



EAGLE COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

FAMILY GUIDE TO SCHOOL **BUS TRANSPORTATION**



Dear Families of Eagle County School District,

The ECSD Transportation Department is excited to offer transportation services to our students! Our top priority is making sure everyone travels safely to and from school. Our drivers go above and beyond with their training, meeting and exceeding state and federal standards. We rely on our students, with the help of their parents or guardians, to follow the rules and keep our bus rides safe and enjoyable for everyone.

All students who ride the bus must have a SMARTtag bus pass. This is necessary for the safety of all riders and helps manage loading counts to prevent bus overcrowding. You can use the SMARTtag Parent App to monitor your child's bus activity. Find more information about SMARTtag on our website, eagleschools.net/transportation.

In addition to our daily riders, students use our buses during the school year for activities such as sports, field trips, or other extracurricular events. Please review the Bus Rules and Consequences for Infractions in this file with your child(ren).

Eagle County School District expects all students using school transportation to be familiar with, and adhere to, all required rules and safety standards.

In addition to reviewing the rules with your child(ren), please also ensure your school has updated contact information on file. Emails and telephone numbers are extremely important in the event of an emergency. If you have any questions, contact the Transportation Department at 970-328-2744.

Thank you for your continued cooperation,



Frank Vilece
Director of Transportation
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BUS RULES

Eagle County School District's Policy JICC outlines the appropriate student conduct on buses. Our bus rules apply to all students on all bus routes, including field trips and athletic trips.

- **Rule #1: Students must have their SMARTtag pass ready to scan each time they ride a bus.** All bus riders must identify themselves upon request. Providing false information to a driver may result in permanent loss of school transportation privileges.
- **Rule #2: Students are required to show respect toward the bus driver, fellow students, and the school bus at all times.** Conduct that infringes upon the rights of others, including but not limited to verbal, ethnic, racial, or sexual abuse or any threats, is strictly prohibited. Additionally, passengers must not create any commotion or disturbance that, in the judgment of the driver, may cause distraction or interfere with the safe operation of the bus.
- **Rule #3: The use of electronics on the bus may be restricted,** especially if it distracts the driver. Taking pictures or videos of others on the bus is considered an invasion of privacy and is strictly forbidden.
- **Rule #4: Students can only board and exit the bus at their designated stop.** If a student needs to get on or off at a different stop, a parent or guardian's request must be approved by a school official and presented to the driver. *Notes written in Spanish must be translated by the school office.*
- **Rule #5: Arrive at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time,** as the bus will not wait for latecomers. Once the bus door closes, it will not reopen until the next stop. Do not chase the bus as the driver cannot stop.
- **Rule #6: Stand a safe distance from the curb or roadway and wait for the bus to come to a complete stop.** Stand at least 10 feet from the road and avoid running games or roughhousing while waiting for the bus. Wait to board or exit the bus until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver has opened the door.
- **Rule #7: Wait for the driver's signal before crossing the road.** Cross directly in front of the bus at a distance of 10 to 15 feet. Never cross behind the bus.
- **Rule #8: Sit quickly and quietly in your seat.** Students should remain facing forward while the bus is in motion and always keep all body parts inside the bus. Do not block the aisle with your belongings or your body.
- **Rule #9: Be completely silent when the bus approaches a railroad crossing.**
- **Rule #10: Don't overcrowd the seats.** No more than three passengers per seat for elementary and middle school riders, and no more than two passengers to a seat for high schoolers.
- **Rule #11: No eating, drinking, chewing gum, or spitting while on the bus.**
- **Rule #12: Do not throw objects in, on, at, or from the bus.** Dispose of trash properly in the trash receptacle.
- **Rule #13: Keep conversations at a low volume.** Loud, rude, vulgar, or obscene language and gestures are not allowed.
- **Rule #14: The following items are prohibited on school buses according to state law and/or district policy:**
 - Alcohol, drugs, tobacco, e-cigarettes
 - Weapons (including replicas)
 - Lighters or matches
 - Glass items
 - Explosives
 - Animals, insects, or reptiles
 - Perfumes or colognes
 - Legally prohibited substances
 - Fireworks, smoke bombs, or stink bombs
 - Aerosol products
 - Other dangerous objects

