

**Dear Parent/Guardian:**

***The list of safety rules and regulations below are being sent to you so that you can review them with your child. KRS 158.110 now requires that a transportation policy is adopted that includes the guidelines referenced below and that you and your child must acknowledge receipt of this policy. Many of these rules will also be presented to your child at school with one goal in mind - the safe transportation of your child to and from school.***

.....



## **Russell County Schools Transportation Services Policy**

Each student and at least one (1) of their parents/guardians shall acknowledge in writing the receipt, comprehension, and agreement of adherence to the Transportation Services Policy within seven (7) days of the student's first day of attendance during each school year. Failure to submit written acknowledgement by a student or their parent or guardian may be grounds for revocation of a student's transportation privileges until the acknowledgment is properly received.

### **Principal Authority**

Consistent with the District Code of Acceptable Behavior and Discipline, the Principal/designee has authority to discipline pupils who ride school buses.

### **Driver Authority and Interventions**

The driver is in charge of the bus and pupils. The driver may utilize the following interventions for violations of the Code of Acceptable Behavior and Transportation Safety Policy:

- Driver gives the student a specific instruction.
- Driver may repeat a specific instruction and ask the student to comply.
- Driver moves student to front of the bus or a specific location designated. (Driver has the authority to have students sit where he or she wishes them to sit.)
- Driver may report student to the principal where the student attends. Students discipline procedures will be determined by the principal and riding privileges may be revoked.
- Driver may discharge a student from the bus in extreme cases (see DISCHARGE OF PUPILS FROM THE BUS).

### **Reporting of Violations**

Bus drivers shall promptly report any violation of District policy or school rules to the Principal. Drivers may file a written or electronic complaint or report of student misconduct (06.34 AP.2) including a recommendation to revoke transportation privileges. Drivers may be heard at any disciplinary hearing relating, at least in part, to misconduct that occurred during the operator's transportation of the student.

### **Discharge of Pupils from Bus**

Drivers are in charge of their buses, and their first responsibility shall be to the safe transportation of their passengers. In the event that one or more pupils are behaving in a threatening or violent manner or in such a way as to endanger the safety of other pupils on the bus, the driver shall stop the bus and contact the bus garage or Superintendent's designee to send someone to pick up the student or, if the behavior warrants, the driver shall call law enforcement. If calls for assistance are unsuccessful, the driver is authorized to order the offending student from the bus if the student is in the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) grade or above. In the event a pupil is discharged for disciplinary reasons, the driver shall make every effort to do so near a house or open business establishment. At the first reasonable opportunity, the driver shall notify the Principal of the school where the pupil attends or the Superintendent and the student's parent or legal guardian. Drivers shall only discharge students in compliance with Policy 09.2261.

### **Withholding of Riding Privileges**

The Principal is authorized to withhold bus-riding privileges up to a maximum of ten (10) school days per occurrence, and in the case of habitual or serious conduct violations, the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee may withhold bus-riding privileges up to the remainder of the school year. Drivers may, upon filing a written report to the Superintendent/designee, refuse future

transportation to students in violation of the Code of Acceptable Behavior and Discipline until an interim or final determination of disciplinary action has been made. The Principal shall notify the parents in cases where bus-riding privileges have been withheld. If the student is suspended from one school bus, he/she is suspended from all other buses as well. A school bus suspension is not an excused absence from school, and a student will be expected to be at school each day of their bus suspension.

#### Video/Audio Recording Equipment

Video cameras with audio may be installed in the District's school buses to record student behavior during transportation to and from school and school-related events. Evidence of student misbehavior recorded on video may be used to when determining the discipline of a student.

#### Restitution of Damages

The parents or guardians may be held responsible for restitution of any damages, beyond normal usage, inflicted by their child.

#### Students with Special Needs

Students with special needs who exhibit inappropriate conduct shall be managed in accordance with their Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or 504 Plan and the legal obligations and standards adopted by the Board.

#### PUPIL RESPONSIBILITY FOR RIDING SCHOOL BUSES

Pupils should ride their assigned bus and no other bus. The driver shall transport only those pupils officially assigned to his/her bus unless an unassigned pupil presents the driver with a written note to ride on the bus that has been signed by the school principal or his/her designee or advised by Principal or his designee verbally if signed note cannot be obtained at that time. The driver shall not permit an assigned pupil to leave the bus at a stop other than where the pupil regularly leaves the bus unless presented with written permission signed by the principal or his/her designee as stated above. (702 KAR 5:080)

Pupils shall conform to transportation rules and regulations prescribed under state statutes, state and local regulations, and the District Transportation Services Policy.

#### PUPILS TO WAIT AT ASSIGNED STOP

Be on time. Be at the bus stop 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. The bus cannot wait.

Pupils shall wait at their assigned bus stop off the roadway and shall remain there until the driver has stopped the bus, opened the entrance door, and signaled the pupils to enter the bus.

#### CROSSING ON DRIVER'S SIGNAL

Pupils shall not cross the roadway when entering the school bus until signaled to do so by the bus driver.

