



PORTA Transportation Department
"Transporting PORTA'S most valued asset"

POLICY ON STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

(Updated 5/2008)

A school bus driver must devote 100 percent of his/her time to driving the school bus and, therefore, should not be distracted by the conduct of his passengers. Everyone has a part in helping the driver maintain order – the classroom teacher, parents, and last but not least, the riders themselves. School administrators should see to it that students are oriented in acceptable behavior on the bus.

The following list of safety rules for students although far from complete, will provide a basis for safe conduct.

1. Obey the driver promptly and cheerfully; realize that the driver has a big responsibility for your safety and that it is everyone's duty to help – don't question any of his/her requests when they are given; if you don't understand ask him/her about it at the end of the trip when you are leaving the bus
2. Be careful in approaching bus stops, walk on the left side facing oncoming traffic, cross the road only after the bus driver has signaled that it is safe to do so.
3. Be sure to leave home early so that you will be on time at your bus stop (at least 5 minutes prior to scheduled pick up)– the driver has a schedule to keep, so he cannot wait for you; if thirty students each delay thirty seconds; the schedule will be fifteen minutes late.
4. Wait in an orderly fashion for the bus and be sure you are off the road and out of danger of passing vehicles and flying stones – this is particularly important during icy weather, because the bus might skid as it is stopping for you.
5. Board in an orderly fashion; do not crowd, push or shove, and always use the handrail both when getting on and off the bus.
6. Go quickly and directly to your assigned seat without disturbing or crowding other pupils; remember the driver has to wait until you are seated before he starts and, other traffic is stopped for the bus, the sooner you get to your seat, the sooner the driver can be on his way.
7. Behave on the school bus just as you would in the classroom, observe rules just as your classroom teacher would have you observe them. All "school rules" apply on the bus, with the addition of bus specific rules.
8. Help keep the bus clean and sanitary; as well as for your safety, please NO EATING OR DRINKING ON THE BUS: save your lunch for lunchtime.
9. Cell phones may be in possession. Use should be restricted to emergencies or to contact parents of pick up time. Violators will be subject to having phones confiscated.

10. Stay in your seat while the bus is in motion, because any sudden stop, swerve or other defensive driving maneuver may knock you on the floor – or throw you against an object and cause an injury.
11. Keep your voice low; avoid loud conversations, singing, boisterous conduct, unnecessary noise or profanity. This diverts the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident. A safe bus driver must be able to hear the sounds of traffic such as sirens, horns, and train whistles; AT RAILROAD CROSSINGS, you must be absolutely quiet so the driver can hear a train whistle; this is very important when it is raining and during foggy weather when the windshield wipers, heater and defroster are operating.
12. Keep your head, arms, and hands inside the bus at all times; windows are for light, ventilation, and to see through; relax and enjoy the ride going to school and on your way home.
13. If you detect any approaching danger that you believe the driver is not aware of, don't hesitate to warn the driver – sometimes the driver cannot see in all directions; if you see that a car is not going to stop while he is loading or unloading, or if some vehicle is passing on the right, let the driver know about it quickly and calmly.
14. Be courteous to fellow pupils and the bus driver – remember we are all working together for safety.
15. Keep your feet and other objects out of the aisle, so that students will not trip over them as they enter and leave the bus – musical instruments, lunch pails, book bags, and other large packages should be placed under the seat.
16. Treat bus equipment as you would valuable furniture in your own home, damage to seats, etc., is unnecessary, costly and wasteful. Parents will be liable for any defacing or damage students do to the bus.
17. Remain seated until the bus stops to unload; then get off the bus quietly and quickly – do not crowd or push; if you must cross the street, take 5-6 steps in front of the bus (no less than 10 feet) and cross at right angles so that the driver can see you; WAIT! Make eye contact with the driver and wait until he gives you the signal to cross; then look both ways before crossing the street. NEVER CROSS BEHIND A SCHOOL BUS!
18. Most situations that arise during the bus ride occur when the driver is present and students begin rough play. This "horse play" often results in fighting, injuries, and hard feelings. Because the safety of all students is so important, horseplay on buses is absolutely forbidden.
19. All students are subject to being videotaped including audio on the school bus for the purpose of monitoring students' behavior, at any and/or all times.
20. Use emergency doors, windows, and other equipment only in the event of an emergency.
21. Bus passes must be obtained from the principal and are required for:
 - a. Extra passenger with you on the bus.
 - b. Students not regularly on the bus route.
 - c. Students getting off the bus at any other stop than their scheduled regular stop.
21. Inappropriate behavior will be reported and disciplinary action will be taken. Riding a school bus is a privilege. We do not want you to lose that privilege.