

# **Fort Stockton Independent School District 2025-2026**



## **Bus Rider Safety Handbook**

### **Transportation Office**

**802 S. Rio Street • Fort Stockton, Texas 79735**

**Transportation Phone: (432) 336-4033**

**Transportation Fax: (432) 336-4038**

**Transportation Director, James Warnock**

**[www.fsisd.net](http://www.fsisd.net)**



# FORT STOCKTON

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ensuring children's safety is the top priority. Students must wear seat belts on buses with seat belts. Together, let's remind students to buckle up for safety.

**Thank you for your support!**



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## New Texas Law Regarding Cell Phones in Schools

# TEXAS HB 1481



### NEW DEVICE LAW

**Keeping You Informed:**  
As we prepare for a year of significant changes at FSISD, we would like to inform you about a new state law that will affect all public schools in Texas, effective with the 2025–2026 school year.

**This law will take effect at the start of the 2025–2026 school year.**

**Devices must be left at home or turned off and put away in your locker during the school day.**

**No personal communication devices (cell phones, smartwatches, tablets, headphones, or earbuds) may be used during school hours.**

**This includes during class changes, restroom breaks, and lunchtime.**




**LEARN MORE** ↓

[Texas House Bill 1481](#)



## New Texas Law Regarding Cell Phones in Schools

# FORT STOCKTON



### 6<sup>TH</sup>-12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE DEVICE POLICY

**Students must place devices in the locker at the beginning of the day and cannot access the locker until the end of the day.**

**Students will be assigned a locker designated for all personal devices only.**

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense**  
Parent pick-up at the end of the day.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense**  
1 day of ISS to begin the following day.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense**  
2 days of ISS to begin the following day and loss of open campus lunch.

**4<sup>th</sup> Offense**  
15 days of DAEP placement with a review at 10 days.

**5<sup>th</sup> Offense**  
Long-term DAEP placement at the discretion of the administration.


**Refusal to give the device will result in 3 days OSS, loss of open campus, and complete the original consequence.**

The device will be picked up and only returned to the parent after an in-person conference and all consequences have been completed by the student for every offense.

[Texas House Bill 1481](#)

## New Texas Law Regarding Cell Phones in Schools

# FORT STOCKTON



### PK-5TH GRADE DEVICE POLICY

**Students should not bring devices to campus .**

If brought to campus, device must be turned off, placed in backpack at the beginning of the day and cannot be accessed until the end of the day.

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense**  
Parent pick-up at the end of the day.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense**  
1 day of ISS to begin the following day.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense**  
2 days of ISS to begin the following day.

Refusal to give the device will result in 3 days ISS and complete the original consequence.

The device will be picked up and only returned to the parent after an in-person conference and all consequences have been completed by the student for every offense.

[Texas House Bill 1481](#)

## Cell Phone and Device Use on Buses | In Compliance with Texas House Bill 1481

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Fort Stockton ISD is committed to maintaining a safe and distraction-free environment for all students. As required by Texas House Bill 1481, all school districts must implement a policy that prohibits student use of personal communication devices during the school day, including while riding on school buses. Time spent on the school bus is considered part of the instructional day and school property. Therefore, students are expected to comply with the following guidelines:

### **🚫 Device Use Is Not Allowed on the Bus**

Students may bring personal communication devices, but they must always remain powered off and out of sight during the bus ride. **This includes but is not limited to:**

- Cell phones (smartphones, flip phones, burner phones, etc.)
- Smartwatches, smart glasses, and smart rings, etc.
- Non-school-issued laptops, tablets, computer devices
- Wireless earbuds or Bluetooth headsets
- E-readers with apps or messaging
- Portable Wi-Fi devices
- Any device capable of communicating, texting, calling, or internet messaging

Bus drivers will not collect or store devices, except in an emergency. Students are responsible for keeping their devices powered off and secured in their backpack or personal belongings.

### **⚠️ Policy Enforcement and Consequences**

Any student found using a device on the bus will be reported to the campus principal. Disciplinary actions will follow the FSISD Student Code of Conduct and may include but not limited to, loss of privileges, school suspension, or DAEP.

