



## **SANGER ISD BUS RIDER SAFETY HANDBOOK**

The Goal of this Bus Rider Safety Handbook is to provide information that will help ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for our children who ride the bus.

The school district is in need of your help and cooperation. It is important that every student understand the standards outlined in this handbook and be encouraged by his or her parents or guardians to follow the rules and regulations. Please read and discuss this handbook with your child(ren).

Video surveillance may be in operation on your child's bus to help maintain a safe and orderly bus environment. Federal law prohibits the school district from releasing the video to any member of the public except law enforcement officials (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act).

All Sanger ISD Campus and Transportation policies and rules are enforceable within 300 feet of any Sanger ISD bus stop or campus.

### **RIDER ELIGIBILITY**

1. All riders shall be registered with the Transportation Center office.
2. We provide transportation on school buses to and from school for those children who live more than two miles away from the school they attend or hazardous routes to be determined by the Board.
3. The Board, after determining eligibility for transportation services, shall allow a parent to designate a child-care facility or the residence of a grandparent of the child instead of the child's residence as the regular location for purposes of obtaining transportation under the system to and from the child's school. Either designated location must be an approved stop on an approved route.
4. All students who use District transportation shall board buses at authorized stops. Authorized bus stops shall be designated annually by the Superintendent or designee. Bus drivers shall load and unload passengers at authorized stops only.
5. Visiting riders are not eligible to ride the bus due to seating charts and capacity.

## **PROHIBITED ITEMS**

Students are not allowed to bring animals or harmful objects on the bus (i.e., weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, fireworks, laser lights, flammables, etc.). Band instruments or class projects are allowed ONLY if they can be held in students' laps and not extended above chin level.

**Education Code 370126 Disruption of Transportation:** Except as provided by Section 37.125, a person commits an offense if the person intentionally disrupts, prevents, or interferes with the lawful transportation of children to or from school or an activity sponsored by a school on a vehicle owned or operated by a county or independent school district. An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor.

## **ACCIDENTS OR EMERGENCIES**

1. Follow the driver's directions.
2. If you must leave the bus, stay in a group.
3. The following procedures will be used in an emergency situation.
  - Students will stay seated and wait for the driver's instructions.
  - Leave the bus in a single file as quickly as possible.
  - Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door.
  - Once outside the bus, follow the driver's direction completely.
  - Students may not leave the scene of the accident until the police officer clears the area.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR TRIPS**

1. Bus rider rules apply to all school-sponsored events.
2. Discipline will be the responsibility of the building principal and the trip sponsor.
3. The bus must return clean when returning from the trip.
4. Students leaving with a parent or guardian must sign out on the Sanger ISD release form.
5. Before leaving a contest, the student must make contact with their respective coach/sponsor.
6. A parent or guardian must sign the student out prior to leaving the contest.

## **PROCEDURES FOR WAITING FOR THE BUS**

1. Be at your bus stop five minutes before time.
2. Students are required to wait a minimum of 20 feet from the edge of the roadway in an orderly group and remain there until the bus has come to a complete stop before loading.
3. Students shall move well away from the side of the bus after leaving the bus.
4. Students are not to rush the bus.
5. Students are not to get the mail from the roadside mailbox until the bus has departed.
6. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop.
7. Parents/guardians should instruct their children on what procedures to follow if the bus is missed.

## **LOADING THE BUS**

1. Scuffling, shoving, hitting, or fighting is prohibited on the bus and at designated bus stops. Students must keep all body parts and personal objects from contacting another student.
2. When the bus approaches, form a line (smallest to largest) and be prepared to load immediately.
3. Use handrails and steps.
4. Go directly to your seat and sit down. The bus will not move until all students are properly seated.

## **SEATING ON THE BUS**

1. All students shall be assigned a specific seat on the bus.
2. Students will be assigned seating from front to back, with the younger students seated closest to the driver.
3. The driver will use seating assignments as a form of student management.
4. Upon parent request, siblings may be asked to sit together. (Older students will move forward).

