

# SCURRY-ROSSER ISD TRANSPORTATION

## SAFE RIDER HANDBOOK

### “EDUCATION BEGINS WITH TRANSPORTATION”

#### **SCURRY-ROSSER ISD Transportation Department**

**10705 South State Highway 34**

**SCURRY-ROSSER, TX. 75158**

**972-452-8823 Ext. 1015 Office**

Dear Parents / Guardians and Bus Riders:

The SCURRY-ROSSER Independent School District offers the **privilege** of school bus transportation to and from school as a courtesy service for eligible students in the district. Eligible students are defined by the State of Texas as “those who reside at least two (2) miles from the school they attend, as measured by the nearest practical route.”

Effective transportation service requires cooperation among transportation staff, bus drivers, administrators, students, and parents/guardians. Every effort is made to promote comfortable and pleasant transportation service while maintaining an appropriate level of safety and efficiency.

In order to meet these conditions, as outlined by the State, and to promote safe and prompt movement of eligible students, SCURRY-ROSSER ISD has developed Bus Safety Guidelines and Rules, which are outlined in the students Safe Rider Handbook. The Safe Rider Handbook may be obtained from the Transportation Page of the District’s website: <https://www.scurry-rosser.com/domain/82>.

We ask that you read and discuss the contents of this handbook with your student(s) so that you and your student(s) have a clear understanding of the responsibilities and expectations of riding the school bus.

We do not request or require an adult to be present at the bus stop. Your student will be expected to get on and off the bus without supervision. If you cannot assure that happening, please do not let your student ride. If a problem arises due to the child being scared or seeming lost, they will be returned to their campus.

Please contact the Transportation Department office at 972-452-8823 EXT 1015, if you have any questions or concerns about the SCURRY-ROSSER ISD transportation system.

Thank you for your cooperation and support regarding the care and safety of all our children.

***Erik Scott***

***Director of Operations & Safety***

### **General Rules**

1. Obey the instructions of the bus driver at all times.
  - a. At no time will a student act toward or address comments to the bus driver in a disrespectful manner, or refuse to cooperate with the driver's instructions.
2. Be courteous to everyone at all times.
  - a. Bus driver
  - b. Other students
  - c. School staff
3. Board and leave the bus at your assigned and designated bus stop only.
4. All students must ride their assigned bus to and from their assigned bus stop.
  - a. Example: A student who is assigned to Bus X may not ride home with a friend or relative on Bus A (unless granted permission by an administrator).
5. It is the responsibility of the parent / guardian to provide transportation TO/FROM school if a student misses the bus.
6. School Bus Referrals are utilized as a form of communication from the bus driver to the

administrator, and will be discussed in detail in another portion of this handbook.

7. Electronic Devices are HIGHLY discouraged for elementary students, as the bus driver cannot effectively police their use. With secondary students, these items, if played too loudly, may cause a distraction or disturbance to the driver, and thus becomes a safety hazard. If a secondary student chooses to listen to an electronic device, they must use ONLY ONE (1) earbud / headphone attached to the student's ear. Students must be able to hear communications from the driver at all times.

8. All Ipads and laptops belonging to the district must be kept in backpacks, this will eliminate damage as well as eliminate distraction from their use.

### **Conduct While on the Bus**

1. Go directly to your seat, and remain seated for the duration of the route. Do not stand or change seats while the bus is in motion.

2. Students are not permitted to refuse to sit in an assigned seat, or to deny any student a place to sit.

3. Normal conversation is permitted; any loud noises may distract the driver and create an unsafe condition.

4. Fighting, scuffling, horseplay, use of obscene, vulgar or profane language or gestures are forbidden.

5. If buses are equipped with seatbelts, students are required to wear them at all times.

6. Do not throw any objects inside or outside of the bus at any time.

7. Do not mark, cut, scratch, or tear any part of bus seats. Any person found responsible for damages will pay vandalism costs and may lose riding privileges.

8. Emergency doors, windows, exits and hatch controls should only be used during emergency evacuations, and upon instruction by the driver.

9. Students shall never operate the passenger door control, nor any other driver controls, except in an emergency, upon the instruction of the driver, or if the driver is in some manner incapacitated.

10. Students shall face forward with their feet on the floor in front of them at all times while

the bus is in motion.

