.
- Students are not permitted to save seats for other students.
- Students may be assigned seats by the Bus Attendant or Bus Driver.
- Each student shall display courteous conduct while entering the bus, on the bus, and departing the bus.
- Each student will get on and off at his/her assigned bus stop.
- Drinking of any liquid is prohibited on the bus.
- Students are not permitted to eat food or chew gum on the bus.
- Smoking is prohibited on the bus.
- Students may talk softly to each other while riding the bus; yelling and loud talking is not permitted.
- Profanity of any kind will not be tolerated on the bus.
- Nothing shall be thrown or propelled on the bus, through the bus windows, or at the bus.
- Fighting, scuffling, pushing or tripping is not permitted on the bus.
- There is no littering on the bus.
- No student shall open the emergency door.
- Unreasonable conduct or unsafe actions will not be tolerated.

- Students will be held responsible for any damages that they may do to any school bus.
- Students are not to possess any type of weapon, as defined by the PA School Code, allowed on the bus.
- Students are not to possess, use or distribute any drugs or tobacco on the bus.

Corrective or disciplinary action for student behavior will be determined by the student's school administration and will be based on the severity of the action. Failure to comply with the Bus Behavior Guidelines may result in corrective or disciplinary actions such as suspension of rider privileges from the bus, school suspension, school detention or expulsion. In the event that a student has been suspended from the bus but not from school, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide transportation to and from school.

Parents or Guardians that are concerned or have questions regarding a corrective or disciplinary action that are a result of behavior reported on the bus should contact the student's school administration.

Parent Concerns or Issues with Bus Service:

For the safety of all drivers and all the children on the bus, please do not step into the bus. Please keep in mind when discussing any concerns with your bus driver that routes are timed and the driver has a responsibility to pick up all students on the bus at their scheduled time. If it is not feasible to discuss concerns with your bus driver during your child's pick up due to traffic safety reasons or time constraints, parents can reach out to their school administration and request a meeting with their bus driver during the driver's off peak hours.

Please call the Department of Transportation Services Customer Service at 215.400.4350 to report an issue or concern about a bus driver or bus service. You may also contact your child's school administration to document and submit any incidents or concerns to Transportation.