

# **Forney Independent School District**

**School Bus Riders’**

**Safety & Discipline Handbook**

**2024-2025**

**TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**

**2020 Windmill Farms Blvd. FORNEY, TEXAS 75126 (469) 762-4162**



Parents or Guardians:

Transporting students safely to and from school is the highest priority of the FISD Transportation Department.

The Forney Independent School District provides bus transportation as a courtesy service for students residing in the district.

In order to meet the conditions outlined by the State of Texas and provide safe, prompt transportation of students, the school district has adopted standard regulations and procedures and has provided restrictive measures for violations of the rules. They are herein outlined for your information and for the guidance of your student.

The school district is pleased to provide transportation for students and solicits your assistance in helping create a safe, healthy operation. We ask your cooperation with school personnel in developing proper behavior patterns for those students who ride the bus.

If you need information concerning bus routes or student conduct on the bus, call the Transportation Department at 469-762-4162.

Thank you,

Michelle Ramm  
Executive Director of Transportation  
Forney ISD



## General Rules

1. Students will be respectful to the driver and fellow students.
2. Seating assignments will be arranged by the driver and students are to remain in their assigned seat for the duration of the trip.
3. Students will board and leave the bus at their designated stop only.
4. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide transportation to school if their child misses the bus.
5. If students do not ride for five (5) consecutive days the stop will be taken off the route unless parents notify the transportation department.
6. Parents are forbidden to get on the bus. Only authorized school personnel may enter the bus. Questions concerning the bus or a bus driver's actions are to be directed to the Executive Director of Transportation or the Assistant Principal of Transportation. Bus or bus driver concerns will not be addressed at the bus stop. If a parent does get on the bus, the driver will notify dispatch, the Forney ISD Police Department, and the video will be pulled for a possible citation.
7. Do not ask to ride home on another bus with a friend without a signed note from home. Notes must be signed by the student's campus administrator and a bus pass will be given to the student. Parent notes will not be accepted by the driver.

## Procedures for waiting on the bus

1. Be at your stop *ten minutes* before the scheduled pickup time. The driver will not wait or honk.
2. Stand back from the road while waiting for the bus.
3. When the bus approaches, form a line and be prepared to load immediately.
4. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the parking brake has been engaged, and the red loading lights come on.
5. The driver will not pick up a student unless they are at their designated stop.
6. Do not run after the bus after it has pulled away from the stop.

## Loading the Bus

1. Do not push or shove.
2. Be prepared to have your Smart Tag ready to scan.
3. Use handrail and steps. Carry large bags and objects in front of you.
4. Go to your assigned seat immediately. The driver will not leave the stop until all passengers are seated.

## Conduct on the Bus

1. Remain seated at all times. Each student is to remain seated for the duration of the trip, and remain seated until the park brake is applied and the bus door opens.
2. Do not change seats. Students are required to sit in their assigned seat. They cannot refuse to sit in their assigned seat and cannot deny another student a place to sit.
3. Fighting, horseplay, and the use of obscene or vulgar language and/or gestures is forbidden and may result in immediate denial of bus privileges.
4. Do not throw or spit objects inside or outside the bus.
5. Do not mark, cut or scratch any part of the bus.
6. The emergency door and exit controls should be used by students only during supervised drills or actual emergencies.
7. Students shall remain quiet when approaching railroad crossings.
8. Students will not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus. *Water only* is permitted on hot days.
9. Students will face forward for the duration of the trip, and shall keep their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the bus aisle. Keep all body parts inside the bus and to yourself.

**NOTE: Students that engage in conduct considered dangerous to the health and safety of themselves or to others will be subject to immediate emergency removal from the school bus.**

## Getting Off the Bus

1. Stay seated until the bus is completely stopped and the park brake is applied.
2. Have your Smart Tag out and ready to scan.
3. Use the handrail when leaving the bus.
4. Wait for your turn to leave the bus; no pushing or shoving.
5. You must get off at your designated stop.
6. Stay clear of the bus when unloading. Do not chase or hang on to the bus at any time.
7. If any article drops or rolls near or under the bus do not go after it. Go to the door of the bus and ask the driver for help.

# **Dropping Off Pre-Kindergarten – 1<sup>ST</sup> Grade Students**

Parents or a designee must be at the bus door to receive Pre-Kindergarten – 1<sup>st</sup> grade students. If the bus is on schedule and there is no one to receive the student, the driver will radio dispatch and will continue on the route. At the completion of the route the student will be returned to the campus. The parents will be responsible for picking up the student from that location. *If a parent or designated person fails to show up at the bus stop more than 3 times*, a phone call or conference between the parent, Executive Director of Transportation and Operations Manager will be held and an agreement will be made. Students in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and up will be dropped off at their designated stop without a parent or designee. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to make sure arrangements are made to receive your child at the stop.

## **Crossing the Street or Highway**

1. All students living on the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point of 15 feet in front of the right bumper and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross.
2. Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. Never cross the road behind the bus.
4. Watch out for cars that do not stop when the bus is loading and unloading students.
5. Cross all streets at intersections. Obey all traffic signals and signs on your way home.

## **Accidents or Emergencies**

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. If you must leave the bus, stay in a group.
  - The student nearest to the door will open and hold it open
  - Leave the bus in a single file line as quietly as possible.
  - Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door.
  - Once outside the bus, follow the drivers instructions completely
  - Students will not be released to a parent or guardian at the scene of the emergency/accident.

