



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

CARLA CORONA

July 15, 2024

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

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Superintendent

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Deputy Superintendent

KEVIN VENSKO
Assistant Superintendent
Business Services

DR. CHRIS GRADO
Assistant Superintendent
Educational Services

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Assistant Superintendent
Human Resources

The 2024-25 school year will begin soon. I hope your student(s) will have a positive, rewarding experience in our District at one of our schools.

The state of California does not require school districts to provide home-to-school transportation services. However, the Antelope Valley Union High School District has elected to provide busing services to students who live outside a three-mile circular radius of their high school. To assist our students and families with obtaining transportation services, the District offers transportation to all students at no charge.

All student bus riders will be required to obtain or renew a SMART-Tag bus pass from the Antelope Valley Schools Transportation Agency (AVSTA). A SMART-Tag pass will only be issued once per student. Replacement tags will cost \$5.00 for all general education students.

A SMART-Tag can be obtained online by visiting www.avsta.com.

The SMART-Tag will be delivered by the bus driver on the first day of school. AVSTA will provide the bus stop location for each student by return email once a SMART-Tag has been requested.

Sincerely,

Greg Nehen
Superintendent



Dear Parents of AVUHSD 2024-2025 Returning Students and Incoming Freshman:

Antelope Valley Schools Transportation Agency will begin processing SMART tag passes for our general education high school bus riders for the 2024-2025 school year on **July 15, 2024**. A SMART tag is required for all general education high school students riding a bus to and from school. A new SMART tag pass can be requested by submitting the online "SMART tag Order Form" located at www.avsta.com, by clicking on the Bus Rider portal.

The Antelope Valley Union High School District will provide transportation services to students within the boundaries at no cost. To establish ridership eligibility, all new general education students must request a SMART tag for the 2024-2025 school year. All new riders, returning students who have moved, or returning students who have lost or damaged their pass and need a replacement, must submit the "SMART tag Order Form". A SMART tag is only issued once per student. Replacement passes will cost \$5.00 for all general education students and must be paid for and picked up in person at our office. *Replacement fees must be made by cash, check, or money order only.*

Our online request form is easy and simple to complete. Once your online request form has been received and processed, all new student riders will receive a confirmation email with the bus stop information and instructions for the distribution process of the SMART tag. Please allow 2-3 business days for requests to be completed. If you are unable to access a computer, smartphone, or tablet; a kiosk is available at the Antelope Valley Schools Transportation Agency office at 670 West Avenue L-8 in Lancaster beginning **July 15, 2024**, from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

All returning general education high school student riders' parents/guardians will receive an email notification with instructions to complete a form with their student's ridership status. Once the required form is received and processed, returning students who have not moved, will use their existing SMART tag pass and it will be renewed for the 2024-2025 school year, they will locate their bus stop times on our website before the start of school. For returning students who have moved, they will be required to submit a renewal request by submitting the "SMART tag Order Form", so that the new address can be verified for ridership eligibility. If no response is received before the start of school, the student will be unmarked for ridership until the verification process has been completed.

If you have questions or need additional information, you may call 661-945-3621.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Morris Fuselier III".

Morris Fuselier III
Antelope Valley School Transportation Agency
CEO

Antelope Valley Union High School District Parent-Pay Transportation

Eligibility for Transportation Services

To be eligible for transportation services, students must live beyond a minimum of a three-air-mile radius from their school of residence and comply with current administrative regulations and/or Board policy.

Annual Transportation Fees

The Antelope Valley Union High School District will no longer charge the \$200.00 per school year student fee and will now provide transportation services to students within the boundaries at no cost.

Issuance of SMART tag Pass

The SMART tag pass will provide home-to-school transportation at the beginning and end of the normal academic school day. The SMART tag pass is only issued once (unless lost or stolen) and is to be used throughout the student's entire high school years. **No one-way passes will be sold.** A replacement fee will apply.

All returning students will receive an email notification requesting ridership verification status. Once received, returning students who have not moved will use their existing SMART tag pass and it will be renewed. Returning students who have not moved, but lost or damaged their pass, will be required to replace their pass in person. Returning students who have moved, will be required to submit a renewal request so that the new address can be verified for ridership eligibility.

A SMART tag pass must be renewed or requested using our online request form located at www.avsta.com. For those without access to a computer, smartphone, or tablet, kiosks are available at the Antelope Valley Schools Transportation Agency, 670 W. Avenue L-8, Lancaster, CA 93534, beginning July 15, 2024, from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Note: Students will be allowed to ride the bus for the first week of school per semester to allow time for the submittal and processing of the online request. However, after the first week of each semester, students will be required to present their SMART tag pass to the bus driver, or they will not be allowed to ride the school bus.

