

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #414

MINNEOTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS - MINNEOTA, MN 56264

August 2023

Viking Families and Students:

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! Minneota Public Schools and 4.0 Bus Service strive to provide safe and efficient school bus transportation to and from school and for various activities. It is necessary to have rules and regulations to protect each student's welfare and to share those rules with students and families. Every child, regardless of age, has responsibility for following these rules. They should realize that carelessness, thoughtlessness, or misconduct can cause injury to themselves or their fellow passengers.

Please review the safety rules listed below with your child.

- I. Only students and staff assigned to a school bus by the school authority may be transported.
- II. If your child wishes to ride on another bus to get off at a friend's home, they must present a note to their respective Principal (or their designee) in advance for permission before getting on that bus.
- III. The parent/guardian may designate, pursuant to school district policy, a day care facility, respite care facility, the residence of a relative, or the residence of a person chosen by the parent or guardian as the address of the student for transportation purposes. The address must be in the attendance area of the assigned school and meet all other eligibility requirements.
- IV. Conduct on School Buses and Consequences for Misbehavior
Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. The school district's general student behavior rules are in effect for all students on school buses, including nonpublic and charter school students.

Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will be imposed by 4.0 Bus Service, a Principal or school administrator, and/or the school district under adopted administrative discipline procedures. In addition, all school bus/bus stop misconduct will be reported to the school district's transportation safety director. Serious misconduct may be reported to local law enforcement.

A. School Bus and Bus Stop Rules

The 4.0 Bus Service and the school district school bus safety rules are to be posted on every bus. The Bus Service's and school district's discipline procedures must be followed if these rules are broken. In most circumstances, consequences are

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progressive and may include suspension of bus privileges. The school bus driver must report unacceptable behavior to the 4.0 Bus Service manager.

B. Rules at the Bus Stop

1. Get to your bus stop [at least] 3 minutes before your scheduled pickup time. The school bus driver will not wait for late students.
2. Respect the property of others while waiting at your bus stop.
3. Keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself.
4. Use appropriate language.
5. Stay away from the street, road, or highway when waiting for the bus.
6. Wait until the bus stops before approaching the bus.
7. After getting off the bus, move away from the bus.
8. If you must cross the street, always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you. Wait for the driver to signal to you before crossing the street.
9. Do not fight, harass, intimidate, or engage in horseplay.
10. Do not use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.
11. Follow all other School District policies.

C. Rules on the Bus

1. Immediately follow the directions the driver gives.
2. Sit in your seat, facing forward.
3. Talk quietly and use appropriate language.
4. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
5. Keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself.
6. Do not fight, harass, intimidate, or engage in horseplay.
7. Do not throw any objects.
8. No eating, drinking, or use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.
9. Do not bring any weapons or dangerous objects on the school bus.
10. Do not damage the school bus.
11. Eating or drinking on the bus is left to the bus driver's discretion.
12. Follow all other School District policies.

D. Consequences

Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will apply to all regular and late routes, co-curricular events and extracurricular events (field trips or competitions). Decisions regarding a student's ability to ride the bus in connection with cocurricular and extracurricular events (for example, field trips or competitions) will be in the sole discretion of the school district. Parents or guardians will be notified of any suspension of bus privileges. All decisions are made by 4.0 Bus Service in conjunction with the school district.

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Consequences for PreK-12 Students

1st offense	Warning & parent notification
2nd offense	Up to a 3 school-day suspension from riding the bus & parent notification
3rd offense	Up to a 5 school-day suspension from riding the bus & parent notification
Further offenses	Individually considered. Students may be suspended for longer periods of time, including the remainder of the school year.

1. Other Discipline

Based on the severity of a student's conduct, more serious consequences may be imposed at any time. Depending on the nature of the offense, consequences such as suspension or expulsion from school may also result from school bus/bus stop misconduct.

2. Records

Records of school bus/bus stop misconduct will be forwarded to the individual school building and will be retained in the same manner as other student discipline records. Reports of student misbehavior on a school bus or in a bus-loading or unloading area that are reasonably believed to cause an immediate and substantial danger to the student or surrounding persons or property shall be provided by the school district to local law enforcement and the Department of Public Safety in accordance with state and federal law. Records may also be maintained in the transportation office.

3. Vandalism/Bus Damage

Students damaging school buses will be responsible for the damages. Failure to pay for such damages (or make arrangements to pay) within two weeks may result in the loss of bus privileges until paid.

4. Notice

School bus and bus stop rules and consequences for violations of these rules will be reviewed with students annually and copies of these rules will be made available to students. School bus rules are to be posted on each school bus.

5. Criminal Conduct

In cases involving criminal conduct (for example: assault, weapons possession, or vandalism), the appropriate school district personal and local law enforcement officials will be informed.

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School Late Starts and School Closing Procedures

Delaying or closing school because of bad weather is a decision that is often made with short notice to students, parents, and staff. I have found that a late start due to fog or limited visibility is one of the more difficult decisions, as fog and limited visibility can be spotty or move in after buses are sent out. For me, these decisions are based on common sense, and I tend to make decision based on the safety of our students, staff, and families.

Given the weather conditions when school is open, parents may not want to send their child on the bus – while we always want your child in school, we respect the parental right to keep them home. We utilize SchoolMessenger as the initial contact with families when there is an early dismissal, late start, or school is cancelled for the day. Additionally, a list of radio/TV stations that the school contacts are noted in student handbooks.

Several tasks occur before deciding to either delay or close school. Depending on weather and road conditions, the decision on a late start or close for the day is made as early as possible, typically before 6:00 a.m. It is possible weather will dictate a variation.

If we proceed with a late start, the decision to remain closed or open two hours late is made as early as possible, typically around 8:00 a.m. **Breakfast is canceled for the day when school is on a two-hour late start. Morning school activities and field trips will also be canceled or rescheduled for another day.**

All school activities, practices, and community education events are canceled if school is closed early or canceled for the day. The Activities Director may make exceptions, in consultation with other school staff and administration.

Once the decision is made to close early, radio/TV stations will be notified, and an announcement is made through SchoolMessenger that the school will be closing, including the time buses will leave. Both staff and students should have an alternate place to stay if the weather does not permit them to go home.

Given the use of cell phones, word travels quickly on school day changes which sometimes is helpful and other times causes confusion. School closing procedures allow staff to have an orderly process for getting the students home safely.

My first priority continues to be the safety and well-being of our students, staff, bus drivers, and families. For questions, please reach out to the elementary, high school, or district office.

In education,



Scott Monson
Superintendent