Transportation Handbook
2025-2026

Contact Information

Transportation Office	517-668-3028	Bus Drivers	517-668-3022

Introduction

Our goal at the DeWitt Public Schools Transportation Department is to provide safe and timely transportation for our students. Our district provides transportation for students traveling to and from school, on class field trips, and to various competitions. To meet the many transportation needs of our students, we do ask for support from the parent community. With your support, we can work together to ensure the safety of students transported in or out of the district.

This handbook is provided to share information regarding our responsibilities in providing services to your child, and your student's responsibilities when riding district transportation. Please read this information and share it with your student.

Each driver has completed the required training and licensing to operate a school bus and demonstrates a desire to serve our school system safely, dependably, and efficiently.

Eligibility

The district will provide bus transportation to and from school for students in grades K-12 who reside within district boundaries. Students remain eligible to ride the bus when they adhere to appropriate behavior. If a student violates the DeWitt Public Schools Code of Conduct, the Transportation Supervisor may collaborate with the building principal to resolve. Discipline administered may include loss of bus-riding privileges in addition to any school consequences. When students ride a bus for extracurricular activities, the student Code of Conduct remains in effect. The school bus is an extension of the classroom.

Student Responsibility

Riding the school bus is a privilege, and all students shall follow the rules. Your bus driver has the responsibility for your safety and the safety of all students assigned to the bus. The driver can only perform this responsibility with your cooperation and assistance in the following ways:

- Be at the bus stop five (5) minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. In order to be consistent and stay on schedule, buses will not wait at bus stops.
- At the bus stop, wait in a safe location and at least 10 feet from the roadway.
- If you must cross the street to board or depart your bus, cross only in front of your bus--never behind it. Students should cross only after they have been directed to do so by the bus driver with the crossing paddle.
- Stay in view of your driver at all times.
- Walk—never run to the bus.
- Remain seated until the bus comes to a full stop.
- When boarding or leaving the bus, do so in an orderly manner.

Bus Rules for Students

Safety for all students is our priority when transporting students. The following rules, although not all-inclusive, have been established to maintain order, safety, and well-being for all.

- Follow all the bus driver's directions
- Students must sit facing forward at all times (back to the back, bottom to the bottom).
- Students must stay seated and keep aisles and exits unobstructed during the ride.
- Classroom behavior is expected
- Talk quietly; be respectful of others
- Beverages, food, candy, and chewing gum are not allowed on the bus
- Do not throw items on or off the bus
- All items must be in a backpack/bag and be held on your lap, including band instruments
- Large or fragile items are not appropriate for bus transportation
- Athletic and playground balls need to be in a bag or container
- Do not write on or damage seats
- Students may not open windows without permission from the bus driver.
- Any behavior that distracts the driver will be cause for discipline
- The district's policy for tobacco, alcohol, weapons, and illegal substances/materials is enforceable on the school buses

- Electronic devices are a privilege—not a right. Inappropriate use may result in loss of that privilege:
    - Telephone calls shall not be allowed after boarding the bus
    - No video recording, sound recording, or picture taking will be allowed
    - Sounds must be muted or turned off
    - Drivers shall remove any device that is not being used appropriately.

Parent Responsibility

Parent cooperation is essential to student well-being on and off the school bus.

- Review all bus safety rules with your child, and encourage proper conduct.
- Provide the necessary protection for students traveling to and from the bus stop during times of inclement weather.
- Visit the bus stop with your child and determine the safest route to take to the stop, where to wait (at least 10 feet from the roadway), and to be aware of unsafe situations.
- Backpacks help keep all school supplies intact and free hands for holding handrails when entering or exiting the bus. Teach your children to secure loose drawstrings, long backpack straps, and other objects that may get caught in the handrail or door of the bus as they are exiting.
- Have a plan with your child if the bus is missed.
- Have a plan in case of early dismissal.
- For kindergarten students: parents/caregivers are required to be present when the bus arrives. If the driver does not know that someone will be responsible for the child when they get off the bus, the child will be returned to the Transportation Office.
- Provide the necessary transportation if your student is suspended from riding the bus.

Bus Routes and Bus Stops
Setting bus routes and bus stops involves many factors, most importantly those set by the Federal and State of Michigan Laws. Also taken into consideration are additional factors such as road configurations, speed limits, school grade, and students with special needs. Every effort is made to make every bus stop safe for students. Students are expected to walk to a bus stop. Our department will strive to make walking distances reasonable and uniform throughout the district.

Door-to-door service is not provided, and buses will not drive through a cul-de-sac unless it is necessary for the bus route.

If there is a concern regarding the location of a bus stop, a written request can be made to the district by emailing transportation@dewittschools.net. The request should include:

- Location of the bus stop
- Safety concern
- Contact information for a response

Transportation department staff will review the request and, if necessary, visit the location before responding to the request.

