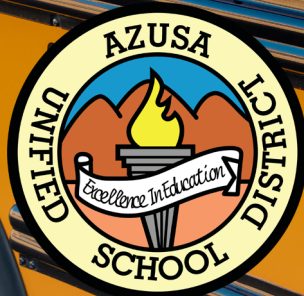


AZUSA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



Azusa Unified School District Transportation Services

Parent & Student Handbook

Updated
Summer 2024

Table of Contents

Parent Letter	2
Safety	3
Personal Belongings	3
Pick-Up and Drop-Off Procedures	3
Assigned Bus Stop Locations	4
Alternate Stops to Address Safety/Legality	4
Route Times	4
Medication	4
Safe and Respectful Rides	4
Behavioral Concerns	5
School Bus Danger Zones	6
S.B. 1072 - The Paul Lee School Bus Safety Law	7
Speed	7
Reporting Procedure	7

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We understand that the safe and efficient transportation of your students is crucial. That's why we've created this Transportation Services Parent and Student Handbook. It outlines important information, procedures, and expectations to ensure a positive and secure experience for everyone who uses our bus services.

Our primary goals are:

- **Safety:** Student safety is our absolute top priority. Our drivers are carefully trained and buses are well-maintained, and we have clear rules and guidelines that all students are expected to follow.
- **Efficiency:** We strive to provide reliable and timely transportation. Our routes are regularly reviewed and optimized.
- **Collaboration:** Open communication between parents, students, school staff, and our transportation team is key in addressing any concerns or changes quickly.

Within this handbook, you will find:

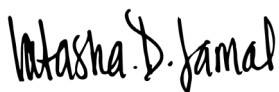
- Bus schedules and routes
- Safety procedures and behavioral expectations for students
- Eligibility guidelines for bus ridership
- Information about how to address concerns or requests

We encourage you to thoroughly review this handbook with your child. By working together, we can make bus transportation a smooth and positive part of the school experience.

If you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to contact the transportation department at 626-858-6174.

Thank you for your partnership in providing a safe and successful educational journey for your child.

Sincerely,



Latasha D. Jamal
Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

SAFETY

DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

School bus driver qualifications go beyond basic licensing. To ensure student safety, drivers undergo rigorous training and maintain high standards. California law mandates a clean driving record, valid School Bus Driver certificate, First Aid training, a physical exam, background check, and ongoing annual training. Additionally, before certification, drivers complete a comprehensive program including medical clearance, classroom and behind-the-wheel training, and a background check. The Transportation Department further monitors driver licenses for any changes.

SCHOOL BUS EQUIPMENT

School buses undergo multiple layers of safety checks. Drivers conduct daily inspections, while the California Highway Patrol performs periodic checks at designated stations. Additionally, every vehicle undergoes annual certification by the state's Motor Carrier Division, ensuring compliance with all student transportation laws and regulations. Notably, buses equipped with seat belts require students to use them, fastening them until the bus reaches a complete stop at their destination.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

It is highly recommended that each article of personal belonging that students take with them on the school bus is clearly marked. In the event that items are lost, parents should check with their child's school of attendance and/or bus driver. However, please understand that the bus driver and school staff cannot be held responsible for lost personal belongings.

PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF PROCEDURES

PICK-UP

To ensure timely departures and minimize missed instructional time, students must be ready for pick-up prior to their scheduled time. Parents or guardians are responsible for escorting children to the bus stop and ensuring arrival within ten minutes of the scheduled pick-up. Drivers will wait two minutes before the scheduled time or upon arrival, whichever is later, and then depart to maintain the route schedule. Please note: honking to alert parents or students of bus arrival is prohibited by state law (Vehicle Code 27001). It is crucial for parents and students to arrive within the designated time frame for safe and efficient bus transportation.

