

RSU 63 Transportation Student Bus Handbook

2026 – 2027 School Year

Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12

Safe Rides Start With You

Contact Us

Phone: 207-561-9238 | Cell: 207-631-3632

Email: transportation@rsu63.org

Web: [RSU63.org/Transportation](https://rsu63.org/Transportation)

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1. Welcome to RSU 63 Transportation

Welcome to the RSU 63 Transportation Department. We are proud to provide safe, reliable, and efficient transportation for students in Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 for the 2026–2027 school year.

This handbook outlines the rules, procedures, and expectations for all students who ride RSU 63 school buses and vans. Please read every section carefully. Every student and parent/guardian is expected to understand and follow these guidelines so that we can make every ride safe and enjoyable.

Riding the school bus is a privilege. When everyone follows the rules, bus rides are safe, smooth, and fun for all

Quick Reminders for Every Rider
Be at your bus stop 10 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time
Always sit in your assigned seat
Use inside voices and appropriate language at all times
No food or drinks on the bus
Keep cell phones and devices away and silenced
If you need help, talk to your bus driver

2. Bus Driver's Authority

The bus driver is in charge of the vehicle at all times. All students must respect and comply with the driver's instructions immediately and without argument.

All students of the district share responsibility for providing a safe, efficient, and positive atmosphere on district buses. Students shall conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior.

- The driver is in charge of the vehicle and all passengers.
- On scheduled runs, the driver will not wait for students who are not at their designated pick-up location at the designated time.
- The driver will signal with a thumbs up when it is safe for students to cross the road.
- The driver will assign or reassign seats as needed to maintain safety and order.
- During field trips or special runs, it is the driver's decision whether students may eat or drink on the vehicle.
- The driver will issue verbal warnings and discipline slips as appropriate.
- The driver will report multiple warnings and discipline slips to the Transportation Coordinator.
- Without written permission from the Transportation and Facilities Director, the driver will not transport any student whose riding privileges have been suspended.

3. Student Loading & Unloading Procedures

Getting on and off the bus safely is one of the most important parts of your ride. Please follow all procedures below carefully every single day.

Loading the Bus (Getting On)

1. Arrive at your designated bus stop at least 10 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time.
2. Stand at least 10 feet away from the roadway while waiting.
3. Never walk behind the bus.
4. Form an orderly line and wait calmly until the bus comes to a complete stop.
5. Wait for the bus driver to open the door before approaching the bus.
6. Board the bus in an orderly manner — walk, do not run and no pushing.
7. Go directly to your assigned seat and sit down immediately.
8. Keep all personal belongings with you and out of the aisle.

Unloading the Bus (Getting Off)

8. Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
9. Exit the bus in an orderly manner — walk, do not run and no pushing.
10. If you must cross the road, take 10 giant steps in front of the bus away from it, then stop.
11. Look at the driver and wait for the thumbs-up signal before crossing.
12. Look both ways before crossing the road.
13. Move quickly and safely away from the bus after crossing.
14. If you live on the same side of the road as your drop-off point, exit the bus and move immediately and safely away from the vehicle.
15. Never walk behind the bus.

IMPORTANT: Pre-K Through Grade 3 Drop-Off Policy

Students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 3 **MUST** have a parent, guardian, or designated adult present at the bus stop at drop-off time.

If no adult is present when the bus arrives,
the student **WILL BE RETURNED TO SCHOOL.**

Parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

It is the parent's responsibility to arrange pick-up from school.

If you cannot be at the stop, please send a note to the school in advance designating another adult to receive your child

Only Designated Stops

Students will only be picked up and dropped off at their designated bus stop. Any changes to your stop must be arranged in advance. Contact your child's respective school to request a stop change:

Holden 207-843-7828

Holbrook 207-843-7769

Eddington 207-843-6010

Please contact your school by **2:00 PM on regular school days** and **11:00 AM on half days**. We understand that emergencies and unforeseen circumstances may arise, and accommodations will be made when necessary.

