



Bus Riders' Handbook

2023-2024 School Year

School Bus Riders' Handbook

Parents and School Bus Riders

The Borger Independent School District Transportation Department is proud to be a member of our exceptional educational team for the school district and community. We continue to strive for excellence each day as we place the safety of your child and our team members first. The trust and confidence bestowed to us each day is taken seriously as we transport the most precious asset of parents and the community: your child.

The safety of every child relies on their willingness to follow the bus safety rules as outlined in this Bus Riders' Handbook, but most importantly the communication and cooperation between the parents/students and the Transportation Department. Please, take time to read and discuss the information in this handbook with your children.

Riding a school bus is not a right, but a privilege provided by the school district and should be treated as such. This Bus Riders' Handbook and the District's Student Code of Conduct will apply to all students while riding a school bus to and from school on a regular school day or while on co/extracurricular activities.

We understand that students work hard in the classroom and a bus may be a little louder than a classroom. However, we expect our students to follow the Bus Riders' Handbook and the District Code of Conduct on our buses.

The bus ride is an extension of the school day. School regulations and expectations on the bus will be the same as when the student is on school premises.

General Safety Rules

1. Students must obey the instructions of the bus driver. At no time will a student act towards or address comments to a bus driver in a disrespectful manner. Students must cooperate with the driver.
2. Students will board and leave the bus at designated stops only.
3. Only students who are eligible to ride may be transported and must ride their assigned bus. *Special written permission must be obtained from the campus principal before a student is allowed to ride a different route or get on or off at a different bus stop. Long term changes, over 10 days, the Transportation Department must be contacted for approval. A campus administrator must sign the written request. The student will take a copy of the written request or note from the office to give to the bus driver of their current route or alternate route. The requesting student must be currently receiving bus privileges to ride on another bus. If the student is not a current bus rider, they must get approval from the campus administrator and transportation department due to seating capacity.*
4. It will be the responsibility of the parents to provide transportation to or from school if a child misses the bus.

Procedures for Waiting for the Bus

1. To maintain the bus route schedule, students shall be at their morning stops 5 to 10 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. The driver will not be able to wait.
2. To ensure safety, students need to stand on the sidewalk or back from the roadway while waiting for the bus. The District Code of Conduct is in effect as students wait. Inappropriate behavior will be addressed.
3. When the bus approaches, students need to form a single file line and prepare to load the bus.
4. Students need to stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop.

Loading the Bus

1. Students do not need to engage in inappropriate physical contact like pushing another student.
2. Use of the handrail while climbing the steps is the best safety practice.
3. Students may be assigned a seat on the bus at any time.
4. Students need to quickly find a seat. The bus cannot move until all students are seated.

Conduct on the Bus

1. Students being transported are under the authority of the bus driver.
2. Students may be assigned seats by the bus driver.
3. Fighting, wrestling, or boisterous activity is prohibited on the bus.
4. Students shall use the emergency door only in case of emergency.
5. Students shall not bring firearms, weapons, or other potentially hazardous material on the bus.
6. Students shall remain seated while the bus is in operation. This includes while stopped during route.
7. When necessary to cross the road, students shall cross in front of the bus and as instructed by the bus driver.
8. Students shall not extend their hands, arms, heads, or any other objects out of the bus windows.
9. Students shall have written permission to exit the bus at a location other than at home or at school. (See instructions above.)

10. Students shall converse in normal tones; loud or vulgar language is prohibited. Loud noises may distract the driver and create an unsafe condition. In severe conditions, the driver may implement no talking during the route and Transportation, or the Campus can be called for assistance.
11. Students shall keep the bus clean and must refrain from damaging it.
12. Students shall be courteous to the driver, to fellow students, and passersby.
13. Students who refuse to promptly obey the directions of the driver or refuse to obey the regulations may forfeit their privilege to ride on the buses.
14. Students cannot bring glass, animals, balloons, unsecured skateboards on the bus, any items that cannot fit on student's lap, or other inappropriate items as determined by the bus driver.
15. No food or drink may be consumed on the bus unless approved by the bus driver.
16. Personal electronic devices (cell phones, electronic games, video players, computers, etc.) are allowed on the bus, but students must wear headphones or earbuds and cannot be disruptive or cause a safety concern on the bus. No inappropriate, offensive, or vulgar material will be allowed on personal electronic devices. Taking pictures and/or video is not permitted. If this rule is not followed, the driver may confiscate the phone and give it to the principal where the student may pick it up the next day.
17. Objects will be always kept out of the aisle. Feet and legs should be kept out of the aisle when students are loading or unloading.
18. Students may talk quietly. Loud noises may distract the driver and create an unsafe condition. In severe conditions, the driver may implement no talking during the route and Transportation, or the Campus can be called for assistance.
19. Objects will not be thrown inside or outside the bus.
20. Students will not mark, cut, or scratch any part of the bus. The person(s) responsible for vandalism to a bus will be required to reimburse the District for repair costs.
21. The emergency door and exit controls shall be used only during supervised drills or actual emergencies or when directed to do so by the driver.
22. Seat belts must be worn by all students when the bus or vehicle is so equipped.

