



EAGLE COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

FAMILY GUIDE TO SCHOOL **BUS TRANSPORTATION**



Dear Families of Eagle County School District,

The ECSD Transportation Department is excited to provide transportation services for our students this year. Our top priority is ensuring that every student travels safely to and from school each day. Our drivers are highly trained professionals who are required to complete regular training, and comply with all state and federal safety standards.

We ask for your partnership in helping us maintain a safe and positive environment on our buses. Students, with the support of their parents or guardians, are expected to follow all bus rules and safety guidelines.

All student riders are required to have a SmartTag bus pass. This system enhances student safety and helps our staff monitor ridership and look for improvements whenever possible. Families can also use the SmartTag Parent App to track their child's bus activity. For more information, visit our website at eagleschools.net/transportation.

In addition to daily routes, school buses are used throughout the year for extracurricular activities such as athletics and field trips. Please take time to review the Bus Rules and Consequences for Infractions included in this packet with your child(ren).

Eagle County School District expects all students utilizing school transportation to be familiar with and adhere to established safety rules and expectations.

We also ask that you ensure your child's school has up-to-date contact information on file, including current phone numbers and email addresses. This is critical in the event of an emergency, or delays and/or changes to our bus service that must be communicated.

If you have any questions, contact the Transportation Department at 970-328-2744.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in keeping our students safe, and helping ensure that our students are well-behaved any time they are on our buses.

Sincerely,



Frank Vilece
Director of Transportation
francis.vilece@eagleschools.net

TRANSPORTATION RULES & EXPECTATIONS

Eagle County School District's Policy JICC governs student conduct in classrooms as well as school buses. These rules apply to all bus transportation, including daily routes, field trips, and athletic trips.

1. HAVE YOUR SMARTTAG BUSS PASS READY

Students must scan their SMARTtag each time they get on and off the bus, and respectfully be able to identify themselves whenever requested.

2. FOLLOW THE DRIVER'S INSTRUCTIONS AT ALL TIMES

The driver is responsible for the safe operation of the bus. Students are required to follow their instructions.

3. TREAT OTHERS WITH RESPECT

Bullying, harassment, threats, discrimination, profanity, hitting, pushing/shoving, any inappropriate gestures, or anything else deemed by the driver to be inappropriate is prohibited.

4. USE ELECTRONICS RESPONSIBLY

Electronic devices, including phones, laptops, ipads, etc., will not be permitted if they distract the driver or students. Taking photos or videos of others without permission is strictly prohibited.

5. USE ONLY YOUR ASSIGNED BUS STOP

Students may only board and exit at their approved stops unless a written notice is provided by parents or caretakers and approved by the school.

6. PRACTICE SAFE BEHAVIOR AT BUS STOPS

Arrive 5 minutes early and never run after a bus. Stay a safe distance from traffic, avoid horseplay, and wait for the driver's signal before approaching the bus.

7. CROSS ROADS SAFELY

Cross only when directed by the driver, always 10 to 15 feet in front of the bus, and never behind the bus.

8. REMAIN PROPERLY SEATED WHILE THE BUS IS MOVING

Only sit facing forward, keep aisles clear of feet and personal items, keeping all body parts inside the bus. Maximum 3 students to a seat in Elementary & Middle, and 2 students to a seat max for High School.

TRANSPORTATION RULES & EXPECTATIONS

9. MAINTAIN A SAFE AND QUIET ENVIRONMENT ON THE BUS

Keep voices at a reasonable level; loud voices and yelling are forbidden. Remain silent when directed by the driver, including all railroad crossings.

10. KEEP THE BUS CLEAN

Eating, drinking, chewing gum, spitting, littering, and leaving any debris/trash on the bus is prohibited. Dispose of all trash properly.

11. BRING ONLY SAFE AND APPROVED ITEMS ON THE BUS

Students may not bring weapons, dangerous objects, lighters/matches, alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, glass, animals, scented items, or other prohibited items.

12. SECURE PERSONAL BELONGINGS

All items must be safely stored, remain under the student's control, and may never block aisles or exits.

13. RECREATION AND ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT MUST BE TRANSPORTED SAFELY

Items must be properly contained in a bag and may be denied transportation if deemed unsafe. Any other sporting equipment that can not be contained in a bag and will not fit on the students lap, may not be transported.

14. RESPECT SCHOOL BUS PROPERTY

Students may not damage seats, floors, equipment, emergency exits, or any part of the bus.

15. UNSAFE AND RUDE BEHAVIOR IS PROHIBITED

Any action not mentioned above that may create a safety risk, disrupt transportation, create danger, or distract the driver, may result in disciplinary action.



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.