**Repeated or serious violations may result in permanent removal from bus transportation.**

We ask for your support in reinforcing these expectations with your child. **Please make sure your contact information is up to date with your child's campus, as all official emergency communications will come through the school and not through student devices.** Thank you for your cooperation in supporting student safety and a focused learning environment.

Sincerely,  
FSISD Transportation Department

FSISD Bus Rider Safety Handbook 2025-2026



## **Notice to Parents and Guardians**

### **Implementation of UniteGPS Transportation Technology**

Fort Stockton ISD is committed to student safety, efficient transportation, and clear communication with families. Beginning this school year, we will implement a new transportation management system powered by **UniteGPS**.

**UniteGPS** provides real-time GPS tracking, student ridership monitoring, and route efficiency tools that enhance safety and communication across our transportation system. This technology will help our staff monitor bus routes, streamline scheduling, and send timely updates to families.

In the coming weeks, we will notify families about the implementation of **UniteGPS**.

**For this reason, it is important that your campus has the most up-to-date contact information on file, including:**

- Phone Number(s)
- Physical Address
- Email address(es)
- Authorized emergency contact(s)
- **Any changes or information that helps to transport students safely**

Please notify your school office immediately if your contact information has changed.

We look forward to using this system to provide greater peace of mind, improved communication, and safer transportation for all students.

If you have any questions, please contact your campus or the FSISD Transportation Department at (432) 336-4033.

Sincerely,  
Fort Stockton ISD Transportation Department

Dear Parents,

The Fort Stockton Independent School District provides bus transportation to and from school as a courtesy for eligible students residing in the district. The State of Texas prescribes the conditions governing school bus operations and supports the service by allotting the District a given amount of funds for eligible students transported. All routes are structured according to the State of Texas guidelines for pupil transportation.

To meet the conditions outlined by the State and provide safe, prompt movement of eligible students, the School District has adopted regulations and procedures and has provided restrictive measures for violations of the rules. They are herein outlined for your information and for the guidance of your child. The School District is pleased to provide transportation for its eligible students and solicits your assistance in helping create a safe, healthy operation. You may do so by reading the enclosed material and completing the Parent/Student Agreement below. Our children are precious, and their safety is essential, so we ask for your cooperation with school personnel in developing proper behavior patterns for those students who ride buses.

If you need information or have any concerns or questions regarding bus routes, you may contact the transportation department.

James Warnock  
Transportation Director

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**PARENTS:** If you should have any questions concerning established bus routes, please contact the Transportation Department at the phone number listed below.

<b>Transportation</b> James Warnock, Director	<b>Bus Barn</b>	<b>(432) 336-4033</b>
<b>Apache Elementary</b> Roxana Espino, Principal	<b>Grades Pk-1</b>	<b>(432) 336-4161</b>
<b>Alamo Elementary</b> Karina Pacheco, Principal	<b>Grades 2-3</b>	<b>(432) 336-4016</b>
<b>Intermediate School</b> Julian Castillo, Principal	<b>Grades 4-5</b>	<b>(432) 336-4141</b>
<b>Middle School</b> Stacy Jones, Principal	<b>Grades 6-8</b>	<b>(432) 336-4131</b>
<b>High School</b> Sammy Solis, Principal	<b>Grades 9-12</b>	<b>(432) 336-4101</b>



## **Please Read the Important Information Below**

Parents must ensure they do not send a child to school on campus if the child has COVID-19 symptoms or is lab-confirmed with COVID-19. Fort Stockton ISD will take precautions to minimize any potential spread of a possible virus by

- Recommending students and staff to use hand sanitizer.
- Face coverings are used upon the rider's discretion.
- Buses will be thoroughly cleaned daily between routes, focusing on high-touch surfaces such as bus seats, steering wheels, knobs, and door handles. During cleaning, open windows to allow for additional ventilation and airflow.
- Monitor adherence to the schedule for increased, routine cleaning, and disinfection.
- Avoid touching nonessential surfaces as much as possible.
- Remind staff and students to do their best to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Place posters/reminders that encourage hygienic practices.
- Follow all applicable federal regulations and public health agency guidelines.
- Train staff on all safety protocols.
- Bus drivers will work with campuses to inform the schools of students who may be sick.
- Bus drivers and staff will self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before driving a bus each day.
- FSISD will rely on health and hygiene practices, including the use of hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations with soap and water.
- FSISD will comply with any governor's executive order regarding the wearing of masks.