4. Rules on the Bus

Seating

At the beginning of the school year, you will be assigned a specific seat.

- sit in your assigned seat immediately upon boarding.
- Keep your entire body within your seat.
- Keep the aisle clear at all times.
- Do not change seats.
- Keep hands, arms, and head inside the bus at all times.

Noise & Behavior

- Use inside voices only. Do not shout across the bus.
- Use appropriate language at all times. No profanity or obscene gestures.
- Fighting, roughhousing, wrestling, or physical contact with other students is prohibited
- Spitting or throwing any objects inside or outside the bus is prohibited
- Treat all other students and the driver with kindness and respect.

Keeping the Bus Clean

- No eating or drinking on the bus of any kind.
- Pick up and dispose of any trash you see.
- No graffiti, damage, or destruction of bus property. Parents are liable for all damage costs.

Safety

- Remain seated whenever the bus is in motion.
- Do not distract the driver.
- No weapons, tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, alcohol, or controlled substances are permitted on any school vehicle.
- Follow all driver instructions immediately and without argument.

5. Cell Phone & Electronic Device Policy

Cell Phones Are NOT Permitted to Be Used on the Bus
Using a cell phone while riding the school bus is a disciplinary offense.
Cell phones must be silenced and stored in your backpack for the duration of the ride.
Violations will result in a disciplinary slip

Electronic devices (including cell phones, tablets, laptops, earbuds, headphones, and similar devices) can create distractions and pose safety risks while students are being transported. The use of electronic devices on school transportation is governed by RSU 63 Policy JFCK (Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices) and the rules established by the school.

- Cell phones **MUST** be silenced and kept in your backpack during the entire bus ride. They may **NOT** be used while on the bus.
- No phone calls may be made or received on the bus.
- No videos, music, or audio may be played aloud through device speakers.
- RSU 63 and the Transportation Department are **NOT** responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices.
- Bus drivers will have their personal cell phones turned **OFF** or silenced at all times while operating a school vehicle. Drivers carry communication devices connected to the bus garage.

Parents who need to relay information to a driver (e.g., student is absent, early pick-up) should contact the school or the Bus Garage directly:

Phone: 207-561-9238 | Cell: 207-631-3632 | Email: transportation@rsu63.org

Using a cell phone on the bus and will result in a disciplinary slip. Repeated violations escalate to higher-level consequences.

6. School Bus Rights

SCHOOL BUS RIDERSHIP IS A PRIVILEGE — NOT A RIGHT

Misconduct on the school bus will result in suspension of transportation privileges.

The district reserves the right to remove disruptive students from bus service.

When bus privileges are revoked, parents must arrange alternate transportation to school.

- Students may be suspended from the bus for any violation of these rules.
- Parents will be held liable for any damages or destruction of property belonging to other students or to any part of the bus.
- The district reserves the right to modify bus assignments, routes, and pick-up/drop-off times at any time.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

SUSPENSION FROM THE BUS IS NOT AN EXCUSE FOR BEING ABSENT FROM SCHOOL.

If your child loses bus privileges, you are responsible for getting them to school.

Merit Awards — PK through Grade 8

Students who demonstrate excellent riding behavior or a notable act of kindness may receive a "Busted Slip" from their driver. Students should bring this slip to the school secretary for special recognition. We love celebrating great riders!

7. District Policy

The district does not permit the use of physical force in student discipline, except in the following limited cases: self-defense, to stop a disturbance, to obtain weapons or dangerous objects, for the protection of property, or to prevent bodily harm to others — in accordance with District Student Discipline Policy.

Audio and Video Recording Notice

To help ensure the safety and security of students and staff, audio and video recording systems may be in use on all RSU 63 school vehicles. Recordings may be reviewed by authorized school personnel as part of investigations involving student safety, behavior, accidents, or other transportation-related incidents. By riding an RSU 63 school vehicle, students and parents acknowledge that audio and video recording may occur.

