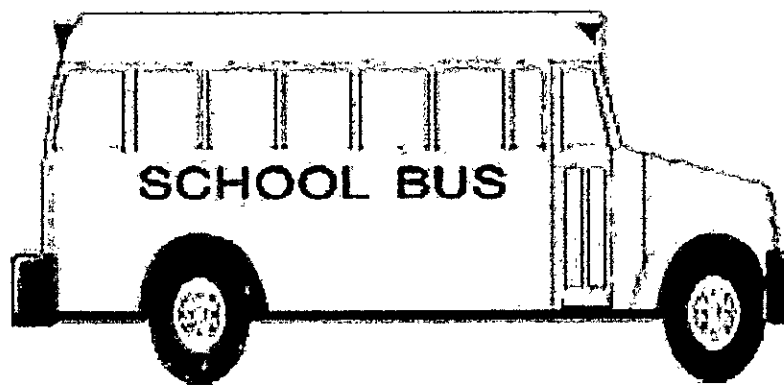




STUDENT SCHOOL BUS RIDER HANDBOOK

2024-2025



Available in English and Spanish



Dear Parent/Guardian:

San Benito C.I.S.D. is pleased to provide transportation to and from school as courtesy service for students who meet the requirements set forth by the Texas Education Agency.

In order to provide safe and prompt movement of students meeting the conditions outlined by Texas Education Agency, the District has set out standard guidelines and procedures relating to student behavior in regard to the outlined procedures; included in those guidelines are measures for discipline related noncompliance.

We consider you a team member of the transportation department in assisting us to create a safe and healthy environment for "every student, every day." Both of you are requested to acknowledge your understanding by signing the enclosed acknowledgment form and returning it to the appropriate route driver.

If you should need additional information or have questions concerning the safety of your child, the bus routes, or other matters regarding transportation, please contact the Transportation Office at (956) 361-6350.

Thank you.

Respectively,

Nancy L. Martinez
Director of Transportation

Alfredo Perez
Acting Superintendent of Schools

Reynaldo Saldaña Jr.
Executive Director of Operations

Eligible students are invited to ride buses for increased safety and convenience. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) and San Benito C.I.S.D. provide transportation if the following requirements are met:

The student must live more than two miles from their assigned school or reside in an adopted hazardous route, as measured by the shortest route that may be traveled on public roads from the student's home to school. Requests to change or add stops will be considered if the change will make the route shorter or safer as determined by the Transportation Department.

Private Roads, unpaved roads, non-county adopted roads, and private properties will not be traveled by any San Benito C.I.S.D. Transportation School Bus. Students may have longer than half-mile distance to the bus stop on these roads. The safety of all our student bus riders is our #1 priority.

Any changes to a student's bus ride home must be called in to the campus by 1:30 p.m. Transportation bus changes are approved by the Transportation Department.

Parents who drive their children to and from school are asked to use only the areas designated for them and to avoid the bus loading and unloading zones.

NOTE FOR Parents of Students in grades PRE-K through 4th GRADE:

To ensure the safety of our youngest bus riders, parents or designated adults are required to be present at the bus stop in the mornings and to meet the bus in the afternoons to receive all Pre-Kinder through 4th grade students. If NO adult is present at the bus stop to receive the student, the student will be returned to the campus. Parents will be notified to pick up their child at the campus.

****Students returned to the campus three times will lose bus riding privileges for the remaining quarter of the (9) Week Grading Period.**

BUS LOADING AND UNLOADING SAFETY RULES

LOADING THE BUS

When a school bus approaches a stop, students need to form a single line at least 10 feet away from the curb or loading area. The line will need to form away from the street.

1. Students need to wait to approach the bus and load until the bus has come to a complete stop, the door is opened, and the driver will instruct the student to come aboard.
2. Students will need to be prepared to load the bus as soon as instructed by the driver.
3. If student misses the bus, **THEY ARE NOT TO CHASE OR ATTEMPT TO TOUCH THE BUS.** They should return home immediately and contact their parents.
4. Families should instruct their students on the steps to be taken if the student does miss the bus.
5. If students have to cross the road to get onto the school bus
 - a. They should stay on the side of the road, away from traffic, until the bus stops and the driver signals to cross.
 - b. When the driver signals that it is safe to cross, students should first check for traffic
 - i. San Benito C.I.S.D. will attempt to secure a safe loading and unloading designated stop.