BUS RULES continued

- **Rule #15:** Students must carry all items (such as band instruments, athletic equipment, backpacks, etc.) safely on their lap or place them on an adjacent open seat if available and maintain control of these items at all times. Items considered too large may be denied transport at the driver's discretion.
- **Rule #16:** Sport or recreation balls and equipment must be carried in a backpack or sports bag. It is not safe to play with any of these items on the bus at any time.
- **Rule #17:** Baseball bats, hockey sticks, golf clubs, tennis rackets, skateboards, scooters, and rollerblades are not permitted on the bus. Any other object deemed unsafe as cargo will also be denied. Drivers have the authority to deny transportation to students with such items.
- **Rule #18:** Students must not wear clothing or footwear (such as cleats) that can damage upholstery or floors or that violates district dress code policies.
- **Rule #19:** Stay alert for danger signals from the driver (such as a horn honk or verbal command) when unloading the bus or crossing a road. If you hear a signal, immediately stop and follow the driver's instructions.
- **Rule #20:** Unauthorized exit from or tampering with emergency exits is prohibited.
- **Rule #21:** Any behavior not specifically mentioned above that the driver considers unsafe or harmful to the well-being of other passengers is not permitted.



CONSEQUENCES FOR SCHOOL BUS INFRACTIONS

Students who do not follow the rules will be suspended from our buses. Bus suspension applies to bus routes, field trips, and athletic trips. Bus suspension is not the same as a school suspension. If a student is suspended from the bus, it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to ensure the student's safety in traveling to and from school.

Note: Students suspended from the bus who are variance students (students who attend a school of choice rather than their community school) will lose all bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.

Individual infractions may result in either a warning or suspension. Subsequent infractions are cumulative, building upon the original infraction. While a warning may be issued for one type of infraction, a different type of infraction may then result in suspension.

In every instance, a Bus Conduct Form will be sent to the parent or guardian via the email information on file. This form details the behavior issue and the resulting disciplinary action. The form must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the Transportation Department before the student can ride the bus again.

Our Transportation Department will typically try to make contact with the parent or guardian by phone. However, due to varying schedules and the possibility that some families have unlisted phone numbers or lack a telephone, phone contact can be challenging.

Bus suspensions issued at the end of a school year will carry over and be enforced in the following school year.

ZERO-TOLERANCE BEHAVIORS

In addition to our standard bus safety rules, Eagle County School District has a zero-tolerance policy for certain serious behaviors. The Transportation Department, in coordination with the ECSD administration, has established the following consequences:

- **Vandalism:** Bus suspensions due to vandalism will require restitution through a money order before bus privileges can be reinstated.
- **Police Involvement:** If police involvement is necessary, consequences may escalate to bus suspension for the remainder of the school year, depending on the severity of the infraction.
- **Variance/Transfer Students:** Students who are variance (open enrolled to a school other than their community school) or transfer students, as well as those in after-school programs, will receive one warning call to their parents before losing transportation privileges for the rest of the school year.

The following acts apply to the matrix below:

- Bullying as per Colorado S.B.01-80 (Taunting, Racial Slurs, or Sexual Innuendo)
- Fighting or Physical Assault
- Repeated Extreme Profanity and/or Vulgarity
- Gang-Related Activity
- Theft or Vandalism
- Inappropriate Display of Affection/Sexual Nature
- Tobacco/Vaping or Use of a Lighter or Matches
- Menacing a Driver

	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
First Offense	5-Day Bus Suspension	10-Day Bus Suspension	10-Day Bus Suspension
Second Offense	10-Day Bus Suspension	15-Day Bus Suspension	15-Day Bus Suspension
Third Offense	Suspended for the Remainder of the School Year	Suspended for the Remainder of the School Year	Suspended for the Remainder of the School Year

Students will be suspended for the remainder of the school year for any of the following actions:

- False Accusation or Menacing of a Driver
- Alcohol or Drug Use on a Bus
- Weapons or Weapon Facsimiles (District Policy JICI - Weapons in School)
- Tampering with Emergency Equipment

