

MANKATO AREA SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION RULES AND REGULATIONS

Safety is the primary concern in transporting students. Safety on school buses is the shared responsibility of students, parents, school staff, bus contractors and bus drivers.

Parents/guardians should read and explain these rules to their children. We ask your cooperation in helping us provide a safe and pleasant ride for all students by impressing upon your child(ren) the importance of bus safety and courtesy at the bus stop and on the bus.

Rules on the Bus

For a safe and pleasant ride

1. Immediately follow directions of the driver, do not delay loading/unloading procedures.
2. Always sit, face forward and do not move around.
3. Talk quietly, be courteous and use appropriate language.
4. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
5. Keep your arms, legs and belongings to yourself.
6. No fighting, harassing, intimidating or horseplay.
7. Do not throw any objects in or out of the bus or damage the bus.
8. No eating, drinking, matches, lighters or use of tobacco or electronic cigarettes.
9. At railroad tracks be absolutely silent.
10. No verbal and/or physical sexual harassment.

BREAKING THE RULES

1. Student will be verbally warned.
2. Student will be issued a pink slip.
3. School Bus Incident Report will be issued and transportation denied.

NOTE: Dangerous or destructive offenses will result in the IMMEDIATE suspension of busing privileges with NO warning given.

Rules at the Bus Stop

1. Students should get to their bus stop 7 to 10 minutes before the scheduled pick up time.
2. Students should respect the property of others while waiting at their bus stop.
3. Students must stay away from the street when waiting for the bus. In the winter, they should never walk or play on the snow banks.
4. Students that must cross the street should always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see them. Students should wait for the drivers' signal before crossing the street
5. **REMINDER:** Parents/Guardians are responsible for the discipline of their students at the bus stop. It is **NOT** the responsibility of the bus operators or the school district. Severe problems should be directed to the Police Dept.

Getting on the Bus

1. Stand several feet back from where the bus will stop.
2. Line up and wait your turn. Wait for the bus to stop before moving forward to board it. Pushing and shoving causes accidents.
3. Use the hand rail when boarding the bus & show the driver your pass.
4. Take a seat quickly; delays in getting seated may cause buses to be late.
5. Do not save seats for friends.
6. On many buses students must sit three to a seat. Move over so each student can be seated.

Riding the Bus

1. No radios, musical instruments, school projects, skateboards, sports equipment of any kind, or other large items you cannot hold on your lap.
2. Do not carry articles such as guns, gas cans, fireworks, sharp instruments, electronic cigarettes, animals or any other objects of a dangerous or objectionable nature onto the bus.

3. Do not throw things on the bus, or out of the windows.
4. Immediately report to the driver any damage to a bus.
5. Use the bus for transportation to and from school only.
6. In cases of emergency, follow the driver's instructions.
7. Drivers will pick up and drop off students only at designated bus stops.

Leaving the Bus

1. Don't get up until the bus stops.
2. Pushing and shoving will not be allowed.
3. **IMMEDIATELY** move away from the bus.
4. If you drop something, **DO NOT** pick it up. Wait until the bus leaves and ask an older person to get it. (Have your teacher staple your papers together so they can't blow away easily)
5. If you have to cross the road, walk in front of the bus about 10 giant steps so you can see the driver's face. **IF YOU CAN SEE THE DRIVERS'S EYES- THE DRIVER CAN SEE YOU!**
6. If you do not have to cross the road, stay away from the side of the bus.
7. **ALWAYS REMEMBER-** if you can touch the side of the bus, then you are **TOO** close.
8. **Absolutely** no "skitching"- holding onto the back of the bus while it is moving on snowy and icy roads. Skitching is dangerous and illegal.

Change of Address

If you move during the school year, please visit the Central Registration office to update your address and re-register for busing.

Bus Assignments

We are required by the state to transport eligible children to and from home or child care. Allowing children to ride buses they are not assigned to causes overcrowding on those buses, preventing students that are assigned to them from having a safe and comfortable ride.

Consistency of routes is also very important for safety. Therefore, students will **NOT** be allowed to ride with friends for any reason. Transportation will **NOT** be provided for students to attend parties, meetings, medical appointments, sports practice/events or going home with friends etc.

Route Timing

When school opens in the fall, inconsistencies in route timings are often experienced. Fortunately, the weather during that time of the year is usually quite pleasant and we appreciate your patience as drivers get familiar with their routes and riders. As the year progresses the times should be consistent, but it is still a good idea to be at the bus stop 10 minutes ahead of the scheduled pick-up time. The weather, traffic, construction, and students not riding can affect the timing.

Bus Stops

Bus stops are determined by need and location of bus riders and may change from year to year. Students must use the stop assigned. Bus drivers are **NOT** required to stop if there are no students waiting, so it is important for students to be at the stop a few minutes before the bus time, waiting to board the bus.

Eligibility

Students in grades K-5 must live at least one mile from school and students in grades 6-12 must live at least two miles from school to be eligible for transportation. The district will bus students (K-5) to and from a child care facility if it meets the criteria listed below.