DROP-OFF

While all students are released at their designated stops, only transitional kindergarteners (TK) and kindergartners require a parent/guardian to receive them. If no one is there to receive the TK and/or kindergartner at their stop, they'll be returned to the school office for parent pickup. It will then be the parent's responsibility to pick up the student(s) from the school site. Future transportation privileges may be suspended if a student is not received on more than one occasion. Parents of TK and/or kindergarten students may sign a waiver that allows the TK and/or kindergartner to walk home unattended or to be picked up by someone else. This form may be obtained from your bus driver.

Important Note: Regardless of age, authorized individuals, including parents and guardians, must meet students at the bus door and present valid photo ID for driver verification upon request.

ASSIGNED BUS STOP LOCATIONS

All students needing transportation will have the opportunity to sign up for a route during the annual data confirmation process. Please note that students who are not signed up for a route will not be permitted to ride the bus.

Once registered for a bus route, the student's name will be on the roster for their route. At the secondary level, students must carry their student ID cards. Secondary students will receive an indicator on their ID card that identifies the student's route. Students must show their ID card to board the bus; failure to do so will result in progressive discipline.

To ensure student safety and efficient route management, students must use their assigned bus stop every day. Riding a different bus for personal reasons, like visiting friends or attending activities, is not permitted. Similarly, students cannot be dropped off at locations other than their assigned stop, except in approved emergency situations such as natural disasters or police activity.

ALTERNATE STOPS TO ADDRESS SAFETY/LEGALITY

Bus stops may occasionally shift slightly due to various factors, such as:

- Limited parking: When parking is unavailable directly in front of the designated stop.
- Traffic restrictions: If the stop falls within a "No Parking" or "No Stopping" zone during the scheduled arrival/departure time.
- Obstructions: Obstacles like parked cars, trash collection, or construction may block the primary stop.
- Safety concerns: Police activity, suspicious activity, bad weather, or other safety hazards may necessitate a stop relocation.

Please note: For safety reasons, school buses cannot double-park on streets exceeding 25 mph. As a result, parents must be prepared for buses to stop down the street prior to or following the assigned bus stop.

ROUTE TIMES

Due to factors like traffic, weather, and the specific stops on each route, bus travel times can vary. This means arrival times might differ from day to day, especially during bad weather like fog or rain. We encourage parents to be flexible and anticipate adjustments when necessary.

MEDICATION

To ensure student safety and proper medication administration, we have a no medication on the bus policy. All medications must be provided to school personnel directly by parents or guardians. This ensures proper storage, dispensing, and documentation in accordance with school guidelines and medical orders.

SAFE AND RESPECTFUL RIDES

School buses are dedicated to transporting students safely and efficiently. To achieve this, a collaborative effort is essential. Drivers need to be focused on the road, while students need to create a calm and respectful environment.

California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 14263 governing pupil transportation states:

“Pupils transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of, and responsible directly to, the driver of the bus, and the driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street, highway or road. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation”.

Here’s what we all can do to ensure a smooth and pleasant ride:

Students:

- **Be a good teammate:** Treat everyone on the bus with courtesy and respect, just like you would in the classroom. This includes the driver and the other passengers.
- **Stay safe:** Remain seated and keep all body parts inside the bus at all times. Keep your hands to yourself. If your bus has seat belts, wear them properly. **Mind your noise levels:** Keep conversations quiet and avoid profanity, loud or disruptive behavior.
- **Respect others’ space:** Avoid using electronic devices in a way that bothers others. Offensive and unsafe content is prohibited. Recording audio or video on the bus is not allowed.
- **Leave certain items at home:** Weapons, drugs, animals, sharp objects, skateboards, scooters, and anything potentially harmful are prohibited.
- **Keep it clean:** Eating and drinking, and littering are not permitted on the bus.

Please note: All passengers are under authority of the driver.

Parents and Guardians:

- **Review bus rules with your child:** Familiarity with the expectations fosters a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone.
- **Discuss safe waiting practices:** Emphasize the importance of waiting at the designated stop and remaining at a safe distance from the road until the bus arrives.
- **Open communication:** Discuss any concerns or questions you may have with your child’s school or the transportation department.

