

MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT
Milford, Delaware 19963

POLICY
5417

SCHOOL BUS CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY – GENERAL INFORMATION

Student Safety – Student safety is a top priority for the Milford School District. School bus drivers are considered school officials and the bus is deemed an extension of the classroom. Students should observe classroom conduct when on the bus. Students who do not follow safe procedures on the bus will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or denial of bus privileges as outlined in this policy.

Parent Contact – Drivers and/or contractors are to make a good faith attempt to contact parents prior to writing a bus referral. This effort should be documented on the referral form when necessary. A Principal/Designee must notify the parent/guardian of any suspension or denial of riding privileges.

Contractor/Driver Meeting Request – Contractors and/or drivers may request a meeting with administration and parents of children in grades Pre-K-12 prior to writing a bus referral.

Implementation – School Bus Drivers should take steps to organize and promote a safe school bus environment. Drivers and Principal/Designee shall implement this policy in the manner specified. The implementation of this policy is in compliance with Delaware State 14 DE Reg.1150 which requires the school district assume primary responsibility for student conduct.

The following items should be implemented when carrying out the Bus Code of Conduct:

- a. For any suspension from the bus, Principal/Designee must contact the parent/guardian prior to the suspension. If there is a loss of bus privilege, it will start no later than two (2) days after the school has notified the parents.
- b. An administrator can enact or prolong a bus suspension if the student presents a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of other students and staff.
- c. Infractions are cumulative regardless of offense type or category.
- d. If a student commits a series of related offenses on a bus trip, the offense with the highest penalty is to be chosen for action.

Bus Referrals – The Driver is responsible for maintaining discipline among all passengers. A discipline referral process is in place to support the Driver in this endeavor.

Should a student commit a disciplinary infraction the Driver should:

- a. talk to the student initially to resolve the problem and issue a verbal warning if necessary.

- b. turn in a bus referral discipline form to the school's Principal/Designee within a timely manner.
- c. The Principal/Designee may also initiate a bus referral based on his/her investigation of a student complaint and/or parental/guardian concern regarding a bus discipline matter.
- d. Referrals will be returned to the driver/contractor within a timely manner.
- e. The school Principal/Designee reserves the right to increase the consequences based on the severity of the incident on the bus. Infractions are cumulative regardless of offense type or category.

Due Process

Students must be afforded the following due process procedures:

- A. Given notice of charges to student
- B. Given explanation of evidence against student
- C. Student given opportunity to tell his/her version of the incident

Transportation Review Committee – This committee consists of a building administrator, school district transportation supervisor, and disciplinarian. The Transportation Review Committee may take any disciplinary action deemed appropriate including but not limited to a long-term suspension from the school bus and/or complete denial of bus privileges. In addition, the Transportation Review Committee may recommend to the Alternative Placement Team of each school for alternative placement, long-term suspension or expulsion in accordance with Delaware State Regulation 616.

Return to School (Pre-K and Kindergarten Only) – To provide safe transportation and ensure students of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten age are properly monitored, a parent/guardian or caregiver must be present when the student departs the bus.

For pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children to be released from the bus:

1. Parent/Guardian or caregiver must be at the bus stop, go to the bus door after the bus has stopped and opened the entrance door to receive his/her child. This way the bus driver can ensure that each pre-kindergarten and kindergarten student has a parent/guardian or caregiver present.
2. The bus driver may ask for the name of the child before releasing him/her. (At the start of school year or if there is a substitute driver)

In the event a parent/guardian is not present at the bus stop, the driver is required to notify the school and return children to school at the end of his/her route. School administrators should follow the list of consequences below. The consequences only apply to the bus transportation from school to home and not morning transportation.

- 1st Offense: A letter will be sent to the parent notifying him/her that the child was returned to school. The parent will be told that this is against district policy to not

be present to receive his/her child. It will be explained to the parent that if this continues, transportation services can be discontinued.

- 2nd Offense: A letter will be sent to the parent notifying him/her that the child was returned to school for a second time. The parent will be told once again that this is against district policy to not be present to receive his/her child. It will be explained to the parent that if this infraction occurs again, a five school day bus suspension will occur.
- 3rd Offense: A letter will be sent stating that transportation services will be suspended for a period of 2 school days from school to home.
- 4th Offense: A letter will be sent notifying the parent/guardian that transportation services will be suspended for 5 school days from school to home.
- 5th Offense: Bus privileges suspended until Transportation Review Committee meeting. Services may be terminated for the remainder of the school year.