# **Bus Rider Safety Handbook**

Parents, Principals, Drivers, and Bus Riders:

The goal of the Bus Rider Safety Handbook is to help provide a safe and enjoyable experience for children and adults who ride buses. Parents should take time to read and discuss the materials in the handbook with their children. Riding a school bus is a privilege provided by the school district and should be treated as such. The Parent/Student Agreement is to be completed before your child may ride the bus.

## **General Guidelines:**

1. Each student rider must review, approve, and return this agreement each school year.
2. If your student will not attend school on a particular day, please notify the Transportation Office at **(432) 336-4033**, no less than 30 minutes prior to student pickup time.
3. All students must board and exit the bus at their individual pick-up or delivery location. Please coordinate with the Transportation Office if changes to a student's pick-up or delivery location are necessary.
4. Only those students who are eligible to ride an assigned bus will be allowed entry on that bus. Students who must ride home or school with another student must provide a permission note signed by their parent and/or guardian and by a campus administrator.
5. If a student misses the bus, it is the parent and/or guardian's responsibility to provide transportation to or from the school. Students who miss the bus should immediately return to their homes or school.
6. Riding the bus is considered a "school-related activity," and so the requirements and procedures found in the Fort Stockton ISD Student Code of Conduct likewise extend and apply to student behavior on the bus. Behavior offenses while riding the bus may result in the suspension of bus privileges, or other disciplinary consequences including detention, school suspension, alternative placement, or expulsion.
7. Regular bus rules apply to all school-sponsored events, including extracurricular trips.
8. Video cameras are utilized on Fort Stockton ISD school buses to ensure the safety and protection of all students and drivers. Footage from these devices may be utilized for the purpose of safety training and/or student discipline.
9. The use of district transportation is a privilege, not a right. This privilege may be revoked for just cause and is conditional on a student's behavior and cooperation with the safety guidelines in this Handbook.

### **Conduct for School Transportation:**

Required conduct on the school bus include, but are not limited to, the following guidelines:

- 1. If the bus or vehicle has seat belts, students must wear them properly.**
2. When boarding the bus, students must go directly to their seats and remain seated for the duration of the trip. Standing or changing seats during a trip is strictly prohibited.
3. Students shall not push or shove others while entering the bus.
4. Under no circumstances may a student extend their heads, hands, arms, or any other body part through windows or doors of the vehicle.
5. Students are forbidden from occupying the driver's seat or touching any bus driver's operational controls.
6. Students shall immediately report any existing vandalism or damage to the bus driver. A student found to be responsible for damaging or vandalizing a bus will be responsible for the costs of repair.
7. Screaming, shouting, loud talking, singing, dancing, fighting, use of profanity, or other behavior deemed to be a disruption or inappropriate is prohibited while riding on the bus.
8. Students are expected to obey instructions from bus drivers or other adults with authority while riding the bus.
9. Students must keep all personal items out of the aisle while the bus is in motion.
10. Students shall not throw items or objects while on the bus.
11. Students shall not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on the bus.
12. Students must remain in their seats until the bus comes to a complete stop.
13. If a student's personal item falls under the bus, the student must ask the driver for assistance or wait until the bus has departed to retrieve the item.
14. Be at your bus stop five minutes before scheduled pick-up time. The driver will not wait or honk.
15. Stand on the sidewalk or back away from the roadway while waiting for the bus.
16. When the bus approaches, form a line, and be prepared to load immediately.
17. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop.
18. Parents should instruct their children on what procedures to follow if the bus is missed.
19. Students will abide by the district's rules and regulations concerning bus rules, including conduct and dress code.
20. While loading the bus students must not push or shove, use handrails/steps.
21. The driver and or school personnel may assign designated seats to all students.
22. Students will use the emergency door and exit controls only during supervised drills at actual emergencies.
23. Students should never attempt to operate the passenger door or other driver controls except in case of extreme emergencies.

