

Children will be more comfortable if they understand the behavioral and safety expectations for riding the bus. Help prepare your child by having them take the safety pledge.



SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PLEDGE

I promise to:

Be respectful of the driver – listen and follow the rules

Stay in my seat, facing forward, while the bus is in motion

Keep the aisle clear of feet, book bags and instruments

Talk quietly and be polite to others

Tell the driver if I drop something outside the bus and wait for him/her to tell me it's safe to pick it up

I will not:

Throw anything inside or outside of the bus

Stick my hands or objects outside the window

Eat or drink on the bus

Litter, write on or damage the bus in any way

Important Contact Information

If you think your child's bus is late or has arrived early, call First Student. They will radio the driver and check on the location of the bus. If your child loses an item on the bus, please call First Student directly. Concerns about bus and driver safety should be immediately reported to Buffy Barry at Westport Public Schools.

FIRST STUDENT(203) 293-0574

304 Post Road East
Location Manager: Liz Sierra
Dispatcher: Alixa Bailey

Westport Public Schools.....(203) 341-1754

Buffy Barry
Coordinator of Transportation and Other Business Services
bbarry@westportps.org

Dismissal Changes.....www.schooldismissalmanager.com

Weather-related cancellations/delays.....(203) 341-1SNO

District website.....westportps.org

Coleytown Elementary School.....(203) 341-1700

65 Easton Road
Janna Sirowich, Principal
jsirowich@westportps.org

Greens Farms Elementary School.....(203) 222-3600

17 Morningside Drive South
Brian Byrne, Principal
bbyrne@westportps.org

Kings Highway Elementary School.....(203) 341-1800

125 Post Road West
Tracey Carbone, Principal
tcarbone@westportps.org

Long Lots Elementary School.....(203) 341-1900

13 Hyde Lane
Kimberly Ambrosio, Principal
kambrosio@westportps.org

Saugatuck Elementary School.....(203) 221-2900

170 Riverside Avenue
Elizabeth Messler, Principal
emessler@westportps.org

Welcome to Kindergarten!

Let's get ready to ride!



2023 - 2024

Parent Information Guide

One of the most eagerly anticipated experiences for kindergarten students is riding the “big kids” bus. When you register your child for Kindergarten, you automatically register them for transportation. Please encourage your child to ride the bus during the first week of school so that they can become familiar with the bus procedures and their driver. Beginning with the first day of school, kindergarten students will have a regular, full day schedule. Saugatuck Elementary School will dismiss at 3:15 and all other elementary schools will dismiss at 3:45.

Be assured that The Westport Public School district is committed to providing safe, efficient and reliable transportation services for your children. The information contained in this brochure will help you prepare your child for “the big day” and to make you aware of important facts about our transportation services.

Bus Stops Basics

Bus routes will be published the week before school starts and posted on the district website (www.westportps.org). Parents can access this information using the drop down menu under Quick Links.

All students are assigned to a centrally located bus stop that efficiently accommodates all students within the allotted time. District policy allows for a maximum walking distance of ½ mile to a bus stop for Grades K-5. Please be aware that buses do not enter cul-de-sacs under ½ mile, nor do they travel on private roadways.

Students should be at the bus stop at least 5 - 10 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. After the first two weeks of school, pick up times for each stop should be well established. Please bear in mind that adverse weather conditions, traffic or occasional mechanical problems can delay buses.

Children are picked up and dropped off at the same bus stop. If they are to be dropped off at an alternate location (ex. daycare center), please notify the school in writing and make the change on the School

Dismissal Manager Website. Please note that transportation is only provided to existing bus stops within the school district.

Upon arrival at school, a faculty member will check in the buses and greet the children. Additional staff members will be on hand to help Kindergarteners find their classroom. Staff will also be on duty as the children board the buses at dismissal.

A parent or other designated adult must meet kindergarten students upon arrival at the bus stop at the end of the day. A designated adult is someone selected by you and placed on file with the school and/or bus driver. If circumstances dictate that another person pick up your child on a given day, you must notify the school in writing. Drivers are instructed not to release Kindergarten students if no designated individual is at the stop. In the event this happens, your child will remain on the bus for the duration of the route and then returned to their school.

Safety Information

Bus transportation is statistically the safest method of transportation and student safety is our top priority. Parents play an essential role and are urged to review these simple guidelines:

- * Check children’s clothing and book bags for potential hazards. Long drawstrings, straps, sashes, belts that hang loosely or long backpack straps can be dangerous if caught in the bus handrail or door.
- * Always accompany your child to and from the bus stop.
- * Wait calmly and stay back from a busy street. If children need to cross a road, teach them to wait until the bus arrives, comes to a complete stop and the bus driver nods to them that all traffic has stopped and it is safe to cross.
- * Teach your child to cross where the bus driver can see them. Cross 10 feet in front of the bus

only – never behind the bus! Remind children that they should never bend down in front of the bus to pick something up.

- * Always walk when approaching the bus, never run.
- * Encourage children to use the handrail when getting on or off the bus and remind them to sit in the first two or three rows.
- * Encourage students choosing to sit with a Kindergarten sibling must sit in these front rows.

Due to conflicting research regarding their safety, seatbelts are not required on school buses. The construction of the bus and the padding on the seats are designed for added safety.

Remember that flashing yellow lights mean caution – the bus is about to stop. Flashing red lights mean stop – children are getting on or off the bus. Join with other parents to monitor your bus stop.

Bus evacuation drills are held at each school two times a year, usually in October and May. Immediately prior to the drill, the school bus driver will review evacuation procedures with students and inform them that they will practice this skill. School staff will be on hand to assist with the drill.

Conduct

The school day begins and ends at the bus stop, therefore the same rules and expectations for behaving in a safe, responsible and respectful manner apply on the bus. Inappropriate behavior on the bus will result in logical consequences that may include suspension from the bus.

Repeated behavioral infractions will be reported to the school administrator who will determine what actions will be taken.

Drivers have the discretion to assign seats to some or all students to insure the safety of all.