Getting Off the Bus

1. Students need to stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
2. Students should wait their turn to leave the bus; pushing and crowding will only slow exiting and may cause injury.
3. Students should use the handrail and take one step at a time when leaving the bus.

4. Students must have written permission signed by the campus principal, designee or approved by the Transportation Department to get off at a bus stop other than the assigned stop. Written permission must be given to the driver when boarding the bus at the campus.
5. Students need to stay clear of the bus and must not chase or hang on to the bus at any time.
6. If any articles are dropped or roll under the bus, **DO NOT GO AFTER IT**. The students should go to the door of the bus and ask the driver for help.

Crossing the Street or Highway

1. All students living on the left side of the street shall exit the bus and move to a point 10 to 12 feet (6 to 8 large steps) in front of the bus. The student should be able to see the driver and the driver see them. Once in place and when safe, the driver will signal the student to begin to cross the street. The student should then walk to the left side of the bus and ensure that all traffic has stopped before continuing to cross the street.
2. Students need to check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. NEVER CROSS THE ROAD BEHIND THE BUS.
4. Students must cross all streets at intersections and obey all traffic laws and signs on their way home.

CAUTION!! ALWAYS BE ALERT FOR VEHICLES THAT DO NOT STOP WHEN THE BUS IS LOADING OR UNLOADING STUDENTS. IF THE DRIVER HONKS THE HORN WHILE YOU ARE CROSSING THE STREET, STOP IMMEDIATELY, AND LOOK FOR A VEHICLE THAT HAS NOT STOPPED.

Prohibited Items

Prohibited items, as outlined in the District Code of Conduct, will be addressed according to the code of conduct.

1. Tobacco, tobacco products or e-cigarettes
2. Alcoholic beverages
3. Illegal and Prescription Drugs
 - Possessing or selling seeds or pieces of marijuana in less than a usable amount.
 - Possessing, using, giving, or selling paraphernalia related to any prohibited substance.
 - Possessing or selling look-alike drugs or items attempted to be passed off as drugs or contraband.
 - Abusing the student's own prescription drug, giving a prescription drug to another student, or possessing or being under the influence of another person's prescription drug on school property or at a school-related event.
 - Having or taking prescription drugs or over-the-counter drugs at school, other than as provided by District policy.
4. Weapons, laser pointers, explosive devices, harmful chemicals (including pepper spray or other types of aerosol sprays).

5. Harsh aromatic type substances, which could include cologne/perfume, hair spray/products, or fingernail polish
6. Live animals or insects
7. Glass containers
8. Objects too large, this includes band instruments, to be carried by the student or held on the student's lap during the bus route. Skateboards, when allowed, must also be held in the student's lap.
9. Matches or cigarette lighters
10. Food or drinks, except as medically required. Bottled water is allowed.
11. The use of MP3 players, iPods, radios, cd players, video games, cell phones or similar electronic devices are only allowed with the use of headphones or ear buds. These items are also allowed while students are traveling on buses for co/extracurricular activity trips, with the use of headphones or ear buds. Should the use of these items become a distraction to the driver, especially while riding to and from school for the regular school day, the device may be taken up and a Bus Safety Report issued and sent to the principal. Be responsible with electronic devices; do not share your device with others; do not record video or take pictures. If this rule is not followed, the driver may confiscate the phone and give it to the principal where the student may pick it up the next day.

