

S I S D



Student Bus Rider's Safety Handbook

2024 - 2025

Salado ISD

Transportation Department

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Salado Independent School District

Department of Transportation

685 Salado School Road, Salado Texas 76571

School Bus Rider's Safety Handbook

Dear Parents and School Bus Riders,

The Salado Independent School District is pleased to provide school bus transportation for your student to and from school and other school-sponsored activities. We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to serve your student(s) by providing quality public school transportation. Providing this service is a tremendous endeavor and we need your assistance in helping to create a safe and enjoyable riding experience for your student.

Please take a few minutes to review this *Student Bus Rider's Safety Handbook* as well as the school bus section in the *SISD Student Code of Conduct* handbook with your student. The information contained in these handbooks explains bus rules and consequences should student misbehavior occur.

Safety is our primary concern and we hope that these rules and procedures will allow everyone to have a safe and enjoyable bus ride. Our school bus drivers have a tremendous responsibility. Please support their efforts to create a safe, healthy operation and ask your son or daughter to cooperate with the school bus driver while riding the bus.

Should you have questions or concerns about bus routes, please do not hesitate to contact the Transportation Office at 254-947-6994. Should you need information concerning student conduct on buses, please contact the campus administrator at your student's school.

Thank you,

Cheryl A. Lauw

Transportation Supervisor
Salado ISD

Transportation

.....Where Excellence in Education

Begins

Introduction for Parents and School Bus Riders

Bus transportation provided by the district is a privilege and not a right, whether to and from school each day or on school-sponsored trips, and should be treated as such. The goal of this Bus rider's Handbook is to offer safety related information that will help to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for eligible children and adult chaperones or sponsors who ride school buses. Parents should take time to read and discuss the material in this handbook with their children. Student information cards contained in this handbook are to be completed and returned to the driver within five days of receipt.

Rider Eligibility

The Salado Independent School District provides transportation services for students who reside two or more miles from their home school. In addition, the Superintendent of Salado ISD may also approve transportation for students residing in hazardous areas within the district. This approval is based upon specific district criteria used to evaluate hazardous conditions affecting students who live less than two miles from the respective home school. The Salado ISD Transportation Department provides transportation to all eligible students without regard to race, religion, color, sex, or national origin in accordance with all applicable laws and requirements of the State of Texas, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Department of Public Safety - School Transportation Division. No District Transfer Students are eligible to ride to or from school except for field trips and school sponsored events only.

General School Bus Policies

- 1) Students will abide by the district's rules and regulations concerning bus students, including conduct and dress code pertaining to respective campuses and grade levels.
- 2) While on the bus, students are under the authority of Salado ISD. **Students must follow the instructions from the drivers as they would a classroom teacher.** At no time will a student act toward, or address comments to a bus driver in a disrespectful manner, or refuse to cooperate with the driver.
- 3) Students will identify themselves when asked to do so by the driver or other school official.
- 4) Students must board and leave the bus only at the student's designated stop. Students are not permitted to depart the bus at campus once they board unless approved by a campus administrator.
- 5) Once the bus has left the pickup point, the driver is not permitted to make additional stops.
- 6) Only students who are eligible to ride may be transported and they must ride their assigned bus. Students may not ride on another bus with a friend. Most buses are at capacity. For that reason, students are not allowed to ride home with friends. (Parent notes will not be accepted by the driver.)
- 7) If an emergency should occur, contact the Transportation Office by 2:30 pm at (254) 947-6994 or (254) 947-6995 to request a bus riding change. This must be approved through the Transportation Office. Transportation will notify the driver and campus of the student's bus riding change for the day. **No notes from home will be accepted.**
- 8) The district cannot accommodate transportation requests for personal desires, custody agreement, or convenience of parents or students. We cannot transport students to job sites, special locations, or a friend's home.
- 9) Photography is prohibited on the school bus unless the student has prior, written permission from the campus principal.

- 10) Personal electronic devices are authorized for personal use while riding the bus as long as they are not shared with or used to distract others. Safety hazards created when using these electronic devices, or any recording or replay device (with or without headphones), may result in a safety referral.
- 11) The principal's jurisdiction extends to the bus stop.
- 12) Drivers and school officials are not responsible for stolen or destroyed/damaged articles or items on the bus.
- 13) It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to school if a child misses the bus.
- 14) If students do not ride for five (5) consecutive days, the bus stop will be taken off the route unless parents notify the Transportation Department.
- 15) Only school authorized personnel may enter a bus. Questions concerning the bus or bus driver actions are to be directed to the Transportation Supervisor. (Bus or bus driver concerns will not be discussed at the bus stop.)

