

# POTEET INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## School Bus Rider's Safety Handbook



Dear Parents:

The Poteet Independent School District provides bus transportation to and from school as a courtesy service for eligible students residing in the District.

The State of Texas prescribes the conditions governing school bus operations and partially funds the service by allotting the District a given amount for eligible students transported.

Eligible students are defined by State statute as those residing in the district two or more miles from the school they should attend, as measured by the nearest practical route. The nearest practical route is the nearest traveled road which may or may not be the road used by the school bus. Address Eligibility is continually audited year round. When an address is found to be ineligible, notification will be made as soon as possible with a grace period allowed for parents to locate alternate means of transportation.

In order to meet the conditions outlined by the State and provide safe, prompt movement of eligible students the district has adopted standard regulations and procedures and has provided restrictive measures for violation of rules. They are herein outlined for your information and the guidance of your child.

The District is pleased to provide transportation for its eligible students and solicits your assistance in helping create a safe, healthy operation. You may do so by reading the enclosed material and sharing it with your child.

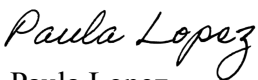
We ask for your cooperation with school personnel in developing proper behavior patterns for those who ride buses. **The District reserves the right to video tape student behavior while on district transportation in order to maintain the safety of all passengers.**

**During the first two weeks of school, please do not make any changes to your child's bus route/routine. This will help provide a smooth route pattern for all students.**

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE INFORMATION SHEET AT THE END OF THIS HANDOUT.**

If you have any concerns about school bus safety, please feel free to call the Transportation Office at **(830)276-8255.**

Thank You,



Paula Lopez  
Transportation Director

## **BUS RIDER'S SAFETY HANDBOOK**

### **PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

The goal of this bus Rider's Handbook is to help provide a safe and enjoyable experience for students who ride the school buses. Parents should take time to read and discuss the materials in this handbook with their children. Riding a school bus is a privilege provided by the school district and should be treated as such to maintain the privilege. The information sheet in the back of this book should be fully completed and returned to the driver the day following receipt of this handbook. If this is not returned in a reasonable time your child could lose bus privileges.

### **GENERAL SAFETY RULES**

- Obey the instructions of the bus driver at all times.
  - Lack of cooperation or respect for the bus driver is a punishable offense.
- Board and depart at bus stops only.
- A student who is eligible to ride must qualify under at least one the following guidelines;
  - A student must live two or more miles from their school campus.
  - A student must live in a school district designated hazardous area.
  - A student must have special permission from the district Superintendent for special circumstances.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to the school if the student misses the bus.

### **PROCEDURES FOR WAITING FOR THE BUS**

- Be at your bus stop 5 minutes before scheduled pick-up time; driver will not wait or honk.
- Stand five (5) giant steps away from the curb or the roadway while waiting for the bus.
- When the bus approaches, form a line and be prepared to load.
- Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the door opens.
- If you miss the bus, go home immediately; **DO NOT CHASE THE BUS.**
- Parents, do not chase the bus in your car, the driver is not allowed to stop anywhere accept the designated bus stops. Instruct your child on what procedures to follow if the bus is missed.
- Students will abide by the school's rules and regulations concerning bus students, including conduct and the dress code.
- When a student misses 3 consecutive days of riding the bus; a parent needs to contact the Transportation office to resume bus service.

### **LOADING THE BUS**

- Students will be assigned seats by the driver and are required to sit there for the duration of the school year, unless you are reassigned by the driver.
- Go to your assigned seat, the bus will not move until all students are seated.
- Do not push or shove when loading.
- Use the handrails and steps at all times when loading or unloading.
- A Bus Pass will be required in order to board another bus, or to get off at another location. A parent must send a note to the campus 1 day in advance for a principal to issue a Bus Pass. For the safety of

your child the driver will not transport your child without a Bus Pass. **PLEASE NOTE; NO BUS PASSES WILL BE ISSUED FOR THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF SCHOOL UNLESS IT HAS BEEN APPROVED IN ADVANCE**

### **CONDUCT ON THE SCHOOL BUS**

**Students are to follow the District Student Code of Conduct at all times.**

- All students are expected to treat each other and drivers courteously at all times.
- A student shall not refuse to sit in an assigned seat or deny another student a place to sit.
- Each student will be expected to remain seated for the duration of the trip.
- Normal conversation is permitted, however any loud noises that may distract the driver are not permitted.
- Fighting, scuffling, or horse playing is forbidden.
- The use of profane, obscene, or vulgar language; verbally, physical or written is forbidden.
- Do not throw any items inside or outside of the bus. Paper fights will not be tolerated.
- Do not mark, cut, scratch, or puncture seats. Vandalism cost will be paid by the person who is responsible.
- Students shall face forward for the duration of the trip, and shall keep their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the aisle.
- Students will keep their hands, head, and feet inside bus windows.
- Spitting on students, floors, or any other part of the bus will not be tolerated.
- The emergency door and exit controls should be used only during actual emergencies or during supervised drills.
- Students shall never attempt to operate the passenger door or other driver controls except in cases of an extreme emergency.

