

2024 / 2025

INFORMATION and OPERATIONS

of the

WASHINGTON UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Regarding

Codes, Policies, Practices, Procedures, Rules and Regulations

Introduction

This information is intended to familiarize parents and other interested persons about the school bus transportation as provided by the Washington Union School District and of the transportation department.

The ultimate goal is to provide safe and efficient school bus transportation for all students on every trip, regular home-to-school transportation and on activity trips/field trips.

The school pupil transportation industry in California is heavily regulated. School buses, their equipment, the drivers who operate these vehicles and everyone involved in the school pupil transportation field are held to the highest standards.

Safe school bus transportation is achieved with the recognition, understanding, and compliance of policies, practices, procedures, rules, and regulations by everyone.

The W.U.S.D. Transportation Director welcomes communications from parents and the public in regards to school pupil transportation matters and can be reached at **831-484-2166** or email **gvillegas@washingtonusd.org**

Thank you.

This issue supersedes any and all previous issues.

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Bus Conduct Rules

Washington Union School District – Transportation Department

The following rules of conduct shall apply to all students who ride a school bus of the Washington Union School District. The school bus is an extension of the classroom and school. Parent(s) or Guardian(s) may be held responsible for the damage to a school bus caused by their child. School bus transportation is a privilege, not a right.

- 1) Students transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of and responsible directly to the driver of the bus.
 - i) Students must respond promptly to the directions and obey the school bus driver.
 - ii) Students must give their proper identification (Bus Pass) when requested by the school bus driver.
- 2) Students must arrive and wait at the bus stop at least five (5) minutes before the bus arrives.
- 3) All students shall remain standing at the bus stop until the door of the school bus opens, then the students shall walk to and enter the bus in an orderly manner.
- 4) Animals, insects, reptiles, aquariums, glass containers, pressurized products, bulky items, skateboards, etc. are not allowed aboard a school bus.
- 5) All students shall remain properly seated and forward-facing with both feet on the floor and shall remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion and at all other times while the passenger entry door of the bus is closed.
 - a) Saving of seats is not allowed.
 - b) If the school bus is equipped with passenger restraint systems, the students shall fasten and appropriately wear the restraints at all times while seated aboard the bus.
- 6) The aisle must remain clear for the passage of other students on the bus.
- 7) Eating, snacking, and drinking (except for water) is not allowed in the school bus.
- 8) Littering on the bus is not allowed.
- 9) Extending the head, arms, or any other part of the body out of an open window at any time is prohibited.
- 10) Normal conversation with those seated next to each other is acceptable. Loud outbursts and other loud disruptions are not permitted on the bus.
- 11) Throwing of anything, even paper is prohibited in or out of the school bus.
- 12) Keep hands and feet to yourself. Hitting, poking, slapping, kicking, tripping, shoving, pulling hair, etc. is prohibited on the bus and at bus stops.
- 13) Boisterous behavior, yelling, profane or vulgar language, name-calling, or obscene gestures are prohibited in the bus and at all bus stops.
- 14) Possession and/or use of tobacco products by minors is prohibited by law.
- 15) No student shall have on his or her person any matches or lighters of any kind.
- 16) Any type or kind of; defacing, destruction, tampering, or vandalism of the school bus or any of its equipment or private property at a bus stop is prohibited.
- 17) While the school recognizes that many students carry cell phones for personal use, students are expected to follow the district's acceptable use policy at all times, including while on the bus or at the bus stop.
- 18) Any inappropriate behavior on cell phones, smartwatches, or other mobile devices will result in disciplinary action and/or suspension of bus riding privileges.

Consequences of any violation(s) of Bus Conduct Rules are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. For a first-time violation, the driver will speak with the student and/or take corrective measures aboard the bus. A second occurrence may result in a first (1st) written warning: Notice of Unsatisfactory Conduct on School Bus. A third (3rd) occurrence may result in any disciplinary measure up to and including a temporary or permanent suspension of bus riding privileges.

Bus Conduct Rules – Posted

1. Obey the school bus driver at all times.
2. Remain standing at the school bus stop, wait for the door of the school bus to open, then walk to the school bus and enter.
3. No animals or unusual items are allowed in the school bus.
4. Stay seated at all times while in the school bus, sit in the seat properly, facing forward with both feet on the floor. If the bus has seat belts – they must be worn at all times while you are seated in the bus.
5. Keep the aisle clear for the passage of other students.
6. Eating, snacking, and drinking, except water, are prohibited on the school bus. Don't be a litter-bug.
7. Keep your hands, head, and other body parts inside the school bus at all times.
8. Talk normally with those around you, no yelling or calling out on the school bus.
9. Throwing anything, even paper, in or out of the school bus is not allowed.
10. Keep your hands and your feet to yourself at all times.
11. Bad language, name-calling, obscene gestures, and fighting are not allowed on the school bus or at school bus stops.
12. Do not cause any damage or vandalism to the school bus.
13. Any inappropriate behavior on cell phones, smartwatches, or other mobile devices will result in disciplinary action and/or suspension of bus riding privileges.