- c. As students cross in front of the school bus, they should watch the driver to guarantee that both the driver and student have eye contact.
 - d. Students should never attempt to cross behind the bus.
 - e. Students should still remember to look in both directions before proceeding and then walk directly to the other side of the road and away from the traffic flow.
 - f. CAUTION! Students should be alert for oncoming traffic. The District cannot control drivers who do not follow the law.
 - g. Crossing should be made at intersections and students should obey all traffic signals, signs and safety rules on their way home.
- 6. Students are required to maintain appropriate behavior during this loading process. No pushing or shoving as this could create a safety hazard and lead to an accident.
 - 7. The handrails and steps are safety devices and students should use them. Bus steps should be used one step at a time.
 - 8. Movement to their assigned seats should be done quickly and safely.
 - 9. The bus will not move forward until all the students are seated.
 - 10. If a student drops something while loading, he or she should tell the bus driver and NEVER try to go underneath the bus.
 - 11. Students are required to sit in their assigned seats.
 - a. Assigned seats makes loading faster and in the case of an accident, the driver is able to account for the students on the bus.

UNLOADING THE BUS AT A CAMPUS

- 1. Students should stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- 2. Students should not push or play on their way off the bus.
- 3. Students should use the handrails to avoid falls
 - a. They should watch that straps, drawstrings and clothing do not get caught in the handrail or door.
 - b. Students should move 10 feet away from the bus.

UNLOADING THE BUS AT THEIR DESIGNATED STOP

- 1. Students should remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- 2. Students should not push or play on the way off the bus.
- 3. Students should use the handrails to avoid falls.
 - a. They should watch that straps, drawstrings and clothing do not get caught in the handrail or door.
 - b. Students should glance back toward the rear of the bus before they step off the bus to make sure NO OTHER vehicle is passing on the right.
 - c. Students should move 10 feet away from the bus and clear the area once they have unloaded. Hanging on or attempting to chase a bus is a safety hazard.

If a student misses his/her appropriate stop, they need to remain on the bus until they arrive at their campus. The transportation office will call the campus that students are being returned to the campus.

SCHOOL BUS RIDER SAFETY RULES

THE FOLLOWING ARE TWELVE OF THE BUS RIDER SAFETY RULES posted on the school bus. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE RULES MAY RESULT IN THE LOSS OF BUS RIDING PRIVILEGES.

1. Follow the Directions of the Bus Driver.
2. Stay in Your Assigned Seat, NO standing or moving.
3. Keep Hands, Feet, and other objects to Yourself.
4. Keep All Parts of Your Body and any objects inside the bus.
5. No Pushing, Shoving or Running.
6. No LOUD Talking, CURSING, or Fighting.
7. NO Eating, Drinking or Chewing Gum.
8. NO Smoking or Use of Tobacco.
9. No use of Electronic Devices to record or photograph other riders on board.
10. Keep ALL personal and School supplies in your backpacks, purses, bags.
11. Students must use headphones to listen to music/videos on electronic devices.
12. Bus Driver has the authority to assign seats.
13. No graffiti or vandalism is permitted on district property.

ITEMS PROHIBITED ON THE BUS

1. TOBACCO, E-Cigarettes, Vape Pens
2. Live animals or insects
3. Food, Drinks, and gum
4. Alcoholic Beverages
5. Weapons, explosive devices, harmful drugs or chemicals
6. An object so large that a student cannot contain it in their lap; this includes musical instruments, school projects or fund raisers which may block the aisle and or emergency exits.
7. Matches or cigarette lighters
8. Any material that would be considered illegal including items considered to be pornographic.

CONDUCT ON THE BUS

1. The SBCISD Student Code of Conduct details the primary rules regarding student behavior and is applicable in all transportation activities given that the school bus is an extension of the classroom.
2. The bus driver is the authority on the bus and may assign seats as needed and necessary.
3. A student cannot refuse to sit in an assigned seat or deny any other student a place to sit.
4. Students are required to remain in their seat for the entire trip and only when the bus has completely stopped at their designated stop may the student stand.
5. They are expected to be positioned in their seat correctly at all times. They need to face the front, keeping hands and feet directly in front of them and to themselves.
6. For safety, all students should use their normal voice during the bus ride. Yelling, screaming, or any loud noise is prohibited for safety. Loud noise could distract the driver's attention and create an unsafe condition.
7. Windows are for ventilation if necessary and not be used to throw objects out the window nor to stick out their hands or head. Students are not to yell out the window to bystanders or other motorists.

8. As with any school district the possession of alcohol, controlled substances, dangerous drugs, or a "look alike" (something represented to be a prohibited substance) or a weapon is illegal and are prohibited.
9. Students under the influence of any illegal substance will be treated in the manner as stated in the District Student Code of Conduct.
10. Food, drinks and gum of any kind are not allowed on the bus. Lunch boxes or Lunch sacks are to be kept closed at all times.
11. **Pens, pencils, markers, scissors, etc. should remain inside backpacks at all times. Objects with points create safety hazards.**
12. **Based on the Student Code of Conduct, scuffling, fighting use of disrespectful, obscene, vulgar, or profane language, displaying of inappropriate pictures or videos or gestures are prohibited.**
13. **The inside of a bus is NOT a playground. Objects should not be thrown inside the bus.**
14. *****A bus is school district property. Marking, cutting or scratching on any part of the bus is considered vandalism. Vandalism and or Graffiti is punishable by law and the district will seek restitution for all damages.***
15. Students may NOT take pictures or videos on the bus. This is a violation of personal privacy.
16. If the student chooses to play music, work on assignments and or watch videos from an electronic device, he/she must use earbuds or headphones.
17. If seat belts are available on the bus, state law requires all passengers to be buckled in their seats.

