

Bus Behavior Guidelines

The district's school bus behavior rules and expectations outline a code of conduct that ensures all students are safely transported. The school bus is an extension of school itself, and expectations regarding behavior should be clearly communicated. Families are encouraged to regularly review bus behavior rules and expectations listed below with students to limit potential discipline issues.

To be eligible to ride a Bentonville Schools bus, students must meet the following criteria:

- Currently reside within Bentonville School boundaries.
- Reside within the attendance zone for the school they attend.
- Reside outside the Parent Responsibility Zone assigned for their school attendance zone.
- Bus service may be started at any point during the school year upon request for eligible students. Bus service may end after ten (10) consecutive days with the student not riding the bus.
- We do not allow guest riders. Students may get off at another stop with a note from the parents but will not be able to ride a bus they are not scheduled to ride.
- Transportation can only be set up for addresses in the student management system entered by the building registrar.

Kindergarten students:

- Must have a parent or guardian at the bus stop to be dropped off.
- A kindergarten student may be dropped off with a designated adult (grandparent, neighbor, or an older sibling) once a [Kindergarten Bus Release Form](#) has been completed and submitted on the Transportation Department page of the District Website.

Prior to Loading the Bus:

- All bus stop locations must be approved by the Transportation Office.
- All bus stop locations are subject to review and change of location as determined by the Transportation Office.
- The distance between a child's bus stop and their home may be up to eight tenths (.8) of a mile.
- Bus stops will not be located at:
 - Intersections controlled by a traffic signal.
 - A place of business or daycare.
 - Multi-lane roads (4 lanes or more.)
 - Locations that cause the bus to back or turn around (if possible.)
 - Locations determined by the Transportation Office to be unsafe for students to wait or to load.
- Students must arrive at least 10 minutes before the scheduled stop time. The bus cannot be expected to wait.
- Students must wait off the roadway at least 10 feet.
- Students must be outside of their home, vehicle, etc. when the bus arrives and be visible to the bus driver at the bus stop.

- Students must not approach the bus until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver opens the door.
- Students that cross the street to board the bus will wait until the bus arrives and stops all traffic to cross the roadway.
- Students must watch the bus driver and wait until the bus driver gives a signal for the students to cross the roadway to board the bus and must cross 10 feet in front of the bus as they board.
- Students are expected to maintain proper conduct while at designated bus stops.

While on the Bus:

- It is the student's responsibility to badge on the bus when they board.
- Respect the bus driver and other students.
- All students must obey the driver's directions promptly and cheerfully the first time given.
- Cell phones should not be used to take selfies, pictures of other students and/or the bus driver for any reason.
 - Using a cell phone for taking pictures of others without their permission will be considered inappropriate use of the cell phone, which may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the handbook.
- There is to be no eating, gum chewing, or drinking on the bus.
- Students are to stay in their seats and face forward at all times.
- Students must keep the bus aisles clear of books, bags, feet, legs, etc. at all times.
- Students must use proper boarding and departing procedures.
- Students may not bring on board balloons, glass, live or dead animals, or any item too large to hold in the students lap or fit under the seat in front of them. See the Instruments on the Bus section below for more details.
- Students must not tamper with safety equipment or use emergency exits unless instructed to do so by authorized personnel.
- No loud or distracting noises are allowed including singing, yelling, screaming or music.
- No vandalism to school or personal property is allowed.
- No rude, vulgar, obscene language or obscene gestures are allowed.
- Students must keep hands, feet, and other objects to themselves at all times.
- No horseplay, scuffling, fighting, spitting or throwing objects is allowed.
- No ethnic, racial or derogatory comments toward students or school personnel will be tolerated.
- No matches, lighters or other flammable / hazardous materials are allowed on the bus.
- Any action by a student that is deemed unsafe is prohibited.
- Skateboards are only allowed on the bus if they are in a backpack or some type of bag, they cannot be loose or out of a bag while on the bus.
- The Bentonville School District Transportation Department is not responsible for items left, lost or stolen on the bus.
- The bus driver will assign seats.

Leaving the Bus:

- It is the student's responsibility to badge on the bus when they board.
- Students must watch the bus driver and wait until the bus driver gives a signal for the students to cross the roadway to exit the bus.
- Students crossing the street at the bus stop must cross 10 feet in front of the bus as they depart and shall move away from the bus immediately after departing the bus.

INSTRUMENTS ON THE BUS:

With student safety as our number one priority, Bentonville Schools has established guidelines for transporting musical instruments.

All musical instruments transported in the passenger area on a school bus must be positioned in such a way that they do not block or obstruct in any way the aisle, stairwell, or emergency exits.

Unauthorized Musical Instruments

- Tubas, Euphoniums, Sousaphones
- Large Drums
- String Basse
- Baritone Horns
- Baritone Saxes
- Full-sized Cellos

Authorized Instruments

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| • Guitars | • Trombone |
| • Bass Guitars | • Bass Clarinets |
| • Less than full-sized Cellos | • Snare Drums |
| • Cellos in soft cases | • Flutes |
| • Violins/Violas | • Oboes |
| • French Horns | • Clarinets |
| • Tenor Saxes | • Alto Saxes |
| • Trombones | • Trumpets |

Keep in mind that emergency exits cannot be blocked, spacing between seats on buses range from 7" to 12", and that instruments must either fit on the student's lap or within the leg space between each seat.

Careful attention to these procedures will ensure safe transportation for students and their musical instruments. Students are cautioned that failure to abide by these procedures may cause the forfeiture of the privilege to transport their musical instruments on a school bus.

Inclement Weather - Transportation

In the event of inclement weather, Bentonville Schools may choose to run limited bus routes. The pick-up and drop-off times and locations will be developed by Transportation and posted on the school website. Even if you are not in an area prone to travel problems, often the bus routes include areas that may pose a challenge to bus transportation.

Please be timely upon arrival at the designated pick-up location. Buses will not be able to return for those running late. Your student will be returned to the same location for the afternoon route. If you are unable to meet the bus at the drop off site your student will be returned to the school that he/she attends. Regular bus service will resume as soon as it is determined that all routes can be run safely in their entirety.

Passing Of School Buses

A portion of the State of Arkansas Statute 76-658 has been incorporated into the City of Bentonville Ordinance No. 84-5, Section 2:

“That when any school bus stops and indicates by flasher lights that such bus is or is about to load or unload passengers, every operator of any motor or motorized vehicle conveyance within the city limits of the City of Bentonville, Arkansas, approaching the school bus from any direction, shall bring his/her vehicle to a full stop and shall not startup or attempt to pass the bus in any direction until the bus has finished displaying the flasher lights.” Please note that the Arkansas Statute 76-658 applies to all vehicle operators in the State of Arkansas.

Transportation Offenses and Penalties

- Refer to your student's Handbook for the Transportation Offenses and Penalties Rubric.
- All rule infractions are cumulative in most cases for the school year. A series of minor infractions may result in serious consequences.
- All misconduct must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Administration reserves the right to escalate the consequences due to the severity, frequency, or previous warnings.
- Restitution may be required for all damages resulting from student action including but not limited to vandalism, fighting, theft, throwing objects, or other damages.