By working together, we can create a safe and positive learning environment that extends beyond the classroom walls and onto our school buses.

BEHAVIORAL CONCERNS

Transportation bus riders discipline procedures:

Normally, bus drivers verbally warn students in regard to any behavior concerns. Another tool at the bus driver’s disposal is to assign seats for any behavior concerns. When a student’s behavior and/or conduct is unsafe, though, or consistently violates the bus rules, the bus driver will submit a report describing the incident that occurred. The report is submitted to the school site administrator, who will investigate the circumstances and take appropriate action. If a student’s behavior does not improve, further steps are taken to ensure compliance. These steps are:

- **First Offense:** The Student will be called into the school office and will be counseled and cautioned about his/her unsatisfactory behavior. A written bus citation warning may be issued to the student. Parents may be called and informed of the student’s unacceptable behavior.

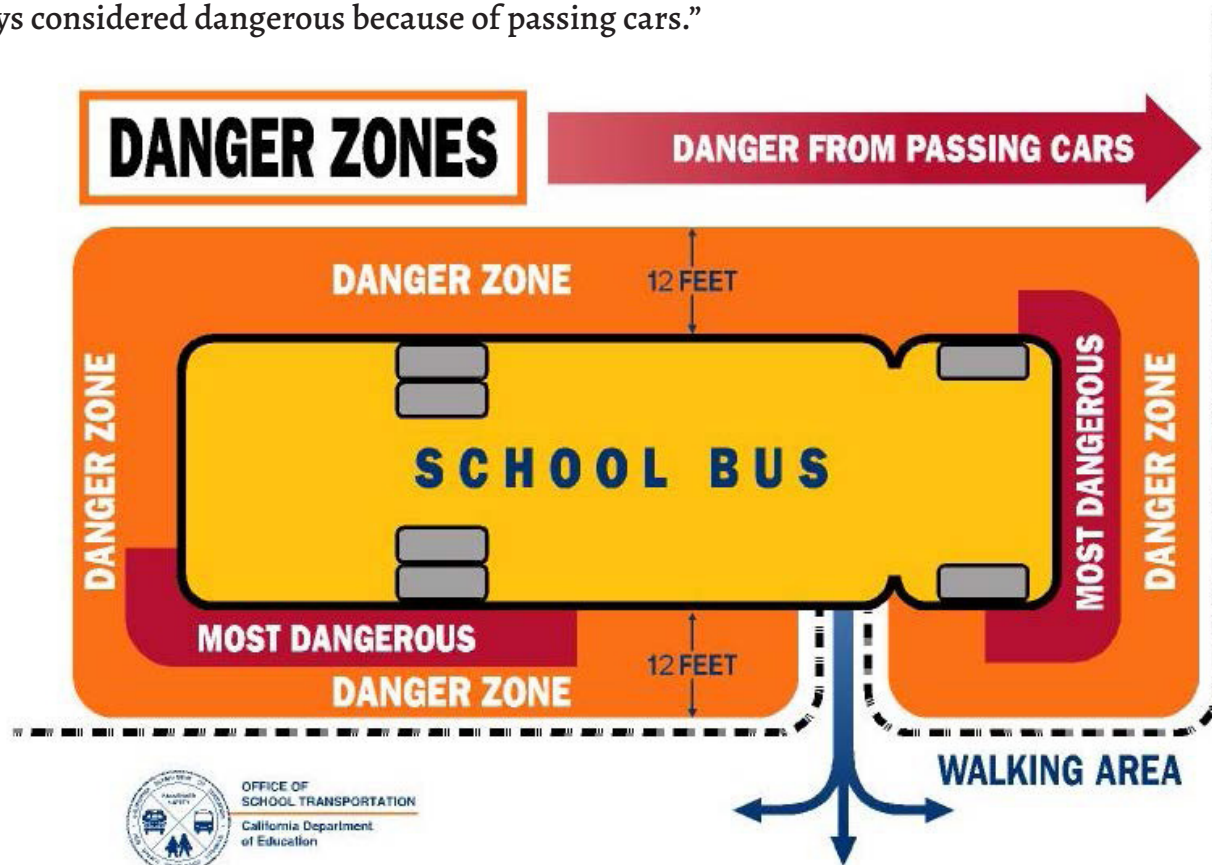
- **Second Offense:** The Student will be called into the school office. Parents will be called and informed of the student's unacceptable behavior. They will further be informed that the student's bus transportation privileges may be suspended for a period of time.
- **Third Offense:** Student and parent will be called into the school office and informed that his/her transportation privilege has been suspended. The duration of transportation suspension will be at the discretion of the site administrator in consultation with the Transportation Department.
- **After Third Offense:** It is possible to have transportation privileges revoked for the remainder of the school year.
- **If a student's bus privileges are suspended on one bus, that suspension will be for all buses to and from school.**