Effective August 26, 2024, a student must have a valid SMART tag to board the school bus for the first semester and January 27, 2025, for the second semester.

Instructions for Completing the SMART tag Request Form

A SMART tag pass can be renewed or requested by submitting the online request form located at www.avsta.com. All parents/guardians must submit this online form to request a new, renewal or replacement pass for the upcoming school year/semester. **Paper applications are no longer available.**

All information submitted on the request form MUST match the information on file with the school. The Agency will validate information before issuance and/or renewal. Submittal of the form does not guarantee transportation as transportation boundaries apply.

Fill out all required fields for the Agency to process your request form. Be sure to sign your name, acknowledging your understanding and acceptance of all conditions. Incomplete applications will not be received or processed.

Possession of SMART tag

Each student must have a valid SMART tag in his/her possession each time he/she wishes to ride the bus. SMART tags are considered the property of the district, rented to the bearers, who are charged with custodial responsibility and are expected to safeguard them accordingly.

Lost, Stolen, or Forgotten SMART tag

The district assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen passes. Damaged or lost passes will be replaced upon payment of a \$5.00 replacement fee. The request for a replacement SMART tag is located on www.avsta.com. Replacement fees must be paid by cash, check, or money order.

Any student with a valid school ID whose SMART tag is lost or stolen, or who forgets his/her SMART tag will be allowed to ride but will be issued a bus ticket. It will be processed per the Agency progressive discipline policy.

Returned Checks

Checks that are returned from a bank due to insufficient funds will be forwarded to the transportation department of the district. Transportation staff will contact the parent/guardian for financial settlement including all associated bank fees.

If a financial settlement cannot be made within five business days of bank notification, then the parents/guardian, school, student, and bus driver shall be notified beginning the next school day that transportation privileges will be denied to the student and the SMART tag will be confiscated by the bus driver. Returned checks are subject to a \$20.00 service charge.

Ridership Eligibility Conditions

Students will be eligible to ride upon presentation of a valid SMART tag, except when student ridership has been suspended by the Transportation Agency.

Students will be required to present their SMART tag pass to the bus driver, or they will not be allowed to ride the school bus.

Students will be required to comply with rules and regulations regarding pupil transportation as set forth elsewhere in the District and Transportation Agency policies and procedures. Students who loan their SMART tag to other students or use a SMART tag that does not belong to them or attempt to obtain transportation service without completing the online request process may

be denied transportation services permanently. Students who attend a school other than their home school of attendance will not be eligible for transportation services.

SMART tag Requirements

Students will be required to scan their SMART tag to load and unload at their assigned stop. A SMART tag must be presented to the bus driver each time they enter or exit the bus.

Uninterrupted transportation service can only be maintained if students have in their possession a valid pass and present it to the bus driver as required.

SMART tag Violation

The following standards of progressive actions regarding abuse/misuse of school bus ridership authorization are established and are separate from other disciplinary measures.

Using, or attempting to use, an expired pass, loaning, borrowing, or altering a pass, using or attempting to use a stolen, found, or forged pass:

- A. First Offense: Bus privileges shall be suspended for one week.
- B. Second Offense: Bus privileges shall be suspended for the remainder of the school year.

Possession of any pass not assigned to the possessor shall constitute prima facie evidence of improper possession and shall be a reason to exercise disciplinary measures as set forth above.

Emergencies

In the event conditions beyond the control of the district temporarily prevent the district from providing the expected transportation services, the district will have no liability for refund of fees.

Bus and Bus Stop Assignments

Possession of a valid SMART tag entitles a student to ride only on the designated bus to and from a designated stop before and after the regular academic day. SMART tag passes **will not** be recognized on any bus other than the bus for which the pass was issued. The bus stop assignment will be determined by the current home address on file with the school. All decisions regarding assignments to buses and stops are at the sole discretion of the Transportation Agency.

Parents are advised that the district does not supervise bus stops and that the District is not responsible for the control and conduct of students at the bus stop. Parents should not neglect their responsibility for supervising their students until their students safely board the bus.



Dear Parents/Guardians,

The **SMART tag™ Parent App** is now available!

Things you need to know:

- The new mobile Parent App is replacing the Parent Portal (web access).
- SMART Alerts and notifications that you received as text will now be sent as push notifications.

Get the Parent App Now!



Available for Android and iOS.
Scan the QR code or use the link
Below to download the app.