Students will be suspended for the remainder of the school year AND face assault charges for either of the following actions:

- Physical Assault of the Driver
- Sexual Assault of a Student

APPEALS PROCESS

If a parent or guardian would like to appeal a bus suspension decision, please follow these steps:

1. The parent or guardian must request a conference by contacting the Transportation Department. The student and at least one parent or guardian must attend the conference with the Transportation Supervisor (or designee) and a School Administrator.
2. The School Administrator will schedule the conference and notify the appropriate parties.
3. The Transportation Director will have final authority following the conference. Any suspension will remain in effect until the outcome of the conference is determined.

DISTRICT AUDIOVISUAL RECORDING

Eagle County School District buses are equipped with audiovisual recording devices for the purpose of enhancing safety and discipline. The recordings provide a visual record of behavior on the bus. Misconduct discovered through reviewing recordings may lead to disciplinary action. Recordings will not be released to anyone outside the district unless required by law and will be treated as protected records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

RESTORING ORDER

If a bus discipline problem becomes too disruptive and the driver deems it unsafe to proceed on their route, the driver will safely park the bus until order is restored. This may cause delays, but our priority is to ensure the safety of the students on the bus.

As a last resort, drivers may return any unruly students to their school.

ECSD SMARTTAG BUS PASS PROCEDURES

All students are required to scan their SMARTtag bus pass as they load and unload the bus. Students that do not present their bus pass will have to be manually input into the SMARTtag system by the bus driver, which is a time-consuming process with potential safety concerns.

We have implemented a 3-Strike Policy for middle and high school students. Students receive a single strike each time they have to be manually input into the SMARTtag system. Manual inputs for after-school activities, sports, after-school programs, or field trips do not count as strikes against students. However, we urge all students to carry their SMARTtag bus pass to make these trips safe and efficient.

If a middle or high school student has three strikes, Transportation will not give them a ride to or from school. Bus drivers will contact the Transportation Dispatcher with the name(s) of three-strike student(s) left at their pick-up location before proceeding along their route. Once the \$10 replacement pass is paid, the student may ride the bus until the new pass arrives without earning more strikes. The preferred method of payment is online through your ePayTrak account, but cash or check are also accepted. The driver can issue a receipt upon request.

Middle and high students will not be manually loaded twice in one day. If a student is manually loaded in the morning, schools will reach out to their families via phone to find out how the student is planning to get home that afternoon as they will not be permitted to take the bus home.

We expect middle and high school students to manage their bus passes responsibly. This expectation does not apply to elementary students. Elementary students will not be denied boarding their bus, meaning they will not be left at the bus stop or their school. However, for their safety, please ensure elementary students carry their bus passes.

ECSD SMARTTAG BUS PASS PROCEDURES

continued

We encourage students to wear their bus pass on the right side of their backpack or on a lanyard around their neck for easy scanning. However, if the student can quickly access their pass during loading and unloading, they can keep their pass wherever they prefer.

Students who frequently fail to produce their bus pass may face consequences for general misbehavior and receive the appropriate level of discipline outlined in previous sections.

Students who lose or damage their pass must purchase a new one before riding the bus again. To get an initial or replacement bus pass, contact the Transportation Department at 970-328-2744 (English) or 970-328-2743 (Spanish). Replacement bus passes cost \$10.

Learn more about the SMARTtag Parent App and our procedures at eagleschools.net/transportation.

HAZARDOUS WEATHER CONDITIONS

Eagle County is prone to hazardous weather conditions. In the event of inclement weather that delays or cancels school bus transportation, Eagle County School District will notify families directly via email, text message, and phone using the contact information on file. We also post announcements to [our website](#) and the [Eagle County School District Facebook page](#), as direct notification can take time to reach all of our constituents.

It's important for families to have contingency plans for their child(ren) in case school is canceled or there is an early dismissal, but **if there is no announcement, then buses and school will operate as usual.**

Students should dress appropriately to wait for our buses. If a bus is 30 minutes late or more, students should be instructed to return home. During severely cold weather, students should only wait 15 minutes.