## **BUS SAFETY RULES AND REGULATIONS**

1. Remain seated at all times.
2. Sit in assigned seats at the driver's discretion.
3. Nothing may be extended out the windows at any time.
4. Emergency doors may not be entered or exited except for emergency purposes.
5. No type of weapon, explosive, fireworks, sharp or pointed articles will be permitted.
6. No type of alcoholic beverage, controlled drug, or substance will be permitted. No tobacco products will be permitted.
7. Students **MUST** follow the driver's and or aide's instructions at all times.
8. Cursing, obscenities, harassment, and scuffling are forbidden.
9. Students must not depart at unauthorized stops unless a school administrator grants approval.
10. No objects may be thrown from the bus windows.
11. Drivers are not required to wait for students at the bus stop or to sound the horn while students come out of their residences. Students must be at the stop before the bus arrives.
12. SISD students and staff are the only persons authorized to board the buses. Parents and guests must receive authorization from administrators to board.
13. No type of animal, bird, or pet is permitted on the bus.
14. Fighting is forbidden.
15. Students may not eat, drink, or litter while on the bus.
16. Students may be denied bus privileges and required to pay for any damage to any part of the bus, including seats.
17. Students may use cell phones on the bus. The device **MUST BE KEPT ON SILENT, OR** earbuds or headphones **MUST** be used. Transportation is **NOT** responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged earbuds, headphones, or devices. **NO PHOTOS OR VIDEOS** may be taken on the bus at any time.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Bus Discipline Procedures: ***RIDING A SCHOOL BUS THAT SERVES THIS DISTRICT IS A PRIVILEGE.*** The driver is recognized as the authority on the bus and has control over daily operations. Cooperation of every rider is necessary for the safety and comfort of all.

1. The Transportation Director and Principal/ Asst. Principal of each campus shall be responsible for enforcing discipline on all buses. All transportation personnel are authorized to ensure that department and district discipline management guidelines are followed.
2. The Transportation Director and Principal/Asst. Principal will investigate a violation and contact parents by phone, mail, or Bus Violation Report if their child is involved in inappropriate behavior. If consequences dictate a suspension, the parent/guardian will be notified by phone or email delivery of the suspension dates.
3. Misconduct will be reported by the driver to the Transportation Director and Principal/Asst. Principal using a Bus Violation Report. Copies of the Bus Violation Reports will be sent to the parent, building principal and placed on file at the Transportation Department Office.

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** The student may be subject to disciplinary action, and written notice will be sent to the parent. The notice will inform the parent that if a second offense is committed, the student will be excluded from riding the bus for a minimum of 5 school days. **For severe behavior problems, a student may be suspended from the bus immediately for the number of days determined appropriate by the transportation director and principal.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** A notice will be sent to the parent advising that the child is excluded from riding the bus for 5 days. The student may be subject to other disciplinary action.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** The student will be excluded from riding the bus for a period of 10 school days. The student will be subject to other disciplinary action.

**4<sup>th</sup> Offense:** The student will be excluded from the bus for the remainder of the semester. The student will be subject to other disciplinary action. Prior to the student being re-admitted to the bus in the next semester, the parent must contact the principal and give concrete assurance that the student's behavior will conform to rules and regulations.

**EXCEPTION: IF A STUDENT'S CONDUCT SERIOUSLY JEOPARDIZES THE SAFETY OF THE OTHER STUDENTS AND/OR THE DRIVER OR ENGAGES IN ANY ILLEGAL ACTIVITY, A SUSPENSION WILL BE IMMEDIATELY PLACED INTO EFFECT.**

## **DISCIPLINE REFERRAL PROCESS**

The bus driver, Director of Transportation, and campus administrators are each responsible for portions of progressive discipline aimed at correcting inappropriate student behavior occurring on buses. The progression of discipline is as follows:

**Verbal Counseling:** Drivers constantly monitor the behavior of their passengers and, as such, regularly provide oral guidance and reminders of appropriate behavior and applicable rules. This counseling may be accompanied by additional on-bus consequences such as temporary seat assignments. Where minor infractions are not corrected, or notable infractions occur, the driver will follow up the verbal counseling with documentation on the student's transportation discipline record. The date and discipline shall be recorded.

**Written Referral:** Where significant misconduct occurs or continued documented verbal counseling has not been effective, the driver may initiate a written referral. The student will be told that a written referral is being submitted to the Director of Transportation. Upon receipt of a written referral, the Director of Transportation will obtain the necessary feedback from the driver of the bus. The Director of Transportation will then notify the Principal or Assistant Principal, who will investigate the violation. The investigation process is subject to include:

- Current referral piece
- Bus Driver communication
- Transportation Director Communication
- Students involved in the infraction and their role in the infraction.
- A student who witnessed the infraction
- Prior bus referral history that has been reported
- Prior disciplinary history

**Suspension of Bus Privilege:** After the parent/guardian has been notified of a Discipline Referral and the possibility of bus suspension, any subsequent written discipline notices may result in the suspension of bus privilege. Once the Transportation Director and/or Principal or Assistant Principal has investigated the referral and determined that suspension is warranted, the parent/guardian will be notified that the suspension will start the next school day. The first suspension will be a minimum of five days. The student may be subject to other disciplinary action.

**Appeal Process:** The student or parent of a student who has been suspended from receiving transportation entitlement may appeal a decision by submitting a formal written request to the respective administrator.