Child Care

Transportation can be provided to and/or from child care if the following circumstances exist:

1. The child care is in the attendance area of the school your child attends.
2. The child care address is more than one mile from school.
3. Only students in grades **K-5** will be eligible for Day Care Transportation.
4. Only one home per pupil can be designated for transportation purposes and transfers between bus companies will NOT be allowed.

Requests for transportation from child care must be made **EVERY** school year by using the Mankato Area Schools Day Care Transportation Form, available on the website, at Central Registration, or at the elementary schools.

Attendance Exceptions

Students with exceptions to attend a school other than the one they are assigned to are NOT eligible for transportation unless they are using an eligible child care address (K-5).

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, some route adjustments may be necessary. On mornings when schools are closed due to weather, every effort will be made to inform local radio & TV stations by 6 AM. If schools are dismissed early, radio/ TV announcements will also keep you informed. **For all the latest information in school closings related to weather call 386-4777.**

Medical Conditions

If your child has any medical conditions (i.e., subject to seizures, on daily medications, severe allergies) which may be a problem during the bus ride, please call the Transportation Office to request a medical form. This completed form will be carried on the bus(es) your child rides and used if a medical emergency occurs.

Discipline Procedures

If a student does not follow the rules on the bus, the driver will try to resolve the problem as explained in the “Rules on the Bus” section. If the driver cannot obtain cooperation from the student, a discipline report will be filed. Telephone conversations and/or written notification will be made to the student and parent/guardian concerning all incidents. A copy of the Incident Report will also be sent to the principal. Video cameras will be used as a tool for improved safety and student management.

***Consequences for breaking the rules are as follows.**

First Offense:

1. Recorded as a verbal warning.

Second Offense

1. Students will be given a pink warning card and denied transportation, beginning the following day, until the card is signed by the student and their parent/guardian and returned to the driver.
2. A copy of the signed card will be sent to the Mankato Area Public Schools Transportation Office.
3. Parents/guardians will receive a copy of the signed pink warning card along with a copy of the bus Rules and Regulations from the Mankato Area Public Schools Transportation Office.

Third Offense

1. A School Bus Incident Report will be issued by the Bus Operator.
2. Student will be given a **3-5 day suspension** (or longer) of bus privileges, depending on the degree of the offense, beginning with the following day.
3. The incident Report will be sent to the Transportation Office for review.
4. Parents/guardians will be verbally notified by the Bus Operator.

5. Parents/guardians will receive a copy of the Incident Report along with a copy of the Bus Riding Rules and Regulations from the Mankato Area Public Schools Transportation Office.
6. The building principal will also receive a copy of the Incident Report.

Fourth Offense

1. A School Bus Incident Report will be issued by the Bus Operator.
2. Student will be given a **10 day suspension** of bus privileges.
3. Same notification procedures as third offense.

Further Offenses:

Each case will be considered individually. Student may be suspended for longer periods of time, including the remainder of the semester or school year. Student will need to surrender their bus pass at time of suspension.

PLEASE NOTE: Students in grades K-5 cannot be denied transportation until their parent/guardians have been notified of the violation.

****Dangerous or destructive offenses will result in suspension of busing privileges. The length of the suspension will be determined by the degree of the offense.**

Students damaging school buses will be responsible for the damages. Failure to pay such damages within two weeks will result in the loss of bus privileges until damages are paid to the bus company.

Videotaping

School buses are equipped to videotape bus riders. A number of cameras will be rotated throughout the buses. Students and bus drivers will not be aware that a camera is on their bus. The video cameras will be used to help monitor the school bus riders to discourage and detect unsafe and inappropriate behavior. Cameras will also be used as a tool for driver training and safety education for children.

Notice

Minnesota law states that transportation by a school is a **PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT**, so protect your privilege with proper conduct at all times.

Parents/Guardians

School buses are to be used to transport students only; no parents/guardians will be allowed to ride.

Bus Passes

All students being transported on a regular bus (NOT a mini bus) **MUST** have a bus pass for their scheduled bus in their possession in order to ride the bus to & from school. **Students must register each school year for a new pass.** A fee of \$5.00 will be charged for **lost** passes payable to the bus operator. Late and new student registrations need to allow at least 5 business days for processing. Students must receive their bus pass before accessing bus services.

REPLACING BUS PASS

1. If your pass is damaged & no longer legible, take it to the office of the school you are attending to receive a new one.
2. If you lose your pass, please notify the bus company. You will be charged \$5.00 for a replacement pass.
3. Students without passes for their scheduled bus will be given 3 verbal warnings at which time they will be given a pink slip.
4. After 5 verbal warnings students will be issued an Incident Report, parents will be called & students will be denied transportation until payment is received for a new pass.

Questions/Concerns

Contact the Bus Operator that serves your area.

1. Palmer Bus Service Inc. 386-0210
2. Yaeger Bus Service Inc. 345-5470
3. Mankato Area Public Schools Transportation Office 387-5949 or 387-3224.