School Bus Danger Zones:

Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be Responsible School buses are the safest way for students to travel, but children also need to do their part to stay alert and aware of their surroundings to prevent injury. Salado ISD Transportation asks parents to help teach their student(s) the following safety rules for getting on and off the bus and for exercising good behavior while riding:

Procedures for Students Waiting to Board the Bus

- 1) Be at the bus stop five minutes before scheduled pick-up time. Driver will not wait or honk for riders.
- 2) Driver will not pick up a student unless they are at their designated stop. Do not attempt to flag or chase down the bus if missed. This creates an extremely unsafe situation for the bus driver and students already on board.
- 3) Students need to be out of the parent's car and waiting in line with the other students. Be ready to board the bus, stand on the sidewalk away from traffic and avoid rough housing while waiting for the bus.
- 4) When the bus approaches, form a line away from the street or road and be prepared to board the bus as soon as the driver signals.
- 5) Students need to stand clear of the bus and wait until it comes to a complete stop before approaching the bus.
- 6) Public and private property at the bus stop needs to be respected. Students damaging or misusing these properties will be disciplined by school or local authorities.
- 7) Students who miss the bus should go home immediately.
- 8) Parents should instruct their children on procedures to follow if the bus is missed.

Loading the Bus

- 1) Wait until the doors open and the driver gives the signal before approaching the bus.
- 2) Use the handrail and steps; do not push or shove when boarding.
- 3) Go to your assigned seat. The bus will not move until all students are seated.
- 4) Students are required to wear seat belts on all seat belt equipped school buses.
- 5) Students will be assigned seats based on safety considerations, grade level, and ease of loading and unloading.

Conduct on the Bus

- 1) In accordance with the Student Code of Conduct handbook, harassment in any form is strictly prohibited.
- 2) The bus driver is required to assign seats. The student will remain in their assigned seat until instructed otherwise by the driver. Your responsibilities include:
 - a) Keep your seat area clean and free of trash.
 - b) Close your window when leaving your seat.
 - c) Report any damage to the seat and/or window area to the driver.
 - d) Report any evidence of food or drink around your seat area.
- 3) A student shall not refuse to sit in an assigned seat or deny another student a place to sit.
- 4) Do not mark, cut or scratch any part of the bus. Vandalism costs will be paid for by the person responsible.
- 5) Scuffling, fighting, and the use of obscene, vulgar, or profane language and gestures are forbidden and may constitute immediate bus suspension. Note: The appropriate law enforcement agency may be called in regards to any fight on the bus and Disruption of Transportation charges may be filed.
- 6) Do not spit or throw any object inside or outside of the bus.
- 7) Normal conversation is permitted (no louder than classroom level); any loud noises may distract the driver and create an unsafe condition.
- 8) Students are not permitted to conduct personal grooming (brush/comb hair, apply make-up, use perfume/cologne, etc.) while on the bus.
- 9) Students should sit properly in their assigned seat at all times.
 - a) Face forward for the duration of the trip and keep their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the bus aisle at all times
 - b) Do not stand or be on your knees in your seat
 - c) Lying down in the seat is not allowed for safety reasons
 - d) Putting your feet on the back or top of the seat back is **not** allowed. Do NOT put your feet on the seat across the aisle. Keep your feet on the floor.
 - e) Do not put your hands or any objects in your seat area that will be intruding to the seats around you (example: between the seat and windows or in the aisle)
 - f) Sit with your bottom to the seat, not on your backpack or books
 - g) Keep all your personal items in your lap, not on the floor for safety reasons
- 10) Students are required to remain seated while the bus is moving. Each student is expected to remain seated for the duration of the trip and until the bus door opens for departure.
- 11) Students will not extend any part of their body or any article out the window whether the bus is in motion or not.
- 12) Students shall never attempt to operate the passenger door or other driver controls except in the case of extreme emergency.
- 13) The Emergency Door and exit controls will be used by students only during supervised drills or actual emergencies. Unauthorized use of emergency equipment is prohibited.
- 14) NO food or drinks on the bus at any time.
 - a) This includes gum, candy, sodas, snacks, etc. (Keep in back packs or lunch boxes)
 - b) Water is allowed on the bus in bottles only.**
- 15) Do NOT use/possess Tobacco, Alcohol, Drugs or Weapons on the bus or on school property.
 - a) Report any Tobacco, Alcohol, Drugs or Weapons seen or heard on the school bus/vehicle to a SISD staff member immediately.

