

**Everman Independent School District  
School Bus Riders Safety Handbook**



**"We Deliver Tomorrow's Leaders"**

Transportation Department  
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*Dear Parents and Bus Riders:*

*Everman ISD offers the privilege of bus transportation for all eligible students. Eligibility is determined by Board policy.*

*We believe that our bus service enhances the learning experience of each student. We are the first faces that they see each school day, and we want to start each day on a positive note. We have established these transportation rules in order to provide our students with a safe, comfortable, and pleasant ride to and from school each day.*

*Effective transportation service requires cooperation among bus drivers & staff, school administrators, students, and parents/guardians. We ask that you read and discuss this handbook with your students to promote a clear understanding of the responsibilities and expectations.*

*We appreciate your cooperation and support.*

*Sincerely,*

*Latonya Brooks*

*Director of Transportation*

## **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

1. Everman ISD School Bus Drivers are selected, hired and trained following rigorous selection criteria and a thorough criminal history background check. All EISD school bus drivers are certified through the Texas Department of Public Safety. Each driver has also earned a Class B (or class A) Commercial Driver License, as well as necessary endorsements. Bus drivers are required to pass a pre-employment drug test along with an annual physical exam and are subject to random drug and alcohol testing. EISD school bus drivers are professionals and are expected to conduct themselves as such at all times.

2. Authorized Bus Stops will be established within a reasonable (approximately 1/4 mile) walking distance from the home of every student eligible for transportation services. It is the responsibility of the Transportation Department to set designated bus stops with student safety, fairness and consistency in mind. All students should load and unload at their designated bus stop only. If a parent/guardian believes that a bus stop needs to be changed, please contact the Transportation Department to discuss a recommended solution. The decision to change a bus stop will be made only when it is in the best interest of safe transportation for that bus.

3. **Restricted Areas:** Everman ISD buses will not enter dead-end streets or personal property except when approved by the Director. Use of private property requires concurrence by the property owner.

4. Video Cameras (with audio) are utilized on EISD school buses for the protection of all riders and the driver. Transportation or Campus administration may use this information as safety training material and/or evidence of bus safety rule violations.

5. **Proper Seating:** School buses are designed for the safety of students. When students are injured on a school bus, it is generally because they were not sitting correctly in their seats. A major design factor is the compartmentalization formed by each seat, which protects the students. Therefore, each student should face forward at all times. The student's back should be flat against the back of the seat, and the student's bottom should be flat on the seat. Legs should be kept in front of their body, with feet

## **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:**

1. The bus is an extension of the classroom and the bus driver is an extension of the teacher. All District policies are observed on district transportation. Students are to follow all directives of the driver.

2. Students are required to board and exit the bus at assigned bus (home) and campus stops only.

3. Bus routes are designed to provide transportation for students to their designated bus (home) stop, with maximum loading capacity.
4. Specific morning "Pull-Off" or afternoon "Drop-Off" times are estimations created by a computer. Therefore, students are encouraged to be at the bus pick-up location at least 10-15 minutes early.
5. Several factors can cause the bus to be delayed (1st week of school, railroad tracks, red lights).
6. All Pre-K & K riders must have a parent/guardian present at the bus stop (not waiting in a vehicle) in order to exit the bus.
7. Loading at the bus stop as safely and quickly as possible will minimize the frustration from other vehicles waiting for the bus to load. Increased frustration tends to equate to poor unsafe choices by other drivers.

#### **WAITING FOR THE BUS:**

1. Bus drivers are to approach scheduled locations utilizing amber warning lights (AWL). If the student is not visible at the pickup point at the regularly scheduled time, the driver may then turn off the AWL and proceed to the next pickup point without coming to a full stop. Therefore, it is important that students are at the pickup point at least 10-15 minutes early.
2. If a student misses their bus, they are to go home immediately or go back into the school to contact their parent or guardian.
3. Parents should instruct their children on the proper procedures to follow if they miss their bus.
4. Students are to stand on the sidewalk or back from the roadway at all times while waiting for the bus. Students are not allowed to interfere with property at any bus stop. i.e. vehicles, toys in the front yard, fences or front doors.
5. When the bus approaches, students are to form one line and be prepared to load immediately.
6. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop.
7. Parents are responsible for providing transportation to/from school when a child misses the bus.

### **LOADING THE BUS:**

1. Do not push or shove when entering the bus.
2. Use the handrail and step up one step at a time.
3. Go directly to your assigned seat. The bus is not allowed to move until all students are seated.

### **DEPARTING THE BUS:**

1. Stay seated until the bus is completely stopped.
2. Use the handrail and take one step at a time when leaving the bus.
3. Wait for your turn to leave the bus.
4. Stay clear of the bus when departing. Do not chase, touch, or hang onto the bus as it pulls away.
5. If any article drops or rolls under the bus, do not go after it. Ask the driver for help. If the driver is leaving the site, wait until the bus is gone to retrieve the item.

### **CROSSING A STREET:**

Every attempt has been made to establish bus routes that prevent students from crossing streets. If a road crossing is inevitable, the following procedures must be followed:

1. All students living on the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point 10 to 12 feet in front of the bumper and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross.
2. Students are to check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. NEVER CROSS THE ROAD BEHIND THE BUS.
4. Students should be alert for vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading or unloading students.
5. Cross all streets at intersections when possible and obey traffic signals and signs on the way home.