School Buses are an extension of the classroom and of the school.

Regular Education School Bus Transportation is a privilege, not a right.

School Bus Driver Responsibility for the Student begins at a point when the driver can recognize the student at the stop and for as long as the driver can view the student through the windows and rear view mirrors after the drop-off.

All Students Must Arrive to Their Designated School Bus Stop at least five (5) minutes prior to the arrival of their school bus.

The Passenger Entry Door is the Signal of when to approach and enter the bus. Wait until the door opens before walking towards and entering the bus. Students riding in a school bus must remain seated until the door of the bus opens at the destination – this is the signal to the student(s) that it is safe to leave the seat and exit the bus.

Designated Stops. School bus stops made for receiving and discharging pupils shall be designated by the school district superintendent.

Prohibited School Bus Stops. A school bus stop shall not be designated at the following locations:

1. Within 200 feet of the nearest rail of a railroad grade crossing.
2. The left-hand side of any highway.
3. On a divided or multiple lane highway where students must cross the highway to board or after exiting the bus.
4. Upon the main traveled portion of a highway where there is not a clear view of the stop for 500 feet in each direction along the highway and the speed limit is more than 25 miles per hour.

Note: A “Divided Highway” is whenever a highway has been divided into two or more roadways by means of intermittent barriers or by means of dividing section of not less than two feet in width.

Note: A “Multiple Lane Highway” is a highway having more than one lane of travel in each direction.

Note: A “Highway” is a way or place of whatever nature, publicly maintained and open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel. Highway includes

street.

Unauthorized School Bus Stop is any stop:

1. Not designated by the school district superintendent.
2. Other than that of vehicle disablement, passenger crisis or medical emergency.

School Bus Stops shall be designated on the “right side” of the highway whenever possible. The “right side” of the highway is the side of the highway that the school bus passenger entry door faces.

Alternate School Bus Stops are not allowed. If a parent usually receives their child at a stop and the parent cannot be there on a given day, the parent must send an authorized person; a family member, a grandparent, another parent or person to that bus stop to receive that child there. Children will not be taken to any alternate address not designated as a school bus stop on the route.

Students May Board Their School Bus at any other designated school bus stop along the route.

In the Interest of Safety, school bus stops will be located in a safe area where the driver can stop the school bus entirely off of the main traveled portion of the highway for the purposes of receiving or discharging students. Stopping the school bus on the main traveled portion of the highway creates additional risks for all the students aboard the bus, the school bus driver, other users of the highway, and the student(s) entering or exiting the school bus.

Bus Passes must be in the possession of the student every day, readily available and displayed to the school bus driver upon entering the school bus in the AM and the PM.

Parent-Pay Transportation Programs are intended to offset encroachment upon the general fund of a school district due to the operation of transportation. The district does not profit from the fees paid for school bus transportation. Payment of such fees does not imply entitlement to any special services or privileges above or beyond that of the basic home-to-school bus transportation.

Notes from Parents Regarding School Bus Transportation. A dated and signed note from the parent or guardian forwarded to the school bus driver or the transportation department is requested in advance for a student to exit the school bus at any other designated school bus stop other than the regular designated drop-off location for that student. Please use full names and reference the school bus stop by the address or location of the stop.

The Danger Zone is a twelve (12) foot area next to and all around the school bus at a school bus stop. The most dangerous areas are:

1. The left side of the bus.
2. Across the front of the bus.
3. The right rear of the bus.

Note: Please see the last page for an illustration from the Office of School Transportation, California Department of Education.

Only Those Students Who Ride the School Bus are allowed entry into the bus. All other persons, parents and siblings who are not regularly transported by the school bus are not allowed to enter the bus. School staff and employees of the district are exempt.

Unauthorized Entry of a school bus is prohibited by Education Code.

Students Awaiting the Arrival of the School Bus must:

1. Stay at the location of the stop and stay safely away from the highway.
2. Be in good conduct while waiting for the school bus.
3. Not walk towards the school bus as it approaches the stop.
4. Remain standing at the stop until the door of the school bus opens.
5. Have their Bus Pass ready to display to the school bus driver.
6. Walk to the bus and enter in an orderly manner.

School Bus Pick-up and Drop-off Times are approximate and could vary due to numerous factors including, but not limited to, adverse weather conditions, mechanical breakdown, traffic congestion, road work, bus sabotage or vandalism, incidents aboard a school bus, sudden driver illness, parent(s) not present to receive kindergarten student(s) off of the bus, etc.

