

## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

Conduct of students on the school bus is an important factor in the safe transportation of school students. Students who misbehave can jeopardize the safety and welfare of other students.

Because discipline can be a problem on the school bus, please be aware the School District will exercise their right to file disorderly conduct charges for certain student actions. Examples are as follows: standing on the bus, moving about the bus while it is in motion, excessively loud and boisterous talk, harassment of other students or the bus driver, leaning out or throwing things out the window, or any activity that distracts the driver from watching the road and practicing good driving techniques. The above are examples of student actions and are not limited to those listed.

**What does filing disorderly conduct charges mean to you?** This means that after the charges are filed and the student is served with the citation from the police, a hearing will be held before the District Justice. If the student is found guilty, the charge may result in a \$300 to \$400 fine and possible other consequences.

The school district will provide all possible evidence to the District Justice including the digital recordings from the school buses.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

In order to maintain a safe and efficient school bus transportation program, the following rules and regulations have been established:

- 1. Students are required to be at their bus stop at least five (5) minutes earlier than their established time. If a student is not standing at the bus stop, the bus is not required to stop.**
2. Students are not permitted to ride multiple buses or use multiple bus stops in the afternoon with the exception of Fridays. All students are assigned to **one** bus stop for the afternoon trip home from school. On Fridays, students are permitted to ride a bus route different from their Monday through Thursday route; however, it must be the same bus route every Friday. Any student attempting to ride a bus other than their assigned bus will be directed to either their assigned bus or to the principal's office.
3. Students are not permitted to ride a bus other than his/her assigned bus without written permission from the school office. Bus passes will only be issued for students to ride a bus other than their assigned bus if it is determined by the building principal to be necessary for campus-based academic purposes or for the safety and well-being of the student. **If you are unable to be at the bus stop and do not want your child dropped off, either communicate with your emergency contact to be at the bus stop or contact Smith Bus Company at (724) 459-6930 and your child will be taken back to the bus company to await your arrival.**
4. PreK and Kindergarten parents are required to have a designated individual at the bus stop to receive their student or designate another student riding the bus to take the student off the bus. A limit of **four (4) designees including parents/guardians**, will be permitted for each student. All individuals receiving a student from the bus **must be at the bus stop** to receive the student. In the event of an emergency and you are unable to get to the bus stop or have someone at the bus stop, please call Smith Bus Company at (724) 459-6930 to have your child remain on the bus and taken back to the bus company or school to await your arrival. **Please know your child's bus route number. Talk with your child about staying on the bus if they do not see you or your designee at the bus stop.** After the third incident that a call is made to a parent/guardian that no one is at the bus stop to receive a kindergarten/PreK student, the student WILL NOT be permitted to ride the bus in the afternoon for one (1) week and will be parent pickup. After the fourth incident, a student will be parent pick up for a period of two (2) weeks and after the fifth incident there will be a referral made to Children & Youth Services and the student will be parent pickup for the remainder of the school year.
5. Students should board the bus and remain seated throughout the bus ride. Students will receive assigned seating and must sit in that seat for the entire school year **OR** until the bus driver reassigns seats.
6. Students are not permitted to throw anything out the windows or within the bus. Keep hands, arms, and head inside the bus at all times.
7. Students should listen to the bus driver and follow his/her directions and talk quietly so the driver is not distracted. Students are not permitted to use vulgarity on the bus.
8. Students must remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop before making an attempt to get off the bus. **DO NOT** walk in the aisle way while the bus is still moving.
9. Food or drink is only permitted on the school bus at the discretion of the bus driver.
10. **SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION** – Students riding special transportation routes to public school or private/non-public schools are required to comply with all transportation guidelines. A discussion between the parents and school district will occur at the time special transportation arrangements are made dictating whether parents are required to be at the bus stop to receive the student from the vehicle. At no time will a bus/van driver, bus/van aide or nurse depart the vehicle in order to make the parents aware that the vehicle is waiting for them to receive their child. If a decision is made as part of the placement/IEP meeting, that a parent must receive the child from the vehicle and the parent is not available at the stop, the student will be taken back to the school and wait until a parent arrives to pick up the student. Due to unpredictable route changes, parents/guardians should always be at the bus stop at least five (5) minutes earlier than the estimated time both in the morning and afternoon.

Failure of students to comply with the above will cause disciplinary actions.