11. Students must keep seats and the aisle of the bus free and clear of any obstructions

- a. Legs / feet
- b. Backpacks / book bags
- c. School / Art projects
- d. Athletic equipment
- e. Musical instruments
- f. All other large objects

12. Students shall follow ALL SRISD dress codes while riding the bus.

13. All other applicable School Rules apply while riding the bus.

### **Prohibited Items**

1. Tobacco products of any kind

- a. Cigarettes / Cigars
- b. Vapor Cigs / E-Cigs
- c. Smokeless / dip / chewing tobacco

2. Animals or insects, dead or alive

3. Glass containers

4. Alcoholic products

5. Weapons, explosive devices, any flammable items, drugs, or chemicals

6. Matches or cigarette lighters (lighted or not)

7. Flash paraphernalia or laser lights may not be in use while on the bus.

8. Any object (musical instruments, fundraisers, school projects, art projects, crutches, etc) too large to be carried safely by the student, or held in the student's lap. Objects may not take up a seat space.

9. All Food or Drink – eating and drinking on the bus is a choking hazard as well as may cause allergic reaction to other students.

10. Students are not permitted to use any type of recording device while riding on the bus

- a. Video Camera recording devices

b. Still picture recording devices

c. Audio recording devices

11. Any item that may be used as a weapon, i.e., hammers, screw drivers, bats etc...

### **School Bus Stops**

Designated School Bus Stop

Designated School Bus stops must meet strenuous criteria as set by SCURRY-ROSSER ISD

Transportation ensures that all our designated school bus stops meet these criteria.

SCURRY-ROSSER ISD school buses will not enter:

- dead-end streets (unless approved)
- Cul-de-Sacs, unless safe, and deemed necessary for turn-around of the bus route
- Into / onto personal property or private roads

Authorized School Bus Stop

Students may only ride the school bus to and from their authorized bus stop. Authorized bus stops are established within a reasonable walking distance of the home of every student eligible for transportation services.

### **Procedures for Loading / Unloading the Bus**

1. Students must arrive at the bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. This ensures the student will not be missed due to the bus arriving a little earlier than the designated pick up time. Bus schedules tend to accelerate if not stopping to pick up students who do not ride at previous stops.
2. Students must be in clear sight for the approaching bus driver to see. Driver will not stop, wait, or honk for students who are not clearly visible.
3. Stand on the sidewalk or back from the roadway about 10 feet. In darkened areas, it is a good practice to use reflective markers or flashlights so the driver can see the student.
4. If a student misses the bus they should go home immediately. It is the parent's / guardian's responsibility to transport the student to school. Parents / guardians should have a backup plan in place if the student misses the bus.

5. Students must be able to get on and off the bus without assistance. Students temporarily using crutches, wheelchairs or walkers will need special assistance, and may be assigned to a special needs bus while such devices are being used. Parents/guardians must make arrangements with the Transportation Office PRIOR to day of transport.

#### **Loading**

1. As the bus approaches form a line and be prepared to load. Stand clear of the bus, at least 10 feet, until it comes to a complete stop and the driver signals you to board.

NEVER walk toward the bus as it is still approaching.

2. Use steps and handrails properly. Do not jump over steps.

3. Go directly to your assigned seat. Students are typically assigned seats by grade level.

However, at their discretion, the bus driver may assign other seating arrangements.

#### **Unloading**

1. Stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop. Gather all personal items, and walk to the front of the bus.

2. Use the handrails, and take one step at a time. Do not jump from steps.

3. Wait your turn – no pushing or shoving. Students must use the “zipper” method for unloading. That is, they must wait for the students in seat(s) in front of them to get up and leave their seats before they get up and walk down the aisle. Students will be shown this technique by the driver.

4. Allow “crossers” to exit bus first. Students who must cross the street in front of the bus are “crossers”. When it is your turn, exit the bus and walk directly away from the bus, at least 10 feet away, in the straightest path to your home. NEVER return to the bus without gaining the attention of the bus driver first, and only return to the passenger door.

#### **Crossing the Street or Highway**

1. SRISD always tries to accommodate students being picked up on the right side of the roadway. However, if it is necessary to cross the street, students shall exit the bus and walk 15 feet in front of the right front bumper of the bus on the sidewalk, if available,

and wait for the driver to signal the student it is safe to cross.

2. Check both ways before crossing and always go directly straight across the street.
3. NEVER CROSS BEHIND THE BUS. It is against the law.

### **Danger Zones**

The DANGER ZONE is the area immediately surrounding the school bus, extending a minimum of 10 feet on all sides. The area of greatest danger is immediately in front of the front bumper and right wheel. Teach your student(s) “If you can touch the bus, you are TOO CLOSE”, and “If you can’t see the driver as you cross the street in front of the bus, you are TOO CLOSE!”

