

Procedures for Boarding and Departing the School Bus

Bus Drivers are required by law to assign your child a "designated place of safety" where the student waits for the bus to pick them up. The designated place of safety will be in a place clearly visible where the driver and your child are able to see each other outside of your home or car and away from traffic in a safe spot. Students are to be in the place of safety at least 5 minutes prior to the bus's scheduled arrival time. When departing the bus at the end of the day, students must remain at the "designated place of safety" until the bus has departed the bus stop.

The law requires bus drivers to use hand signals and your child's bus driver will teach your child the proper hand signals in order to safely board and depart the bus. Please assist your child in obeying the hand-signals.

When picking up students in the morning, the driver's hand will be palm out and straight up in the window, visible to the students waiting to board. The driver will check traffic and when it is safe to cross, he/she will make eye contact with the student and lower the hand straight down. This is the signal that it is safe for your child to cross the street. Once the driver gives the hand signal, but before going into the street, the child needs to look both ways for themselves, then cross the street. If your student is door side or there are students waiting to board on the door side of the bus, your child will line up and the driver will signal (once traffic has been checked again) for door side students to enter the bus. Your child will need to remain at their point of designated safety until the bus departs.

Bus Stop Procedures

Please have your child at the "driver designated place of safety" at least 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. It is recommended that you stay with your child until he/she boards the bus. When your child returns in the afternoon, your child must wait in the "driver designated place of safety" until the bus has departed in order for the driver to be assured all children are in a safe spot away from traffic and the bus before the bus pulls away from the stop.

Teach your child not to talk to strangers and if someone approaches them, have them tell you or the bus driver right away.

Behavior at the bus stop must not threaten life, limb or property so please help your child to understand proper behavior at the bus stop. If other students are present, have your child line up with the other children and encourage appropriate and safe behavior.

1ST grade - 12TH grade should know what to do when he/she arrives at the bus stop. It is extremely important that you and your child have a plan in place in case an emergency situation should arise before the bus arrives. School may be delayed or released early due to weather conditions. Should this happen, please make sure you have a contingency plan in place for these occurrences so your child knows what they are to do before it happens.

If you and/or your child are late to the bus stop and the bus door has been shut, do not allow your child to run up to catch the moving bus. This is extremely dangerous as the driver may not see you or your child. There is a 10 foot area all the way around the bus that is considered the danger zone. School buses have blind spots like any long vehicle and your child should be taught to stay out of the danger zone. Call the transportation department and they will contact the driver. If possible, we will have the bus come back or wait for you to reach the next bus stop in order to pick up your child safely. Please understand if we are unable to do so it will be your responsibility to get your child to school.

There should not be alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs used at the bus stop by anyone.

Teach your child if they drop something near or under the bus, do not try and retrieve it. They need to tell the bus driver first and get the driver's permission in order to retrieve the item. Your child's safety is more important than the loss of any belonging.

Safe Bus Riding & Rules for Bus Riders

Please cut off any long or dangling straps from your child's book bag or clothing so it can't be caught in the handrails or door.

Students shall arrive at the bus stop 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.

Pupils must observe classroom conduct codes while on the bus.

Pupils may carry on the bus only objects that can be held in their laps. No balls will be permitted on the bus unless they can be properly stored in the child's backpack.

Pupils must leave or board the bus at locations to which they have been assigned unless they have both administrative and parental permission to do otherwise.

Once your child boards the bus, he/she will be assigned a seat and they are required to sit in that seat every day unless a new seating chart is made by the driver. The bus driver assigns the child's seat.

Students must go directly to their assigned seats upon boarding the bus.

Your child must sit down with back on back - seat on seat - feet on the floor or toward the floor. Students must keep exits and aisle ways clear. There are no seat belts on the bus and sitting properly is the only way to ensure the child's well-being if a crash were to occur. Please talk with your child about the importance of staying seated at all times and remaining seated until the bus is completely stopped at the drop off point.

Students must use their inside voice and not be loud so the driver can hear the 2-way radio, traffic noise and any student who may need assistance.

When riding a school bus, children are not allowed to eat, drink or chew gum so it's best to leave it at home before going to the bus stop.

No alcohol, tobacco or drugs are to be used while riding a school bus.

Students must not use profane language at any time.

Students must keep all belongings inside the bus at all times. Body parts should never be outside of the windows. Tree branches and limbs could easily hurt or cause serious injury to the student.

Students must not throw or pass objects on, from, or into the bus.

Students must be silent when approaching rail road tracks and remain silent until the bus is fully across the tracks. The driver will let the students know before approaching the tracks.

Do not send any prescription or over the counter medications to school on the bus, if your child needs medication at school, you will need to transport the medication to/from the school.

Cell phones are not allowed to be used to take pictures of other students or for any inappropriate use. Earbuds or head phones of any kind are not permitted to be worn before boarding and while unloading the bus. We will not be responsible for theft if you allow cell phones or any other personal items to be transported. If the driver feels that cell phone use is being misused in any way, the driver will contact the proper authority and have the rider's cell phone privilege taken away.

Violations of these safe-riding rules may result in:

- A. A verbal warning by the bus driver for the first offense.
- B. Written warning by the bus driver.
- C. Bus privileges suspended for 3-5 days if warnings are not heeded.

D. Bus privileges suspender for the remainder of the school year is a student continues to disobey the driver and is a repeat offender.

Daily Bus Use

For all PK and K students, the law requires an adult to be present at drop off. If you are not able to be there we will accept a note from you stating that it is okay for another person of your choosing to be there for your child. In order for the note to be accepted by our transportation department, the following requirements must be met: 1. The note must be signed and dated by you. 2. The name of the person getting your child from the bus stop has to be on the child's emergency contact list. 3. The full name of the person responsible and his or her relationship to the child. We do allow your child to be picked up or walked home by an older sibling as long as you document it the same way as indicated above. 5. You must include your child's full name, grade, and teacher in the note. It is very important that you update emergency contacts and phone numbers throughout the school year. Any kindergarten or pre k students will not be allowed off the bus if the person who is getting the child is not on the child's emergency contact list.

If no one is there to get your child off the bus we will try to contact you via phone first and then contact emergency contacts listed for your child. If we are unable to contact anyone, our procedure is to bring your child back to RES and it would then be the parent's responsibility to pick them up from the school.

Requests in writing from parents or legal guardians for non-regular bus service for students wishing to go home with another student who is normally bussed should only be done in an emergency. Such requests must be made directly to the transportation supervisor and signed by the student's parent or/legal guardian. Approval is subject to bus capacity and the need for the transportation. The bus coordinator will contact you with the final decision. Play dates, parties, staying overnight with friends, school projects, etc. These events should be dealt with in advance and students would be best served to use their normal bus service with parents providing transportation later in the day.

Transportation Alternate Form

If you need your child picked up and/or dropped off at a location other than their assigned home bus stop on a permanent basis for childcare or shared parenting, an alternate transportation form needs to be filled out and turned in to the Bus Coordinator. Multiple stops for the same student will not be approved. We are unable to take varied schedules or every other week schedules. If a varied schedule is your practice, parents will need to pick one or the other address for the permanent stop location. The request will remain in effect the entire school year and will need to be updated yearly.

Alternate forms are available at Rittman Elementary School through the Transportation Department or the school districts website under the Transportation Department. On the website, click district and then Transportation. These forms need to be filled out and returned to the Transportation Department no later than the week prior to the start of school. Please understand it takes time to alter routes and the first few weeks are the busiest prior to school starting. Your request may be delayed if not received in a timely manner.

PHONE NUMBER FOR TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT IS: 330.927.7413