- 16) No animals, pets or insects on the bus or any school passenger vehicle.
- 17) **NO CELL PHONE USE ON THE BUS AT ANYTIME** (only with the allowance of Item F below).
 - a) NO texting
 - b) NO phone calls
 - c) NO picture taking
 - d) NO Video taking
 - e) NO Internet Access
 - f) You may listen to your music or play games on your phone/device as long as it is not distracting to the driver or other passengers on the bus. You must wear headphones at all times for this and the sound CANNOT be heard by others around you. Please keep one ear uncovered so your student can hear directions from the bus driver. If a driver revokes this privilege due to safety reasons, the student must follow the driver's request.
 - g) If any of the above rules are not followed, the driver has the right to take the phone/device away and turn into the student's school Principal.

Exiting the Bus

- 1) Stay seated until the bus has completely stopped.
- 2) Keep all straps and items that hang down from student or backpack secure to student or backpack so they do not get caught on any part of the bus/vehicle.
- 3) Use the handrail and take one step at a time when leaving the bus. NO jumping from the bus to the ground when exiting the bus.
- 4) Wait for your turn to leave the bus; pushing and crowding will only slow exiting and may cause an accident. Do not leave the bus through the Emergency Door except during an actual bus emergency.
- 5) All TRASH should be picked up and placed in the waste basket at the front of the bus when exiting the bus. **Do not walk to the waste basket while the bus is in motion.**
- 6) No student is allowed to get off at a stop other than their own, unless the driver has received a note from the Transportation Dept. Drivers are not permitted to act on notes or letters from students or parents regarding a stop change.
- 7) Stay clear of the bus when the engine is started. Do not chase or hang on the bus at any time. Leave the bus "danger zone" immediately after departing the bus.
- 8) 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.
- 9) **Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and 1st grade students will not be allowed to exit the bus unless a parent, guardian, or older sibling (3rd grade or older) is present at the bus stop with a valid picture identification. Siblings riding the same bus do not require identification. If no adult or sibling is present, or if the parent or approved adults cannot be contacted, the student(s) will be returned to their home campus for pick up. Please contact the Transportation Department before 2:30 pm if you will have someone different at the bus stop to pick-up your PK, Kdg or 1st grade student(s). The Transportation Department can be reached at (254) 947-6994 or transportation@saladoisd.org.**

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 15 feet beyond the front bumper and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross. The student

will check in both directions for traffic and walk directly across the road if there is no moving traffic.

- 2) Never cross the road behind the bus.
- 3) CAUTION! Be alert for the vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading and unloading students.
- 4) Cross all streets at your bus stop. Obey all traffic signals and signs on your way home.

Prohibited Items

- 1) Weapons, explosives (such as fireworks), knives, taser or stun guns, chains, water guns, unsheathed pointed articles, any light emitting devices, e.g., flashlights, lasers etc., or any other objects that could be considered dangerous or detrimental to safety, order, and discipline on the bus.
- 2) Alcoholic beverages, drugs, or chemicals.
- 3) Vapors, Cigarettes, cigars, and any other tobacco products.
- 4) Matches, e-matches or any type of lighter.
- 5) Live animals, pets or insects of any time. Plants in containers of dirt or other growing medium OR containers of spill able material not in an enclosed or sealed container or bag.
- 6) Skateboards, rollerblades, Heelys shoes with wheels extended, or other items that may roll around on the bus.
- 7) Audio players, Walkie-Talkies, push-to-talk cell phones, or paging devices of any kind will not be allowed.
- 8) Students will keep aisles clear of loose items and obstructions. Examples: Articles such as large projects, large band instruments (i.e. tuba, baritone horn or saxophone, other large instruments, etc.) which are too large to be held in the student's lap or which may impose on other riders will not be allowed on the bus.
- 9) Musical instruments will not be played on the bus.
- 10) Students are not permitted to wear book bags and backpacks while seated on the bus. These items will be transported on the floor between the student's feet, on the student's lap, or on the seat next to the student (only if this does not restrict another student's ability to ride). Musical instruments will not be played on the bus.
- 11) Students will not eat food, chew gum or drink (Bottles or cans whether full or empty) will not be allowed on any bus with the exception of bottled water
- 12) Perfumes, colognes, or aerosol containers will not be sprayed or applied on the bus.
- 13) Glass containers.
- 14) Sporting equipment (balls, bats, rackets, etc.) must be in backpacks, cased, or left in the front of the bus. Multiple or bagged golf clubs are prohibited. Cleats of any type will not be worn on the bus.
- 15) **Drivers and school officials are not responsible for articles left on the bus.**

Accidents or Emergencies

- 1) Follow the bus driver's instructions.
- 2) If you are told to leave the bus, stay in a group.
- 3) The following procedures will be used for evacuation in emergencies:
 - a) The two students nearest the door will open the door and hold it open.