See diagram 2

### **Safety tips for parents and students**

1. Never stop to pick up anything that falls in front of the bus bumper, is swept under the bus, or that is in front of the wheels. Notify the driver, and he/she will retrieve the dropped item, or instruct the student to retrieve it.
2. Students should always watch for moving vehicles when exiting a stopped school bus, and/or crossing the street. Vehicles do not always stop for a school bus with red lights flashing, even though it is the law to do so.
3. Have children put everything they carry in a backpack or school bag so they won’t drop things along the way.
4. Secure any loose drawstrings on clothing or bags so they won’t catch on the handrails or bus door.
5. Have them wear bright, contrasting colors so the drivers can see them more easily during early hours.
6. Make sure they leave home on time so they can be at the bus stop a minimum of 5 minutes before the bus arrives. Running to the bus stop after the bus arrives is dangerous.
7. NEVER run to catch the bus.

### **Student Discipline**

The school bus is an extension of the classroom, and most school rules apply while riding the

school bus. All laws, TEA regulations, and school board policies that apply to student conduct during other student activities apply to the school bus.

Drivers will effectively maintain proper control of the bus environment. Proper environment is critical to safe operation of the school bus. Many methods are used to observe, monitor, and ensure the proper environment on the school bus. Transportation supervisors will assist the drivers in administering discipline, utilizing video footage as deemed necessary, and with the assistance from the bus driver's referrals.

#### **BUS SAFETY REFERRALS**

In most circumstances, students are given several chances to correct their behavior before receiving a Bus Safety Referral. Drivers utilize several options:

1. Verbal correction
2. Remedial instruction
3. Move the student to another seat, usually closer to the front near the driver
4. Have an administrator from campus have a conversation with the student/return them to their campus
5. As a last resort driver will write Bus Safety Referrals

#### **Accidents or Emergencies**

1. Students must remain calm and follow the driver's instructions at all times.
2. Remain in your seat until receiving further instructions. Seating charts are required by the police for their investigation.
3. If an evacuation is necessary, students must stay in a group, remain calm and quiet, and walk to a safe location, away from the danger zone.
4. The following procedures from the Texas Education Agency will be used for evacuation of the school bus in an emergency situation:
  - a. Two students assigned by the driver will open and hold the evacuation door, and assist other students off the bus as necessary.
  - b. Students will leave the bus in a single file as quickly and quietly as possible.
  - c. Evacuations will start with the seat closest to the exit being utilized for



evacuation.

d. Walk to a safe place at least 100 feet (approximately 40 paces) off the road, in the direction of oncoming traffic. This keeps students from being hit by debris if another vehicle collides with the bus.

5. NO student will be released from the bus until authorized by emergency responders or a school district Official. Parents must show proper ID to emergency response teams to take a student from the scene of an accident.

#### Bad Weather Days / School Bus Schedules

Any day that school is being held school buses will operate, to include late starts. Many sources are available to determine if school is closed or delayed due to bad weather:

- [www.SCURRY-ROSSER.com](http://www.SCURRY-ROSSER.com)
- Radio stations
  - FM 94.9
- Television stations
  - 8 - ABC
  - 11 – CBS

Additionally, SRISD uses the district website for mass communication/notification.

If school is delayed, buses will run according to the delayed time. If school is on a two-hour delay, expect your students' bus to arrive at the authorized bus stop two hours later than normal. Example: if your student typically catches the bus at 7:05 a.m., you can expect the bus to be at your stop at 9:05 a.m.

#### **Restricted Areas**

SCURRY-ROSSER ISD buses will not enter dead-end streets, Cul-de-Sacs, nor personal property, except when used for route turn-around, which requires special approval by the Transportation Coordinator.

### **Professional School Bus Drivers**

SCURRY-ROSSER ISD School Bus Drivers are professionals and are expected to conduct themselves as professionals at all times. As professionals, they will expect the same courtesy, respect and consideration from all students and parents in return.

All School Bus Drivers are certified through the Texas Department of Public Safety with at least a Class B CDL, with P (passenger) and S (school bus) endorsements. All school bus drivers are required to take annual DOT physicals, and are subject to random drug and alcohol testing at any time. All drivers have successfully completed a 20-hour school bus driver training course approved by the State of Texas, and administered through the TEA.

### **Penal Code:**

A person commits a class C Misdemeanor if he/she intentionally disrupts, prevents or interferes with the lawful transportation of students in a school district owned vehicle.

### **ADDENDUMS & REVISIONS:**

Please consult with the online version of this handbook for any changes that may be made at any time.