#### CROSSING IN DRIVER'S VISION

When students are required to cross the roadway when entering or leaving the school bus, crossings shall be made in front of the bus. Pupils shall cross approximately ten (10) feet in front of the bus in order that they may be seen by the bus driver.

#### SEATING

When pupils enter the bus, they shall proceed directly to a seat. Pupils shall remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop. Pupils shall not change from one seat to another while the bus is in motion unless given permission by the bus driver. The bus driver as the authority to assign seats to passengers at any time.

#### BODY NOT TO PROTRUDE FROM WINDOW

Pupils shall not extend their arms, legs, or heads out the bus windows.

#### PUPIL NOISE

Pupils shall not create noise on the bus to the extent that it might distract the bus driver or to the extent that it might interfere with the driver's ability to hear the signals of emergency vehicles or an approaching train.

#### REAR DOOR

Pupils shall not leave the bus via the rear door except during an emergency situation or during an evacuation drill.

#### PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

The following activities are prohibited at all times: (a) improper behavior to include: insolence, disobedience, vulgarity, foul language, fighting. (b) Use of tobacco products /vaping. (c) Eating or drinking on the bus. (d) No firearms or weapons, either operative or ceremonial, except that the policy may permit archery bows, used in connection with a school archery team, to be transported inside the passenger compartment and arrows transported in the underneath storage compartment. (e) No live animals, except for a service animal necessary

for the student to attend school. (f) Throwing articles or objects in or from the bus. (g) Tampering with mechanical equipment, accessories or controls of the bus. (h) Placing musical instruments or other articles at the door by the driver. (i) Obstructing the aisle in any manner. (j) Occupying more space in a seat than required. (K) Littering the bus. (l) No glass containers or helium balloons.

In addition, bullying as defined by KRS 158.148 will not be tolerated and will be addressed as per guidelines in the Code of Acceptable Behavior and Transportation Safety Policy.

Any pupil who persists in violating any of these rules or regulations shall be reported to the principal of the school which they attend for disciplinary action. After due warning has been given, the principal shall withdraw the privilege of riding the bus for a specified period.

Any complaints of drivers, pupils, or parents not specified in the above regulations, shall be reported promptly to the Principal or Director of Transportation, Eric Wolford (270)866-4844. To diminish the risk of retaliation, Russell County Schools employees will keep confidential, to the extent possible, the identify of students making complaints for violations of transportation policy.

#### BUS EVACUATION DRILLS

Bus drivers will conduct four (4) evacuation drills each year. Students will be given specific instructions on how to respond to the need for evacuation.

#### PRESCHOOL-KINDERGARDEN TRANSPORTATION

Preschool and Kindergarten (ages 7 and under) students will not be left unattended at the time of the delivery. It shall be the responsibility of the parent, guardian, or person authorized by the parent of the child to provide safe transportation to and from the bus stop and upon delivery. If parent/guardian is not present upon delivery, the child will be returned to their respective school, and it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pick up the child. (702 KAR 5:150)

#### BUS INCIDENT PROCEDURES

In the event the bus is involved in an incident, the parent will be notified by phone. If you do not have a phone, your child will be given a note regarding the incident. In case of injuries, your child will be examined and appropriate steps will be taken.

#### PARENT EXPECTATIONS

District employees shall be courteous and helpful in interacting with parents/guardians. In turn, individuals who come in contact with employees are expected to behave accordingly.

Parents/guardians are not permitted to step inside the entrance door of the bus without driver permission. They are encouraged to communicate with the driver through the driver's side window. Violations of parent misconduct will be immediately investigated by School Resource Officers. Parent/guardian misconduct may result in revocation of student's transportation privileges. Increased consequences are possible upon subsequent violations of the policy.

#### CRIMINAL VIOLATIONS

Criminal violations based on misconduct covered by this policy include but are not limited to the following:

1. "KRS 511.020 makes it a Class B felony for a person, with the intent to commit a crime, knowingly entering or remaining unlawfully upon a school bus, and when in effecting entry or while upon the school bus or in the immediate flight therefrom, the person or another participant in the crime causes physical injury to another person or uses or threatens the use of a dangerous instrument against another person.";
2. "KRS 508.078 makes it a Class C felony for a person to intentionally threaten to commit any act likely to result in death or serious physical injury to any employee of an elementary or secondary school, which includes a school bus driver.";
3. "KRS 508.025 makes it a Class D felony for a person to recklessly, with a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument, or intentionally cause or attempt to cause physical injury to a school bus driver or other school employee acting in the course and scope of their employment.";
4. "KRS 519.020 makes it a Class A misdemeanor for a person to obstruct governmental operations, which includes intentionally obstructing, impairing, or hindering the performance of a governmental function by using or threatening to use violence, force or physical interference."; and
5. "KRS 525.070 makes it a Class B misdemeanor for a person, with intent to intimidate, harass, annoy, or alarm another person, to strike, shove, kick, or otherwise subject another to physical contact."

The Superintendent or designee shall apply the Transportation Services Policy uniformly and fairly to each student without partiality or discrimination.