Escorted Crossings are dangerous. The routing of the school bus shall be such that these situations are minimized to keep the student(s) and the driver from being out of the school bus and on the highway.

Should an Escorted Crossing be necessary, all students must follow the instructions of the school bus driver at all times.

1. Only cross when the driver gives the verbal command to “Cross between me and the bus”.
2. Walk, don’t run, across the highway.
3. Stay out of the highway after crossing.

The Amber Warning Lights on school buses shall be flashed by the school bus driver at least 200 feet before a school bus stop designated for the purpose of loading or unloading school pupils.

Note: The Amber Warning Lights on school buses are traffic control signals. As a yellow signal light at an intersection warns of an impending red light signal, so does the amber warning lights on school buses.

Note: The Amber Warning Lights on a school bus are located above the windshield and above the rear window(s) or just below the roof top.

Note: Use of the Amber Warning Lights for the loading and unloading of school pupils on private property is required by law.

Note: An amber turn signal and/or hazard warning lamps on school buses are not Amber Warning Lamps as described above.

The Flashing Red Light Signals and Stop Signal Arm on school buses shall be flashed by the school bus driver after reaching a stop for the purpose of loading or unloading school pupils.

Note: The Flashing Red Light Signals and Stop Signal Arm on school buses are traffic control signals. As a red light at an intersection means Stop, so does the Flashing Red Light Signals and Stop Signal Arm on school buses until they are cancelled by the bus driver.

Note: Use of the Flashing Red Light Signals and Stop Signal Arm for the loading and unloading of school pupils on private property is required by law.

Note: The Amber Warning Lights and the Flashing Red Light Signals together are referred to as the 8-Light System.

Passenger Restraint Systems lap and shoulder belts (when a school bus is equipped) shall be properly worn and fastened at all times when a passenger is seated in the seat aboard such school bus. Restraints must remain fastened until the driver opens the passenger entry door at the destination.

Proper Seating aboard a School Bus is forward facing with both feet on the floor. This position reduces the risk of injury in the event of a collision or vehicle upset. Industry regulations mandate the design, manufacture and specific location of seats in a school bus to provide the best protection through “Compartmentalization” of the student. The use of padded, high-back seats are elements of this protection. Being properly seated at all times in the school bus is paramount for overall transportation safety in buses not equipped with passenger restraint systems.

School Buses are intended for the Transportation of School Pupils. On all trips, school pupils, teachers and classroom instructional aides have first priority for the boarding of a school bus. Any available seating after loading may be offered to others.

Students should speak to the driver if being bullied or harassed by other students aboard the school bus or if destruction and vandalism is witnessed.

Passenger Management skills and techniques from time to time may be employed by the school bus driver in an effort to maintain order in the school bus. These measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Seating of student(s) at the front or rear of the bus.
2. Keeping a student aboard the bus for information or questions.
3. Assigned seating.
4. Separation of students.
5. Temporarily confiscating student property.

Note: If student property is taken by the driver, it will be returned to the student when he or she exits the bus.

Notice of Unsatisfactory Conduct on School Bus may be issued for the following reasons: Boisterous, Profanity or Vulgarity, Insubordination, Eating in the bus, Arms or Body Exposed Outside Window, Must be Corrected Constantly, Throwing Objects from the Bus, Not Remaining Seated While Bus in Motion, Property Damage.

Note: Action Taken could result in: **a warning, a temporary suspension from part or all school bus transportation, or a suspension from all school bus transportation** pending conference with parents and/or authorities.

Use of Horns. The driver of a motor vehicle, when reasonably necessary to insure safe operation, shall give audible warning with the horn. The horn shall not otherwise be used. The school bus driver will not sound the vehicle horn to signal their arrival at a stop.

In Communications to the transportation department or the school, please reference the bus color/number and/or the name of the driver. Currently, our bus colors/numbers and drivers are:

Blue (7B) – Jacob Landavaso
Green (5B) – Martin Saldana
Red (2) – Felix Atrisco
Yellow (9) – Jay Davison
Orange (4) – Leo Luna

Note: This arrangement of buses and drivers is subject to change at any time in order to meet unexpected transportation challenges.

WASHINGTON UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION RULES AND REGULATIONS ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

**Student and Parent signatures are required before bus pass
will be issued.**

*My child and I have received, read, understand, and agree to abide by
Washington Union School District's Transportation Codes, Policies,
Practices, Procedures, Rules, and Regulations.*

Child's Name: _____ Grade _____
(please print)

School: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date _____

DANGER ZONES

DANGER FROM PASSING CARS