MECHANICAL BUS FAILURE

1. If there is a mechanical failure on a bus prior to picking up your child, your child may be instructed to board another bus. A substitute bus will meet students at the arranged location and drivers will escort appropriate students to the substitute bus to complete the route.
2. If the mechanical failure happens after your child has boarded the bus and the bus is on route, every effort will be made to deliver a substitute bus, to the site of the mechanical failure as soon as possible. When the substitute bus arrives on site, students will be assisted in boarding the substitute and the route will continue.

ACCIDENTS OR EMERGENCIES

1. During an emergency, students are required to quickly and quietly follow the driver's instructions.
2. If instructed to leave the bus, students should remain in a group and not leave the area.
3. For bus evacuation, the driver will select a student or other adult person to open the door and assist in the evacuation.
4. Evacuation will start with the seat nearest the door and alternate across the aisle to the front of the bus.
5. Students will leave the bus in a single file as quickly and quietly as possible.
6. Once all students and driver are outside the bus, students are required to specifically follow the instructions of the driver immediately and completely.

Students may participate in emergency evacuation drills and re-unification drills during the school year.

SMART-TAG PARENT PORTAL STUDENT-TRACKING SYSTEM

Parents will be able to track their children's bus ride and current riding status upon receiving the SMART tag card. Students will be able to scan their card to get on and off the bus. SMART tag will authorize the student, or alert the driver through the onboard tablet computer if:

- A student attempts to get on a bus that does not go to their school or registered home address.
- A student attempts to get off at a stop that is not their assigned stop.

****All students will be given a Smart Tag ID Badge and will need to be used to board a school bus. SMART TAG IDs will need to be turned into the bus driver on the last day off school and be reissued at the beginning of the next school year. The cost to replace the card will be \$5.00. Student will have 3 days to replace the card to continue bus riding privileges.**

VIDEO MONITORING SYSTEM

San Benito C.I.S.D. buses are equipped with video monitoring systems. Our goal is for these cameras to provide an added measure of safety and security for your child as he/she is transported to and from school.

San Benito C.I.S.D. has the exclusive rights to use the video as deemed necessary. Only authorized school personnel will be allowed to load or unload video equipment and review video footage. All recording equipment devices will be kept in a secured location at the transportation department.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

The school bus is an extension of the classroom and discipline will be administered by the Campus Administrator. The District's Student Code of Conduct and all other School Board policies that apply to student conduct and other student related activities apply to the school bus and student transportation.

Steps and Consequences for inappropriate behavior or conduct on the bus include the following:

- **FIRST OFFENSE:** The student will be given a written warning depending on the severity of the incident and at the Campus Administrator's discretion and judgement, additional action may be taken.
- **SECOND OFFENSE:** The student will be suspended from the bus for not less than 5 school days.
- **THIRD OFFENSE:** The student will be suspended from the bus for a minimum of (9) weeks or the remainder of the nine week grading period.



Refusal or Failure to wear seat belts will result in:

First Offense: 5 days of suspension from riding on school bus

Second Offense: 10 days of suspension from riding on school bus

Third Offense: The student will be suspended from the bus for the remainder of the (9) week Grading Period, or until the end of the school year depending on severity of the offense.

Major offenses including, but not limited to fighting, obscenity, cursing, confrontation with the driver, vandalism, etc. will be handled according to the severity of the offense. The Campus Administrator has the authority to skip steps according to the category and number of violations.



SBCISD SCHOOL BUS STUDENT RIDER HANDBOOK

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT INFORMATION FORM

- One Form per student to place in the Bus Driver's Bus Rider File

My child and I have received a copy of the School Bus Student Rider Handbook. We are fully responsible for reviewing the handbook and understanding the expectations to be a safe student bus rider.

STUDENT'S GRADE: _____ Today's DATE: _____

PRINT STUDENT'S NAME: _____

Student's Home Address: _____

Home Phone # _____ Cell phone # _____

Please list three (3) emergency contacts:

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone # _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone # _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone # _____

PRINT NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE: _____

STUDENT'S BUS ROUTE A.M. # _____ STUDENT'S BUS ROUTE P.M. # _____