### **ACCIDENTS OR EMERGENCIES:**

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. If you must leave the bus, stay in a group.
3. The following procedures will be used for evacuation in an emergency situation:
  - a. The student nearest the door will be directed to open the door and hold it open.
  - b. Leave the bus in a single file, as quietly as possible.
  - c. Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door.
  - d. Follow the driver's instructions completely.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR TRIPS:**

1. Regular bus rules apply to all school-sponsored events.
2. Discipline will be the responsibility of the building administrator and the trip sponsor.
3. Strict loading and unloading time schedules will be allowed.
4. The bus must return clean from the trip.
5. At the principal's discretion, students suspended from regular transportation may not be eligible for extracurricular trips.

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

The rules of conduct on the school bus include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Seats are assigned by the driver.
2. Students must remain seated in their assigned seat at all times. For safety reasons, students are considered safely seated when they are facing the front, feet out of the aisle, their back to the seat (not backpack), and not sitting on anything, including their legs, books, etc. Students are not allowed to sit on the floor.

3. Keep your hands to yourself.
4. Normal conversation between students in the same seat is permitted, but any loud talking or noises may distract the driver and create an unsafe condition. Drivers may switch on interior lights (or other means) as a signal for students to remain quiet.
5. All students will remain quiet when the bus is approaching and while crossing a railroad crossing.
6. Excessive or malicious teasing will not be tolerated.
7. The use of profane or vulgar language will not be tolerated while on the bus.
8. Arms, head and other parts of the body are to be kept inside the bus at all times.
9. Do not throw objects inside or out of the bus.
10. Students are strictly prohibited from activating emergency exit latches (windows/doors), unless directed by driver/bus aide, or in case of true emergency. This can easily distract the driver, and/or open the exit creating an unsafe situation, especially while the bus is moving.
11. Do not mark, cut, scratch (or enlarge a cut/scratch) or dismantle any part of the bus or its contents. The student/parents are responsible for the cost of the repairs, including parts and labor. Transportation privileges may be denied until arrangement for payment is made and the level of discipline is satisfied.
12. All personal items must remain in students' bags or purses, including footballs, basketballs, writing devices, skateboards, etc. while on the bus. They are not to be played with or passed around to others. It is encouraged that students keep all items in their backpack, so as not to cause delay when approaching the bus stop to exit the bus.
13. Keep books, packages, coats and all other personal items out of the aisle.
14. All carry-on items will be held in the student's lap, including band instruments. Nothing will be allowed in the aisle or block the exits. Carry-on items are not allowed to take the seat of a student. Items that block the view of the Driver are not permitted.
15. Students who allow their electronic devices, including cell phones and games, etc., to become a distraction/disruption to the driver will be directed to put item(s) away until they exit the bus. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. Students are to have the sound "off"

or use headphones that do not distract the driver. If a student cannot hear the driver because of the volume of the device, and the driver has to repeat directions, this will be viewed as a distraction to the driver.

**PROHIBITED ITEMS:**

1. All tobacco products, lighters, matches, and “E-Cigarettes”
2. All alcoholic beverages.
3. Glass containers.
4. Weapons, such as guns, knives, brass knuckles, etc. or any object resembling a weapon.
5. Explosive devices or any object resembling an explosive device.
6. Harmful or flammable chemicals (alcohol, stink bombs, perfume or aerosol)
7. Laser lights or laser pointers.
8. Rubber bands, water balloons, paintballs
9. Any object (musical instrument, shop/science/history project, etc.), which is too large to be held safely in the student’s lap, and not take the seat of another student.
10. All food and drinks, gum, etc.
11. All/Any animals, insects or reptiles.
12. Other items deemed by the driver as unsafe to transport on the bus.

**DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES:**

An administrator will notify the parent by telephone, email or mail concerning disciplinary violations. If a student has bus privileges revoked (temporarily or permanently), they are still required to attend school.

**MINOR BUS DISCIPLINE:**

For most Minor Discipline issues, a bus referral may be issued after the driver has given a verbal warning and a change of seat assignment has taken place. The parent will then be



contacted by the Transportation Director (or designee) and informed of the violation, where the parent will be encouraged to go over safety rules with their child in order to help prevent future occurrences that would result in removal of bus privileges. All violations will be sent to campus administrators, where campus consequences may also be assigned.

**“Progressive Discipline” will be used to encourage safe behaviors and lessen misbehavior and distractions to the driver. Therefore, continued safety violations will result in an increasing number of days removed from the bus. If behavior becomes habitual, or a student is intentionally attempting to distract the driver, students may have riding privileges revoked for the remainder of the school year.**

### **MAJOR OFFENSE (Code of Conduct):**

Major offenses endanger the safety and well-being of the passengers (and driver) on the school bus. They include, but are not limited to, major distractions to drivers, fighting, sexual misconduct, disorderly conduct, disruption of public transportation, destruction of school property, assault, criminal mischief, and terroristic and/or direct threats toward the driver or any passenger. Major offenses may result in removal from bus (temporarily or permanently), and will be sent to the campus administration, which could result in removal of bus privileges for a period ranging from ten to 180 days depending on the level of offense and prior discipline referrals. Other disciplinary consequences may also be applied including placement in the District’s Alternative Education Program. Law enforcement officials may be notified for major offenses, and tickets may be issued, where students do not receive transportation due to misbehavior.

### **DISRUPTION OF TRANSPORTATION:**

***It is a violation of state law (TEC 37.126) for non-riders to board a school bus or to impede its progress. Violators will be prosecuted.***

Once a student has boarded the bus, they will be dropped off at their designated stop. Because the bus driver does not have a way to verify custody, we do not allow anyone to remove a student from the bus.

We also ask parents not to attempt to stop or delay the bus. Please call the Transportation Department if you have a concern or need to talk with the bus driver. Do not approach them at the bus stop or attempt to board the bus.