Emergency Procedures

1. Follow the bus driver's instructions.
2. If you must leave the bus, always stay with the group.
3. THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES WILL BE USED FOR EVACUATION IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.
 - A. The student nearest to the emergency door will open the door and hold it open.
 - B. Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door and alternate sides (left then right).
 - C. Students leave the bus in a single file, as quickly and quietly as possible.
 - D. Once outside the bus, students follow the driver's instructions completely.
4. All bus riders may practice emergency evacuations during the school year. When conducted, these will be scheduled to occur during the school day.

Extracurricular Travel

1. The Bus Rider Rules and District Code of Conduct apply to all school-sponsored events.

2. Student management will be the responsibility of the trip sponsor, campus principal or the bus driver, if needed.
3. The bus must return in the same condition of cleanliness as when it was received.
4. NOTHING is to be on the back deck of activity buses 512, 514, or 516.
5. There is to be at least one Coach, Teacher, or Sponsor sitting in the very back seat of the bus to monitor behavior.
6. No sitting backwards or sideways or laying across the aisles.

BISD Transportation Conduct Policy

We hope it will not be necessary to forbid any student to ride a bus. Such action will be taken only as it contributes to the accomplishment of the goals of the district as spelled out in the Board of Education Policy. Students are forbidden to ride the bus when their behavior threatens the safety of themselves or others. When riding the bus is the only way a student can get to and from school, other disciplinary consequences may be given at the school campus.

The Bus driver is responsible for the safe operation of the bus. Students must abide by the instructions of the driver to ensure a safe transportation system. If students refuse to abide by the instruction of the driver, the following action may be taken by the campus principal.

The consequences for elementary students' K-4 offenses will be applied within the semester. The consequences for 5-12 students' offenses will be applied within the current school year. Student discipline on the bus shall be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Video surveillance systems are used on all buses.

FIRST OFFENSE:

A verbal warning or bus safety report will be issued at the discretion of the driver. The bus driver may explain the bus safety rules to the student and the need to abide by these rules to ensure the safety of all students. If a bus safety report is issued, the principal will oversee the bus safety report at their discretion. The student may be subject to punishment and parent/guardian will be contacted by phone. The phone call will inform the parent that if a second offense is committed, the student will be excluded from riding the bus for a period of two school days.

SECOND OFFENSE:

A parent/guardian will be contacted by phone advising that the child is excluded from the bus for two to three school days.

THIRD OFFENSE:

The student may be excluded from the bus for a period of ten school days.

FOURTH OFFENSE:

The student may be excluded from the bus for a period of thirty school days.

FIFTH (AND BEYOND) OFFENSE:

The student may be excluded from the bus for a period of a semester or the rest of the school year.

SEVERE INCIDENT:

Destruction of property, fighting, or other major infractions will result in a bus safety report sent to the principal. The principal will then address the issue accordingly.

RE-ADMITTANCE PROCEDURE:

Prior to the student being re-admitted to the bus after committing the fifth or more offense, the parent must contact the student's principal and give assurance that the student's behavior will conform to rules and regulations. Any student, even though he has not committed his first offense, who willfully creates a disturbance or deliberately disobeys the bus driver may be refused transportation by the student's principal. Any student who enters the bus after being excluded by the principal for willful misbehavior will be excluded from riding the bus for an additional period of thirty days.

General Information

1. The Borger Independent School District will use one the following means to notify parents of school closures or delays due to inclement weather. Be sure to check these sites for information regarding school closures or delayed school starts.
 - Borger ISD web site: www.borgerisd.net
 - Borger ISD School Announcement
 - Borger ISD TWITTER
 - Borger ISD FACEBOOK
 - Borger ISD App "SchoolMessenger"
 - KQTY 1600 AM and 106 FM radio,
 - Amarillo TV Stations Channels 4, 7, and 10
2. We ask that you contact your child's school and then the Transportation Department, if you move during the school year or have moved in the last year to ensure the school district has the correct address and contact information on file. This allows your child uninterrupted transportation service and keeps the District's records accurate.
3. Nationwide, numerous students have been severely injured or killed when a drawstring on their clothing or backpack has gotten caught in playground equipment, fences, and school bus handrails and doors. All Borger Independent School District buses have been checked to prevent drawstrings from getting caught in the handrail or door.
4. For added safety, we ask you to please check your child's coats, jackets, backpacks, or other articles that have drawstrings that could get caught in the handrail or door of the bus. If the draw strings are extremely long, please remove, shorten, or replace them with another type of fastener. Thank you for helping us make your children safer!

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