Reporting Infractions

Bus drivers must report any violation of bus regulations in writing using the approved forms:

- Morning infractions: Reported to the Transportation Director by noon the same work day
- Afternoon infractions: Reported by after morning bus run the following work day.
- Disciplinary steps will be taken by a school administrator in accordance with district regulations.

Requesting Changes to Bus Service

The district establishes roads served by school buses. Citizens who wish to request bus service on a road not currently served should submit a written request to the RSU 63 Director of Transportation with a copy to the Superintendent.

Weather-Related Closures

On days when RSU 63 closes district schools due to inclement weather, bus service will NOT be provided to any school — including schools in other districts that may remain open.

8. Student Conduct & Possible Consequences

RSU 63 is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and distraction-free environment for all students and staff while riding school transportation. Student misconduct will be addressed using progressive discipline whenever appropriate. Depending on the severity of the behavior, disciplinary action may begin at any stage.

Each incident will be reviewed individually. The Transportation Director and the appropriate Building Administrator will determine the appropriate disciplinary action based on the nature of the incident, the student's disciplinary history, safety concerns, and any other relevant circumstances.

The examples below are intended as guidelines only and do not represent every possible violation or consequence.

Examples of Student Misconduct	Possible Consequences
• Refusing to follow driver directions • Standing or moving while the bus is in motion • Riding an unauthorized bus or exiting at an unauthorized stop • Cell phone or electronic device violations • Horseplay, excessive noise, or littering • Delaying the bus through inappropriate behavior • Profanity or inappropriate language • Throwing objects • Bullying, harassment, or intimidation • Disrespect toward staff or students • Vandalism or intentional damage to school property • Unsafe conduct that places others at risk • Fighting or physical assault • Threats toward students or staff • Possession or use of weapons • Alcohol, tobacco, nicotine/vaping products, or controlled substances • Interfering with the safe operation of the school vehicle • Any conduct creating an immediate safety threat	• Verbal warning or assigned seating • Parent/guardian notification • Bus discipline referral • Parent conference • Temporary suspension from transportation • Restitution for damages when applicable • Referral to school administration for additional disciplinary action • Immediate removal from transportation • Long-term or permanent suspension of transportation privileges • School disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion when applicable • Referral to law enforcement when required or appropriate

Important Notice

The examples above are **not all-inclusive**. Other behaviors that interfere with the safe operation of school transportation or violate school policies may also result in disciplinary action.

All disciplinary decisions are made at the discretion of the Transportation Director and the appropriate Building Administrator. Consequences may vary depending on the severity of the incident, whether safety was compromised, the student's previous disciplinary history, the student's age and individual circumstances, and applicable district policies and state or federal law.

Repeated or serious misconduct may result in the suspension or permanent loss of school transportation privileges.

Grades 9–12 — First Offense

High school students receive a vehicle discipline slip on the first offense and riding privileges are immediately suspended for 10 days. A parent/guardian must sign the slip before the student may resume riding.

9. Students with IEP/504

If transportation is included in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), a bus suspension must be treated as a school suspension — unless the student is transported to school by other means.

When a bus suspension applies to a student with an IEP, the Director of Special Services will be notified within the required timeframe.

Parents of students with IEPs who have questions about transportation may contact:

- Transportation Office: 207-561-9238
- Special Services Office: 207-843-0802

10. Parent/Guardian & Student Acknowledgment Form

Please detach, sign and return this form to your school secretary. This form confirms that you have read and reviewed the RSU 63 Transportation Student Handbook with your student.

If you have more than one student who rides an RSU 63 school vehicle, please complete and submit a signed form for each student in your household who utilizes district transportation services.

Students in Grades K–8 will review this Transportation Handbook with their homeroom teacher at the beginning of the school year. The signature below acknowledges that your student has participated in this classroom review and has been provided the opportunity to learn and discuss the expectations, rules, and safety procedures outlined in this handbook.

Please cut here and return to the school secretary

RSU 63 Transportation — Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment 2026–2027 School Year

I have read the RSU 63 Transportation Student Handbook and reviewed the rules with my student.

*Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

School: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Home Address: _____

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