Student Records – All student offenses reported to the school shall be made a part of the student’s discipline record. The bus referral process will start over at the beginning of each school year with exception to days suspended off the bus, which extend past the end of the school year and may be applied to the following school year.

Category 1 – Minor Offenses

Minor Offense 1

Issue verbal/written warning (Morris – applicable for offense 1 and 2)

Minor Offense 2

Loss of bus privilege for one (1) school day

Minor Offense 3

Loss of bus privilege for three (3) school days (Morris – one (1) day)

Minor Offense 4

Loss of bus privilege for five (5) consecutive school days (Morris – min. of three (3) days)

Mandatory conference with Parent/Guardian and Principal/Designee

Minor Offense 5 or more

Loss of bus privilege for ten (10) consecutive school days (Morris – min. of five (5) days)

Mandatory Transportation Review Committee meeting

Denial of bus privileges

Student will be automatically be referred to the Transportation Review Committee

Category 2 – Major Offenses

Major Offense 1

Loss of bus privilege for five up to (5) consecutive school days after mandatory parent notification (Morris – one (1) day)

Restitution

Major Offense 2

Loss of bus privilege for ten up to (10) consecutive school days after mandatory parent notification (Morris – min. of three (3) days)

Restitution

Major Offense 3 or More

Loss of bus privilege for fifteen (15) consecutive school days after mandatory parent notification (Morris – min. of five (5) days)

Restitution

Mandatory Transportation Review Committee meeting

Category 3 – Serious Offenses / Law Violations

Serious Offense 1

Loss of bus privilege for five (5) consecutive school days after mandatory parent notification (Morris – one (1) day)

Restitution

Mandatory Transportation Review Committee meeting

Police report

Serious Offense 2 or more

Loss of bus privilege for ten (10) consecutive school days after mandatory parent notification (Morris – min. of three (3) days)

Restitution

Mandatory Transportation Review Committee meeting

Police report

Bus Code of Conduct Violations

In accordance with Delaware State Regulation 1150 School Transportation 9.0 Pupil conduct on school buses, the following code violations will be used:

Offense	Category
Failure to obey bus driver's instructions	1
Failure to Obey Safety Procedures	1
Inappropriate conduct at bus stop	1,2
Improper boarding and departing procedures	1,2
Failure to remain seated in a forward position	1
Seated in driver's seat	1
Unauthorized use of bus windows	1
Throwing items inside of bus or out of bus window	1,2
Abusive language/Profanity	1, 2
Abusive Language to Driver/Profanity	2
Failure to maintain a clean, sanitary and orderly bus / Littering	1
Destruction of property	2
Horseplay and/or Reckless Play	1
Inappropriate Behavior	1,2
Inappropriate Sexual Behavior	2
Disruption	1
Disruption: Caused Driver to Stop Bus	2
Misrepresenting the Truth/Lying	1,2
Offensive Touching	1,2
Possession/Use of Unauthorized Comm/Electronic Device	1
Stealing/Theft	1,2
Tobacco possession/use including e-cigarettes and/or possession of matches/lighter	2
Unsafe Items	1,2
Attorney General's Report	3
Violent Felony	3
Assault III	3
Unlawful Sexual Contact III	3
Offensive Touching (Employee Victim)	3

Terroristic Threatening (Employee victim)	3
Deadly Weapons Offenses	3
Pornography: Possession and Production	3
Bomb Threats	3
Criminal Mischief (Vandalism)	3
Tampering With Public Records	3
Alcohol, Possession and Use	3
Felony Theft (\$1000 or more)	3
Bullying	3
Offensive Touching (Student Victim)	3
Terroristic Threatening (Student Victim)	3
Fighting/Disorderly Conduct	3
Use and/or Possession of Drugs and/or Alcohol and/or Paraphernalia and/or Inhalants and/or Medications	3

NOTE: All Disciplinary Infractions listed in Policies #5404 and #5414 are applicable to transportation Code of Conduct for all students.

Student Appeal Process for Bus Code of Conduct

All appeals should follow the appeal process as outlined in MSD Policy #5414 and #5404.

ADOPTED: 12/15/86; 7/20/87; 1/25/88; 7/11/88; 7/10/89; 7/9/90; 5/20/91; 6/3/91; 6/22/92; 7/12/93; 6/27/94; 11/28/94; 6/26/95; 6/24/96; 6/25/01; 6/20/05

REVISED: 5/24/99; 9/27/99; 5/22/00; 5/21/01; 6/24/02; 6/23/03; 6/24/04; 5/23/05; 6/20/11; 5/21/12; 4/20/15; 7/8/19