**The River Valley School District reserves the right to use video and audio recording devices on the school buses and utilize video/audio taping as a method of determining student discipline. Please refer to student handbook or Policy #810-Transportation.**

## **DISCIPLINE**

1. **Students riding the school buses are under the direct supervision of the bus driver.** The bus driver has the authority to maintain a safe, orderly environment on the bus at all times and may administer the following disciplinary actions:
  - a. Talk with the student/parents about the student's misconduct.
  - b. Change the student's seat, ask student to lower their voice, loss of window privileges, etc.
  - c. Report student to building principal after the third warning.
2. If a student continually misbehaves, the driver will report the student to the building principal to handle discipline. The driver shall record, in writing, each verbal warning and restriction of bus privileges.

When it is necessary for the driver to issue a Bus Conduct Report to the principal, one of the following discipline measures will occur:

### **Elementary:**

**1<sup>st</sup> notice:** Student will be given a warning and a copy of the Bus Conduct Report will be sent home.

**2<sup>nd</sup> notice:** Student will be given three (3) days suspension of bus privileges and a copy of the Bus Conduct Report will be sent home.

**3<sup>rd</sup> notice:** Student will be given five (5) days suspension of bus privileges and a copy of the Bus Conduct Report will be sent home.

**4<sup>th</sup> notice:** Student will be given ten (10) days suspension of bus privileges with a possibility of suspension of privileges for the remainder of the year and a copy of the Bus Conduct Report will be sent home.

### **Secondary:**

**1<sup>st</sup> notice:** Student will be given a warning and a copy of the Bus Conduct Report will be sent home.

**2<sup>nd</sup> notice:** Student will be given three (3) days suspension of bus privileges and a copy of the Bus Conduct Report will be sent home.

**3<sup>rd</sup> notice:** Student will be given five (5) days suspension of bus privileges and a copy of the Bus Conduct Report will be sent home. **Students attending ICTC may lose the privilege to attend ICTC and will have to remain at their respective building for instruction.** Parents will be required to meet with the Principal prior to child getting back on the bus.

**4<sup>th</sup> notice:** Student will be given ten (10) days suspension of bus privileges with a possibility of suspension of privileges for the remainder of the year.

Immediate suspension of school bus privileges and filing of a disorderly conduct charge, at the discretion of the building principal or in accordance with school board policy, will be issued upon any of the following infractions:

- Personal Assault (pushing, hitting, tripping, kicking, slapping, grabbing, spitting at, pulling hair, pinching, or continued verbal abuse)
- Fighting (violent behavior, intent to injure, punches to face, etc.)
- Threatening another person with an object
- Setting off firecrackers or "poppers"
- Use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or drugs on the bus
- Possession of alcoholic beverages or drugs on the bus
- Incident was recorded on video/audio
- Repeated misbehavior on the school bus after receiving official warning
- Please refer to Policy #237 on the District website regarding the use of electronic devices.

## **WEATHER**

When inclement weather does not permit school buses to run on a regular schedule due to poor road conditions, the following guidelines will be followed. Parents will be notified via the emergency notification system, the radio and TV stations.

**One Hour Delay** – All buses will run one hour later than the normally scheduled time.

**Two Hour Delay** – All buses will run two hours later than the normally scheduled time

**Early Dismissal** – In the event that students are dismissed early from school, parents will be notified via the emergency notification system, radio and television stations.

Please tune in to the following radio/TV stations for reports regarding our school district: Radio stations – WDAD, WCCS, KDKA 1020, 106.3-Cat Country. Television stations – WTAJ-Channel 10, KDKA-Channel 2, WPSX, WPXI-Channel 11, WTAE-Channel 4.

In the event that the school bus is unable to safely travel your road and you are unable to transport your child to school, the day will be considered an excused absence. Each school office will be given a list of the areas that the school buses were not able to travel for verification of excuses.

If road conditions improve during the transporting of secondary students and the bus is able to reach the elementary students in an area they were not able to travel earlier, your secondary student should ride the elementary bus. **If the elementary bus is available for secondary students to ride, they will not be given an excused absence for the day they miss.**

If you have any questions regarding a bus not picking up or dropping off your child, please call Smith Bus Company at (724) 459-6930. Discipline issues, address changes and stop changes should be directed to the child's school office. All other questions regarding transportation should be directed to Larissa Csanyi, Director of Transportation and Student Information Systems, at (724) 343-8421.