24. Students shall face forward for the duration of the trip and shall keep their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the bus aisle.

**Reminders for Boarding and Exiting the Bus:**

1. Students should board or exit the bus at the designated stop closest to their home.
2. Students should be courteous to others while waiting for their bus to arrive. Students are expected to arrive at their designated bus stop no less than 5 minutes prior to the scheduled bus arrival time.
3. Students should stand on the sidewalk or otherwise no less than 10 feet away from the roadway.
4. Students must be standing within the clear sight of an approaching bus driver. A driver will not stop or wait for those students who are not within their clear sight.
5. Students should be aware of their designated bus stop and be ready to exit the bus upon arrival at the designated stop.
6. Students who must cross the street should be permitted to exit the bus first. Students crossing the street shall exit the bus and walk no less than 15 feet in front of the bus before crossing the street. Students must look both ways before crossing a roadway.
7. Students must exit the bus and walk directly from the bus to their home in the straightest path possible. All students must obey traffic signs and signals while walking away from the bus.
8. Students are prohibited from touching the school bus while exiting the bus or walking away from the bus.
9. Students must not return to the bus after exiting without first gaining the attention of the bus driver first. The bus driver will provide instructions for the student for returning to the bus.
10. Items left on the bus after departure will be retained by the driver and be made available for collection at Fort Stockton ISD Transportation Department, 802 S. Rio.
11. Students must not use the emergency exits unless so instructed by the bus driver. Emergency devices shall only be used during evacuation procedures. Students who tamper with emergency devices and/or exits may lose riding privileges.
- 12. Stay seated in seatbelts until the bus has come to a complete stop.**
13. Use the handrail and take one step at a time when leaving the bus.
14. Wait your turn to leave the bus; pushing and crowding will only slow exiting, and may cause an accident.
15. You must have a signed note from your parent/guardian to get off at a bus stop other than your own. The note must be given to the driver when boarding the bus.
16. Stay clear of the bus when the engine is started. Do not chase or hang onto the bus at any time.



17. If you drop an article anywhere near or under the bus, do not retrieve it. Ask the bus driver for their help to get the item for you.

### **Crossing a Street or Highway:**

1. All students living on the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point 10 to 12 feet in front of the right bumper and wait for the driver to signal you, it is safe to cross the road.
2. Check both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. Never cross the road behind the bus.
4. Be alert for the vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading or unloading students.
5. Cross all streets safely and obey all traffic signals and signs on your way home.

### **Prohibited Items:**

1. Tobacco-related products, including lighters, matches, and vaping products.
2. Alcoholic beverages or items that depict the use of alcoholic beverages.
3. Drugs and drug paraphernalia.
4. Weapons, explosive devices, flammable items, or chemicals.
5. Food or drink.
6. Animals or insects, dead or alive.
7. Video and/or audio recording devices.
8. Glass bottles and containers.
9. Laser pointers or other flash devices.
10. Aerosol sprays or other harmful and flammable substances.
11. Other items deemed by the bus driver to be inappropriate or unsafe for bus transportation.
12. Any items prohibited at school according to the Fort Stockton ISD Code of Conduct, available at <https://www.fsisd.net/staff/required-postings/student-code-of-conduct>



***Personal communication devices must always remain powered off and out of sight, in compliance with Texas House Bill 1481. Repeated or serious violations may result in permanent removal from bus transportation.***

### **Accidents and Emergencies:**

The following procedures, upon instruction from the driver, will be used in the event of an emergency evacuation.

1. **If the bus or vehicle has seat belts, students must wear them properly.**
2. Students should remain calm and quiet while waiting for the bus driver to provide instructions.
3. Two students nearest the emergency door will open and hold the door. These students will assist other students off the bus as needed.
4. Students will quickly and quietly evacuate the bus.