Please note that bus privileges can be automatically revoked for egregious violations that include, but are not limited to:

- Damage to property
- Conduct that is sexual in nature
- Behavior that puts the safety of others at-risk (ex. fighting)
- Possession of dangerous objects
- Possession and/or use of illegal substances

SCHOOL BUS DANGER ZONES (EXCERPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA COMMERCIAL DRIVER HANDBOOK)

“The danger zone is the area on all sides of the bus where children are in the most danger of being hit, either by another vehicle or their own bus. The danger zones may extend as much as 30 feet from the front bumper (with the first 12 feet being the most dangerous), 12 feet from the left and right sides, and 12 feet behind the rear bumper of the school bus. In addition, the area to the left of the bus is always considered dangerous because of passing cars.”



S.B. 1072 - The Paul Lee School Bus Safety Law

In accordance with Education Code § 39831.3(a)(4), the Transportation Department deploys the following departmental policy to ensure students are not left unattended on a school bus:

- After each run (this means in the morning and after the last stop) all drivers will physically walk to the rear of the bus and check each row of seats to ensure that there are NO STUDENTS still on board. This bus check shall include looking under the bus seats.
- Upon returning to the Transportation facility drivers will once again physically walk to the rear of the bus and check each row of seats to ensure that there are NO STUDENTS still on board. This bus check shall include looking under the bus seats.
- Drivers must now comply with a device installed under this law that sounds the horn if the check is not completed within 30 seconds of turning off the bus.

Unsafe Driving Conditions

Vehicle Code 34501.6 states:

- The governing board of a local educational agency that provides transportation of pupils shall adopt procedures that limit the operation of school buses when atmospheric conditions reduce visibility on the roadway to 200 feet or less during regular home-to-school transportation service.
- Operational policies for school activity trips shall give school bus drivers discretionary authority to discontinue school bus operation if the driver determines that it is unsafe to continue operation because of reduced visibility.

The Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, or designee, shall notify the schools by phone if the above conditions exist.

Speed

Section 22406 of the California Vehicle Code specifies a maximum speed of 55 miles per hour for any vehicle that transports school pupils. This and other regulations concerning speed restrictions must be adhered to. Maximum speed for bus drivers will be 55 miles per hour. Speed should be significantly reduced at curves, blind crossings, crests of hills, in fog, or whenever the view is otherwise obstructed so that a stop may be made within the distance of clear vision.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

Parents are strongly encouraged to report any comments, questions, or concerns regarding transportation directly to the District Office at (insert phone number). To further expedite results, parents should make every effort to provide as much of the following information as possible:

- Name of student
- School of attendance
- Date of birth and grade
- Bus number
- Pick-Up/Drop-off address
- Scheduled pick-up/drop-off times
- Details of concern
- Date of incident
- Time of incident
- Parent's name
- Parent's contact phone number