<https://www.qbit.codes/q/smart-tag-parent-app>

Create an account

If you have an existing Parent Portal account

1. Download the app on your mobile device.
2. Tap **Create an account**. Enter the same email address associated with your Parent Portal account.
3. Enter the 6-digit code emailed to you.
4. Create a password.

That is it! You should now be able to view your linked students. Confirm the accuracy of the information and subscribe to SMART Alerts!

If you do not have an existing Parent Portal account

1. Download the app on your mobile device.
2. Tap **Create an account**. Enter the same email address associated with PowerSchool.
Otherwise, use your current email address.
3. Enter the 6-digit code emailed to you.
4. Create a password.
5. Link your account to your student.



*If you are the primary parent and your email address and phone number are not in PowerSchool, please contact your School Administrator to update your information.

IMPORTANT: The “primary parent” is the parent associated with the student in PowerSchool. The primary parent must complete their app registration and link to the student first before any co-parent can proceed.

Link your account to your student

1. Sign in with your email and password.
2. On the welcome screen, tab **Find Students**.
3. Select your school district: **AVSTA**.

If your email exists in PowerSchool, it will be recognized and will display all students associated with that email address.

If your email is not recognized, it is not associated with any students in the district.

You may try:

- **Using your phone number.**
If your phone number is associated with a student, a verification code will be texted to you.
- **Linking to the student manually.**
Manual linking is only for co-parent accounts and can only be done if the primary parent has successfully linked to the student.

Enter the 10-digit student state ID, date of birth, and scroll to select the school, then submit the request to the primary parent for approval. The student will appear as pending in your Student list until approved. If there is no action from the primary parent, please contact Transportation.

For multiple students, manually link to one student first. You can add the rest in the Account section.

4. Once students are linked, you can choose your SMART Alert settings (per student).

Benefits

- View your student’s profile and assigned routes.
- Monitor your student’s riding activity.
- Sign up to get notified when your student gets on/off the bus at your home stop and school.
- Sign up to get notified when the bus is arriving at your home stop.
- Manage guardians authorized to receive your student at their PM drop-off (for primary parents only).

For additional information and instructional videos visit www.avsta.com > SMART Tag Information

For further assistance, please contact our Dispatch Supervisor at 661-952-3108 or by emailing dispatch_supervisor@avsta.com.

PUPIL MANAGEMENT
GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE

In order to provide the safe transportation of students, we are using the following assertive discipline policy.

OUR PHILOSOPHY:

We believe all students can behave appropriately and safely while riding on a school bus. We will **NOT** tolerate students deterring drivers from doing their job or preventing other students from having safe transportation. Failure to follow the bus rules will result in a bus ticket.

Agency personnel will carry out the following consequences:

- 1st Ticket: Will result in a written warning notice to parents and school administrators.
- 2nd Ticket: Will result in loss of bus riding privilege for 1 to 3 school days. The parent will be responsible for transporting the student.
- 3rd Ticket: Will result in loss of bus riding privileges for 5 school days. The parent will be responsible for transporting the student.
- 4th Ticket: Will result in loss of bus riding privileges for 10 school days. The parent will be responsible for transporting the student.
- 5th Ticket: Will result in loss of bus riding privileges per Title V, Section 14103 #B for the remainder of the school year.
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THE MINOR CLAUSE

The Minor clause may be used at the discretion of the Agency. The Agency has the right to adjust the number of days the bus riding privileges can be denied. This could be anywhere from a Written Warning to 1 – 3 days loss of bus riding privileges.

THE SEVERE CLAUSE

The severe clause may be invoked **WITHOUT A WRITTEN WARNING** having been previously issued whenever the offense is of such serious nature to warrant it. **SOME** examples of these offenses are:

1. Physical contact of **ANY** kind with Driver or Student.
2. Harassment of **ANY** kind, sexual or disability.
3. Threatening a Driver or Student. Arguing with the Driver.
4. Use of foul or obscene language. **ANY** gang signs or racial remarks.
5. Any violation causing or likely to cause injury to Driver or Student.
6. Throwing object in or out of bus.
7. Jumping out of bus window or emergency door.
8. Destroying or defacing bus or bus equipment.
9. Any action that interferes with the safe transportation of Student. Continued disorderly conduct.
10. Weapon of **ANY** kind.
11. Any violation of the Ed. Code.

BUS PASS CLAUSE

The Bus Pass Clause will be enforced when a student does not present a valid SMARTAG pass for three (3) consecutive days. Failure to produce a valid pass will result in the student being issued a referral. The student will then have three days to replace the lost pass. If the pass is not replaced within three days, another referral will be issued and the student will be denied transportation by the Transportation Security Supervisor. No Student is to be denied transportation by the driver until further notification is received from the Transportation Security Supervisor.

