



STANDARD PROCEDURES AND BUS RULES

- Many students have been injured nation-wide while running after a school bus. Students should be waiting at their assigned bus stops at least 10-15 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. This allows variations due to road and traffic conditions. Drivers cannot wait for students who are not at their bus stop on time, and they cannot return to a stop or the school if a student misses the bus.
- Your child will be taught that the **New York State Universal Danger Signal** is the sound of the horn. The drivers will instruct children that if they hear the bus horn, they are to return to the side of the street where they started. This signal has saved many lives Statewide. Drivers use this signal in the case of a passing motorist or other danger. The driver cannot use the horn to signal children that the bus has arrived.
- Students will be taught the **New York State Universal Crossing Signal**. Students who need to cross the street, either boarding the bus or getting off the bus, must wait for their driver to use this signal before they attempt to cross the street. Once this signal has been given the student must cross in front of the bus, **not behind it**. This crossing procedure has been used through the years and has saved countless lives. Please impress upon your children how important this is!
- All students must be seated before the driver can put the bus into motion.
- Drivers who are experiencing a **disruptive or unruly bus** are instructed to stop their bus in a safe manner and wait until all students quiet down and behavior is acceptable enough to safely drive the bus again. In some instances, this may delay your child getting home at the regularly scheduled drop off time.
- The school bus driver will determine the need for assigned seats on any given school bus, and the students are required to abide by them.
- Once your child is on our bus we take our responsibility very seriously. Children are permitted to ride their assigned buses only. **A parent's permission slip to ride another bus is not permissible.** If a student misses their bus at their regular stop, they will not be permitted to get on any bus at another location. Students will not be allowed to get off their bus except at their designated stop. **(Once a student exits the bus they will not be permitted to get back on.)**
- **When your child requires a pick-up/drop-off other than their home address**, the forms and procedures for baby-sitting/custody requests are available through the Watertown City School District. Baby-sitter forms are for Grades PK-6 only! Parents are required to submit baby-sitter and custody request forms annually.

- After the school bus drivers receive the signal to leave the school and the school bus doors are closed, the driver has been instructed not to open the doors again to receive additional passengers. Please explain to your child the importance of getting to their bus as soon as school has been dismissed.
- Any student who leaves the school grounds at dismissal time for any reason and then attempts to board the school bus will not be permitted to do so.
- **Drivers are not allowed to carry medication** on the bus for any student, unless prior approval has been received from the Board of Education.
- **Special needs, Pre-K, and Kindergarten students** cannot be released from the bus at their bus stops unless the parent or an authorized guardian is there to receive them. In the event there is no one to receive them, the driver will radio into the office so that telephone contact may be attempted. It is vital that First Student has your correct home and emergency phone numbers. If all attempts to contact the parents fail, the student will be brought back to their school building at the end of the bus run, and the proper authorities may be contacted.
- There is no eating or drinking on the school bus. There have been many choking incidents on school buses statewide.
- The local radio and television stations will be notified in the event of a **delay or closing of school**. When school is delayed, it is normally announced as a 2-hour delay. The buses will operate exactly 2 hours later than the regular pick-up time.
- Any student who defaces or damages any part of the school bus will be required to make full restitution of the repairs before they are allowed to resume riding the bus.

Please take the time to go over the following safety rules with your child. These are posted on our buses:

**Keep your hands to yourself.
Stay in your seat.
Be good to each other.
Listen to your driver.**

The following offenses may result in immediate loss of riding privileges:

**Physical abuse towards others
Property damage to the school bus
Failure to provide proper name or school
Use or possession of contraband or weapons
Smoking/Vaping or using a lighter or matches
Gross insubordination**

With your support we hope to have a smooth, safe, and happy school year. Please do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any questions about your child's transportation needs.