- b) Leave the bus in a single file as quickly and as quietly as possible.
- c) Evacuation will start with the student chosen by the driver, alternating from side to side.
- d) When exiting through rear or side doors the “sit and scoot” method will be used; jumping from the bus is not permitted.
- e) Once outside the bus, follow the driver’s instructions completely.
- f) No student or employee may leave the scene of an accident unless released by a school administrator after the investigation is completed.

Extracurricular Trips

- 1) Bus rider rules apply to all school-sponsored events.
- 2) Discipline will be the responsibility of the school principal and the trip sponsor.
- 3) Eating and drinking on buses used specifically for activity trips may be approved if requested and approved by the trip sponsor in advance.
- 4) The bus must be cleaned inside when returning from a trip. Students will assist the sponsors of trips by picking up trash on the bus and disposing of it properly.

Use of Video Equipment

- 1) Transportation video equipment with audio recording capabilities may be used on each bus during routes or on trips.
- 2) Videos will be viewed by the Director of Transportation, School Principals, and Administration Personnel only. Based on legal guidelines, parents, guardians, or other non-district personnel may not view the videos.
- 3) Video tapes or copies will not be released from the Transportation Office
- 4) Transportation department employees are the only individuals authorized to adjust or service these systems.

Student Discipline

The school bus is an extension of the classroom, and as such, all rules that apply in the classroom carry over to the bus. Once a student referral is submitted to a campus through the Transportation Department, any discipline from that safety violation will be assigned by the student’s principal or designated campus administrator.

Level and consequences for improper conduct on the bus include the following:

Level 1 Misbehavior:

- Very loud talking, screaming on the bus
- Disobedient or disrespectful to the bus driver
- Sticking head, hands or feet out of the window
- Spraying perfume/cologne or other fragrances that may induce asthma or allergic reactions.
- Eating and/or drinking on the bus other than water without the driver’s permission.
- Throwing objects inside/outside of the bus
- Moving about while the bus is in motion
- Littering the bus
- Inappropriate language (Speaking in a way that teases, hurts or harasses others).
- Failure to follow the bus driver’s instructions when given.

Consequences for Level 1 Misbehavior:

- Verbal warning/redirection from driver
- Written warning from driver and seat reassignment
- Parent called by Transportation
- Referral sent to campus for corrective action. If behavior continues, possible bus riding privileges suspended at the discretion of the Principal or designated campus administrator.

Level II Misbehavior:

- Vandalizing the bus or others personal property
- Broken window(s)
- Tampering with the bus or equipment
- Possession/use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, weapons
- Physical abuse (i.e. fighting, pushing, or tripping)
- Abusive language towards others (i.e. obscene language)
- Opening the rear door while bus is in motion
- Videoing/recording other students/employees
- Any type of lewd behavior (i.e. exposing body parts, sharing inappropriate content with others or any type of sexual harassment).

Consequences for Level II Misbehavior:

- Bus referral sent to campus administrators for corrective action
- Bus referral sent to campus and conduct form sent home to parents for signature.
- Bus referral sent to campus - bus riding privileges suspended at the discretion of the campus administrator.

Continued inappropriate behavior after suspension from the bus, could result in longer suspension(s) from the bus up to the remainder of the school year to be determined by the campus administrator.

If the discipline includes the student's bus riding privileges being suspended, the campus will inform the parent or guardian. The parent or guardian must make other transportation arrangements of their own for the duration of the suspension of bus riding privileges.

In case of serious misconduct that may endanger the safety of the other passengers or driver, the student(s) may be removed from the bus by any school official or with law enforcement assistance. The parent or guardian will be notified as soon as possible.

STUDENT INFORMATION

TEAR OUT THIS PAGE

Please complete and return to your Bus Driver within five days

Last Name		
First Name and MI		
Prefers to be Called		
Parent / Guardian		
Street Address		
City and ZIP		
School		
Grade and Age	GRADE	AGE
AM Bus & Stop	BUS	STOP LOCATION
Noon Bus & Stop	BUS	STOP LOCATION
PM Bus & Stop	BUS	STOP LOCATION

I have received and understand the contents of the *Student Bus Rider's Safety Handbook*.

Student Signature or Name

Date

Parent / Guardian Signature

SALADO ISD TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

254-947-6994

Transportation@saladoisd.org



Transportation

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