5. Students will remain in groups during evacuation.
6. The order of evacuation will proceed based on those seated nearest the evacuation exits.
7. Students will walk to a safe location no less than 100 feet from the road, per the bus driver's instruction.
8. All students must remain on location until released by emergency responders or school officials. Parents will be required to provide identification to the appropriate official before taking their child from the scene of an accident.
9. Parents are expected to cooperate with the emergency evacuation process and not interfere with or obstruct these procedures.

#### **Extracurricular Trips:**

1. Bus rider rules apply to all school-sponsored events.
2. Discipline will be the responsibility of the trip sponsor, the principal, and or the transportation director.
3. The bus must be cleaned upon returning from the trip by the group on the trip.

#### **Discipline:**

1. If any of the above student behavior rules are violated, a bus driver will make a referral of the violation to the principal and the following disciplinary action will be taken:
  1. **1st Violation:** Principal or Assistant Principal will conference with the student - suspension from the bus may occur with this violation. Parents or guardians will be notified.
  2. **2nd Violation:** Principal or Assistant Principal will conference with the student and parent or guardian. Suspension from the bus may occur with this violation.
  3. **3rd Violation:** Principal or Assistant Principal will conference with the student and parent or guardian. The student may be suspended from the bus for an extended period as determined by the campus principal.

Upon suspension from the bus, parents are responsible for providing transportation for the student to attend school during his/her suspension. This is not a suspension from class. If the student does not attend school after suspension from the bus, the absence is unexcused.

Modification or exception to the disciplinary steps will be agreed upon by both the school principal and the transportation director.

#### **Student Expectations for Behavior:**

**1. Wear a seatbelt if the bus or vehicle has seatbelts.**

2. Respect self, others, and property.
3. For the safety of everyone, behave appropriately with no loud noises.
4. Cooperate with the bus driver and others.
5. Enter and exit the bus in an orderly fashion.
6. Stay in your assigned seat, facing forward.
7. Keep hands, arms, head, and feet inside the bus.
8. Do not drop or throw objects inside or outside the bus.
9. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
10. Do not litter on the bus.
11. No inappropriate language.
12. No weapons, alcohol, or drugs including tobacco.
13. No physical or verbal altercations.

**14. Communication devices must always remain powered off and out of sight, in compliance with Texas House Bill 1481.**

**Parents have a responsibility to:**

1. Read and discuss with your child(ren) the responsibilities, behavior rules, and violation consequences covered by this Handbook and Student Code of Conduct Handbook available on the district website [www.fsisd.net](http://www.fsisd.net).
2. Inform your child(ren) of the location of the bus stop, time, and to wait in a single line.
3. Require your child(ren) to arrive 5 minutes prior to the scheduled time and to conduct themselves appropriately on school buses.
- 4. Remind your child(ren) to wear a seatbelt on the bus or vehicle if it has seatbelts.**
5. Inform the school principal and transportation department of any change of address or telephone number as soon as this information is available.
6. Support the school officials in their efforts to operate a safe and efficient transportation system.

# Parent/Student Agreement and Acknowledgment

Dear Student and Parent:

The Fort Stockton Independent School District provides this Bus Rider Safety Handbook so you will become familiar with our transportation safety procedures. We seek to provide safe and reliable transportation for all students, and your awareness and compliance with the following transportation regulations and procedures assists us in providing the best transportation services possible.

Please review the following guidelines with your child so that they better understand the expectations and responsibilities that come with using District transportation. The student and parent should each sign this page on the space provided below, then return the page to the student's school.



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We acknowledge that we have received the Fort Stockton ISD Bus Rider Safety Handbook for the **2025-2026** school year, and that we are responsible for reading and understanding the rules and other information contained in the Bus Rider Safety Handbook.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Cell Number	Work/Other Number	Home/Other Number

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Student will be riding: Morning (AM) \_\_\_\_\_ Afternoon (PM) \_\_\_\_\_ Both \_\_\_\_\_

Other Information:   
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**Office Use Only:**

Bus Driver Name \_\_\_\_\_ Bus Number \_\_\_\_\_