### **EXITING THE BUS**

- Stay seated until the bus is completely stopped, and the door has opened.
- Use the handrail and take one step at a time when exiting the bus. Leaping or jumping from the steps of the bus is not permitted.
- Wait for your turn to leave the bus; pushing and crowding will only slow exiting and may cause an accident.
- Stay clear of the bus. Do not chase or hang on the bus at any time.
- **If any article drops or rolls near or under the bus, do not go after it or approach the bus. This is very dangerous because the bus driver may not see you. Notify the bus driver and ask for help.**
- Please instruct your children not to pick up mail after getting off the bus. We ask that you wait until the bus has cleared the area.

### **CROSSING THE STREET OR HIGHWAY**

- All students living on the left side of the roadway must have an adult there waiting for them to safely cross the street or highway.
- Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
- Never cross the road from behind the bus.

- CAUTION! Be alert for vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading or unloading students, even when the red flashing lights and bus stops are on.

### **PROHIBITED ITEMS NOT ALLOWED ON THE BUS**

- Weapons of any kind including pocket knives, explosive devices, laser devices, rubber band shooters, harmful drugs or chemicals, (nail polish, perfume, etc....).
- Matches or cigarette lighters.
- Any type of tobacco items.
- NO DRUGS OR drug paraphernalia
- Alcoholic beverages
- Any object (musical instruments, shop project) too large to be carried by the student. All other items must be kept on the student's lap at all times.
- CD players, headphones, hand held video games, or lap top computers.
- \*\*\*\*\*Cell phones will be permitted as long as they are not a distraction to the bus driver.\*\*\*\*\*
- No gum, food or drinks. (No eating or drinking on the bus is permitted.)
- Glass containers, live animals or insects.

### **ACCIDENTS OR EMERGENCIES**

- Follow the driver's instructions. Stay calm. Remain quiet in order to be able to hear the drivers instructions.
- If you must leave the bus, stay in a group and follow the designated leader.
- The following procedures will be used for evacuation in an emergency situation:
  - The student nearest the door will open the door and hold it open.
  - Emergency windows will only be used if instructed by the driver.
  - Leave the bus in a single file form as quickly as possible, following the designated leader to a safe waiting area.
  - Evacuation will start with the seats closest to door on one side then the other and will continue in that order.
  - Once outside the bus, follow the driver's instructions completely.

### **EXTRA CURRICULAR**

- Bus rider rules apply to all school-sponsored events.
- Discipline will be the responsibility of the campus principal, trip sponsor and driver.
- The bus must return clean when returning from a trip.

## **DISCIPLINE**

District Student Code of Conduct and School Board Policies apply to school bus related activities/trips. The school bus is an extension of the classroom and students should observe the same conduct as in the classroom. The bus driver will report all violations to the transportation director. Steps and consequences for improper conduct on the bus include but are not limited to the following;

After a verbal warning by the driver, a school bus report will immediately be made resulting with;

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense      Written Warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense      1 day suspension off bus
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense      3 days suspension off bus
- 4<sup>th</sup> offense      5 days suspension off bus
- 5<sup>th</sup> offense      10 days suspension off bus
- 6<sup>th</sup> offense      Suspension will be for the remainder of the school year. If a suspension is interrupted by a weekend or holiday, the remaining time will be served after the weekend or holiday.

In the event an incident occurs which the driver feels may endanger the safety of other riders, the verbal warning may be omitted and the student may be written up on a school bus report.

In the case of serious misconduct which endangers the safety of other passengers, or driver, and warrants immediate removal of the student from the bus, the student may be removed by any school official or a Law Enforcement Officer. In the event of such action, parents will be notified as soon as possible.

**PLEASE DETACH AND COMPLETE PAGE 7 AND RETURN TO THE BUS DRIVER.**

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**PLEASE DETACH AND COMPLETE THIS PART AND RETURN TO THE BUS DRIVER**

BUS # \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CLEARLY PRINT ALL INFORMATION**

**STUDENT'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**GRADE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CAMPUS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAILING ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHYSICAL LOCATION OF RESIDENCE:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**FATHER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CELL#** \_\_\_\_\_

**MOTHER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CELL#** \_\_\_\_\_

**FATHER WORK #** \_\_\_\_\_ **MOTHER WORK #** \_\_\_\_\_

**HOME PHONE#** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME AND PHONE # OF PERSONS TO CALL IN CASE PARENTS CANNOT BE CONTACTED.**

1. **NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **RELATIONSHIP:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE #** \_\_\_\_\_

2. **NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **RELATIONSHIP:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE#** \_\_\_\_\_

3. **NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **RELATIONSHIP:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE#** \_\_\_\_\_