# Prohibited Items

1. Tobacco, alcohol, vapes, glass containers, and balloons
2. Weapons, explosive devices, matches or lighters, harmful drugs, prescription drugs or chemicals.
3. Live animals or insects.
4. Aerosol/spray containers, perfumes or colognes
5. Any object (musical instruments, shop projects, sports equipment, sport balls or baggage) too large to fit under a bus seat or on the student's lap without imposing on the other students sharing the seat. All other items must be kept on the student's lap at all times. Parents/Guardians must arrange for other transportation when large, bulky items must be taken to and from school.

**Drivers are not responsible for articles left on the bus.**

## Use of Cell Phones & Electronic Devices on Buses

**The transportation department will enforce the following bus rules pertaining to cell phones and electronic devices on buses. The use of these items can be detrimental to the safety and well-being of other students and the bus driver.**

### **Cell Phones & Electronic Devices:**

1. Students who allow their cell phones or electronic devices to become a distraction or disruption on the school bus will be asked to put them away. Failure to do so may result in the student being written up on a discipline referral. If the student is written up 3 times or more he/she will be suspended from the bus.
2. Parents / Guardians are asked not to request to speak to the driver on the student's cell phone. The parents should contact the Transportation Department at (469-762-4162).
3. Students are encouraged to contact their parent/guardian when the bus has been delayed (after 15-20 minutes) and they are getting home late. We strive to keep our buses on schedule; however, some delays are beyond our control. When doing so, do not allow the phone use to become a distraction to the driver.
4. Taking pictures or capturing video of other students is prohibited. The driver is not responsible for unauthorized pictures or captured video.
5. All electronic devices/cell phones must have headphones or be placed on mute when in use. External noise from any device is not allowed on the school bus.
6. The use of any electronic device is a privilege. Students may lose this privilege if they fail to follow safety instructions from the driver.

# Discipline

The school bus is an extension of the classroom and the Assistant Principal of Transportation will administer discipline with the assistance from the Executive Director of Transportation. All school board policies that apply to student conduct and other student-related activities apply also to the school bus.

**Cameras will run at all times to record students' behavior for bus safety.**

## DESCRIPTION OF INFRACTIONS

### Category I

#### Minor Infractions

Include, but are not limited to the following: Jumping from seat to seat

Not scanning your Smart Tag to get on/off the bus

Not wearing a seat belt if equipped. (State Law)

Not staying in the seat while the bus is in motion (State Law).

Being disrespectful to the driver

Not following the bus driver's directions.

Screaming, yelling, or making loud and distracting noises

Not keeping hands and feet to self. (Horse playing)

Eating or drinking on the bus.

Not meeting the bus promptly.

Not boarding or exiting the bus at student's designated stop

Putting head, arms, hands, or any object out the window

Chasing after the bus

Horse playing/pushing/shoving

### Category II

#### Major Infractions

Include, but not limited to the following:

Accumulating (3) three minor infractions.

Being defiant or disrespectful to the bus driver.

Instigating a fight

Vandalism or destruction of the school bus.

Abusing or stealing another student's property

Use of tobacco, lighters, vapes, drugs or alcohol.

Any unauthorized use of emergency exits.

Using profanity or making offensive remarks and/or gestures

Using another student's Smart Tag

### Category III

Throwing objects inside, outside, or at the bus.

Lewd conduct

Threatening the driver

Fighting/Bullying

Bringing a weapon on the bus

Any conduct in violation of Texas Education Code Sec 37.001 that is a felony, misdemeanor, or requires immediate removal from the bus

### **The following is an outline of the Bus Discipline Procedure:**

Step 1: The driver will inform the student of the problem behavior. The student will be given a verbal warning for misconduct. Every effort will be made to solve the problem prior to reporting the student to the Assistant Principal of Transportation.

Step 2: The uniform disciplinary action for Forney ISD will be:

- A. First and Second Minor Infractions - The driver will submit a conduct form in their Smart Tablet for the Team Leads to contact the parents in an effort to correct the situation.
- B. Third Infraction will result in suspension from the bus.
- C. The Executive Director or Assistant Principal of Transportation has the authority to skip steps for serious violations, or to repeat them if the misconduct is not a serious safety violation.

### **Bus Rider Discipline Policy**

#### ***Discipline Consequences for PK – 5th Grade***

- 1. First Offense      Verbal warning by Administrator and Parent notified.
- 2. Second Offense    Verbal warning by Administrator and Parent notified.
- 3. Third Offense     Three-day suspension of bus riding privileges.
- 4. Fourth Offense    Five-day suspension of bus riding privileges.
- 5. Fifth Offense      Six-week suspension of bus privileges.
- 6. Sixth Offense     Suspension of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.

#### ***Discipline Consequences for 6th – 12th Grade***

- 1. First Offense: Verbal warning by Administrator and Parent notified.
- 2. Second Offense: Verbal warning by Administrator and Parent notified.
- 3. Third Offense: Five-day suspension of bus riding privileges.
- 4. Fourth Offense: Six-week suspension of bus riding privileges.
- 5. Fifth Offense: Suspension of bus privileges for remainder of the school year.

**Examples of behavior which constitute immediate removal from the bus are listed below.**



### All Category III Offenses

Based on the severity of the discipline violation, immediate loss of bus privileges may result at the discretion of the administrator.

- Vandalism (Students will not be allowed back on the bus until compensation for the damage has been made. \$75.00 for graffiti removal, \$100.00 for cover replacement).
- Throwing objects out of the bus (Students will be responsible for paying for any damage done from objects thrown from a bus).
- Assault/Fighting, Bullying
- Sexual Harassment or lewd conduct
- Possession of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol.
- Injury to another student.
- Verbal or physical abuse to the bus driver.
- Possession of hazardous materials on the bus (lighters, matches, dangerous liquids or gasses).
- Possession of a weapon (knife, gun, or object discerned as a weapon).