Bus Passes
DeWitt Public Schools Administrative Guidelines specify that students must board and disembark the school bus only at their designated stops and are to ride only their assigned bus (Policy 8600—Transportation). Transportation services are intended solely for school-related purposes; they are not to be used for play-dates, scout meetings, birthday parties, or other activities scheduled outside of regular school hours. Parents are responsible for arranging transportation for their children for such events.

- Bus passes for daycare arrangements shall not be issued for middle school or high school students.

Change to Transportation Needs
Any change to your child's school bus transportation needs must be in writing. Please complete a Transportation Schedule form on the school's website. A separate form is required for each student. Updates to the bus schedule will be made and the parents will be notified. **Please allow five (5) business days for processing.**

If an emergency occurs that requires a change in daycare arrangements, a written, signed note by a parent/guardian is required, or contact the Transportation Office. Please include the following information:

- Student’s name/address
- Dates the change will be needed
- Reason for the emergency change
- Bus number, name, and address of the person they are going home with
- Parent contact phone number

Inclement Weather
On occasion, inclement weather may disrupt bus service to and from school. It is possible that start times may be delayed for two hours, or school may be canceled for the day. Information regarding bus delays will be posted on the district website and provided to local media as time allows. Should there be a two-hour delay, students should report to their bus stops 2 hours after the regular scheduled time (i.e., if the stop is at 7:52 a.m., be at the bus stop at 9:52). In the case of threatening weather at the end of the day, buses may be delayed until the threat of severe weather subsides.

Passing a School Bus
It is illegal in the State of Michigan to pass a stopped school bus, from either direction, when its red lights are flashing. If a vehicle passes a district bus, our students are put in danger and the license number will be reported to local law officials. Please help keep our students safe and never pass a bus when its red lights are flashing.

Accidents or Emergencies
In the case of a bus accident or emergency, students should stay in their seats and wait for the driver's instructions. Routine bus evacuation drills will be held during the school year to teach students the proper procedure in an emergency evacuation.

Video Monitoring System (Policy 7440.01)
For the safety and security of our students, all district school buses may be equipped with a video monitoring system. Students should be aware that their actions and communications could be recorded at any time by this recording system and used for disciplinary action. Parents should be aware that the recorded video will not be made public and will only be viewed by authorized district personnel.

Volunteering in Our Schools, Field Trips, Athletic Trips, and Transportation (Policy 4120.09)
We recognize that certain programs and activities can be enhanced through the use of volunteers who have particular knowledge or skills that are helpful to our staff. The district appreciates the work and service that volunteers provide to our district and acknowledges your support.

In order to provide a safe environment for our students, we require volunteers and chaperones to complete a background check. DPS will run background checks using the Internet Criminal History Access Tool (I-CHAT) for the following circumstances:

- Chaperoning/volunteering for all off-site and/or overnight events
- Classroom volunteers (regularly, extended time, or working directly with students, even if it is a one-time occasion)
- Volunteer Coaches
- Chaperones for school dances/activity nights
- The district reserves the right to require a background check at any time for the duration of a volunteer's service to the district.

The I-CHAT requires your first and last name, previously used names, date of birth, and race. This background check is conducted by the Human Resources department located at the district's central office. If a criminal history profile includes a conviction of a "listed offense" as defined in the Sex Offenders Registration Act, MLC 28.722, the district shall not allow this person to volunteer for DeWitt Public Schools. If the profile includes a conviction of a felony or misdemeanor, the superintendent will review the information and consider factors such as the nature of the conviction, the date of conviction, the nature of the activity, and other relevant information to determine if the individual will be allowed to volunteer.

The volunteer application may be found at www.dewittschools.net under the volunteer tab.

Electronic Devices for Grades Young 5's, Kindergarten through 5th Grade
Many students use electronic devices as part of their daily lives. Using them on the ride to and from school can be enjoyable. Misuse of these items, however, can be detrimental to the safety and well-being of other students, school personnel, and bus drivers. Therefore, the following rules regarding electronic devices on the buses and school property will be enforced.

1. The school district will not be held responsible for the loss/theft/damage of portable electronic devices that are used on the school buses or school property.
2. iPods, MP3 players, etc., may be used on school buses only if equipped with headphones, and if the volume is maintained at a level that does not disrupt other students or the driver.
3. Cell phones and cameras are not allowed to be used on school buses unless in an emergency where immediate communication is necessary and with the permission of the bus driver. Cell phones and cameras are not allowed to be used on school property.
4. Cell phones must be turned off and kept in backpacks while traveling on district vehicles.
5. Laser pointers are not allowed to be used on school property at any time.
6. Any electronic devices that are being misused may be confiscated by the drivers and returned to the students when they depart the bus/school. If a student continues to violate these rules, the device may be confiscated and returned only to a parent/guardian.
7. Failure to follow these rules may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Conduct.