Consequences: Students will be denied bus transportation anywhere from 1 -10 days depending on the severity. If a student is denied transportation 'Indefinitely' and IF DEEMED NECESSARY, a parent conference will be arranged with parent, student, driver and agency representative. Depending on the severity a student can also be denied transportation 'Permanently'. Any illegal activity can result in notification of law enforcement.

We believe that the use of surveillance systems on school buses will help to deter misconduct and improve discipline, ensure the safety of students and bus drivers, and prevent vandalism. Therefore, surveillance systems may be installed and used on school buses to monitor student behavior while traveling to and from school and school activities.

PARENT CONFERENCE

Parents have the right to request a conference to discuss student behavior, consequences, or concerns that will include: parent(s) or guardian(s), student, driver and agency representative. Please call the Transportation Security Supervisor directly to schedule a conference at (661)952-3116.

ANTELOPE VALLEY SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION AGENCY BUS RULES

1. Authority of the driver: 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 students while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street or highway. (Title V, Section 14103 – A, California Administration Code)
2. Cooperate with the driver. Follow directions the first time they are given.
3. Arrive at the bus stop waiting in line 5 minutes before the scheduled bus departure time. While going to and from the bus stop and while waiting for the bus, keep out of the street and off private property. Noise, rowdy behavior and property damage at the bus stop could cause the stop to be moved to a less convenient location. Students must use the designated stop closest to his or her home both A.M. and P.M. Students may not use multiple stops. Any student having to use another stop in an “emergency only” situation must have a note pre-approved by the school.
4. Board and leave the bus in an orderly manner. Do not push other students. Be seated promptly. Do not “save” seats for others. Be willing to share the seat with fellow bus riders. Follow driver’s instructions concerning seating location and unloading procedures.
5. Always sit facing the front of the bus. Remain seated when the bus is in motion. Do not change seats without permission of the driver.
6. Keep head, hands, and arms inside the bus at ALL times. Do not yell out of the windows to others outside the bus.
7. No physical contact of ANY kind is allowed. Keeps hands off other people and off others possessions.
8. Animals, insects, and reptiles are not permitted on the bus with the exception of service animals. (54.2. Civil Code)
9. Large musical instruments are prohibited on the bus. Other prohibited items include glass containers or other breakable items, skate boards, roller blades/skates, balloons, playground equipment, and other large bulky items. Special arrangements must be made for transportation of athletic equipment. Cleats and or spikes must be removed prior to boarding the bus.
10. Bus aisle and emergency exits must be kept clear of feet, legs, arms, books, and lunches.
11. Keep the bus clean. Students are not to eat, drink, or chew gum or tobacco on the bus.
12. Appropriate school dress must be worn at all times while on the bus. Appropriate footwear must also be worn. Hats/caps, hoodies, etc. are not to be worn while on the bus and must be removed prior to boarding. No open cosmetics or aerosol cans are permitted.
13. Do not use obscene or profane language. Smoking, any narcotics, weapons, and lighting of matches are not permitted on the bus. No hazardous materials, liquids, or gases are permitted on the bus.
14. Do not deface or destroy bus equipment. Damage to seats, windows and other parts of the bus are unnecessary and costly. The student will be responsible for the cost of repair.
15. Avoid loud talking, loud laughter or unnecessary confusion (it may divert the driver’s attention and could result in an accident).
16. Students living across streets, upon which the bus is stopped to unload them, should cross only when the driver indicates that it is safe to do so. Students must cross the street in front of the bus and walk straight across the street. The driver will escort Elementary and Junior High students across the street.
17. In school districts with bus passes, students MUST show their bus pass before boarding the bus and may not use another student’s pass.
18. Students are NOT allowed to use cell phones or any electronic devices while on the bus. These items must be placed in the off position and kept in the student’s possession at all times while on a bus.
19. Students that leave campus for any reason other than a school authorized, pre-approved appointment will NOT be allowed to ride the bus home in the PM.
20. If school bus is equipped with seat belts and shoulder straps, they MUST be worn at all times. Tampering with ANY seat belt or shoulder strap is PROHIBITED.

EVEN THOUGH A TRANSPORTATION FEE IS CHARGED, TRANSPORTATION IS A PRIVILEGE. FAILURE TO ABIDE BY ONE OR MORE OF THESE RULES MAY RESULT IN THE LOSS OF BUS RIDING PRIVILEGES.