

## **Methow Valley School District Transportation Bus Conduct Policy and Rules**

Methow Valley School District's school bus conduct policy and rules are in accordance with Washington State WACs and RCWs, all of which will be enforced whether or not they are included in the following regulations. These regulations are designed to assure every student safe transportation to and from school and school sponsored activities. Violation of these rules may be sufficient reason to discontinue bus transportation privileges for students involved.

Misbehavior on a school bus distracts the driver and could endanger others. Schools and families will be notified when students do not follow bus rules while being transported to and from school and during school sponsored activities. Discipline notices will be issued to students who misbehave on the bus via the school principal. Action taken for improper behavior ranges from written warning for a first offense to removal from the bus for a period of time, which can extend through the school year for more serious offenses. Students are responsible for the cost of repairs due to vandalism, abuse, or misuse.

Students may only ride their assigned bus unless pre-arranged. Special permission to ride a bus may be granted if room is available on the bus. Parent or guardian must send a written note to school with their student requesting to temporarily ride a bus. The note must include the student's name, the date, address of stop to get off at, and if riding with another student, his or her name. Students wishing to *permanently* make a change in bus assignment must submit a request to the Transportation Office. Students must receive permission before the switch of buses or stops can be made. School bus drivers are not authorized to approve these requests. This procedure is required by Washington State Law and is designed to protect the student. Drivers will not allow students to use bus stops or ride buses other than the one regularly assigned to the student without the proper authorization from the Transportation Supervisor or school.

Students are ***not allowed*** to depart the bus at any stop other than their assigned bus stop without parent/guardian permission, and shall go directly to their home after leaving the bus.

***The bus driver is in charge of the bus.*** You must obey the bus driver and staff members assigned to the bus at all times. The bus is an extension of the classroom. ***The bus driver has the authority to assign seats temporarily or permanently.*** Refrain from talking to the driver, unless necessary.

### **Loading/Unloading**

- Students must load/unload the bus in an orderly manner, no pushing or shoving.
- Students will arrive at the bus stop five (5) minutes before bus arrival time.
- Students cross the street **in front of the bus, when signaled by the bus driver**. Never cross behind the school bus.

### **Safety**

- Students must stay seated quietly in their seats, face forward and keep the aisle clear.
- Windows are not to be opened without the driver's permission. Keep all body parts inside the bus.
- All items must be kept out of the aisle and emergency doorways.
- Students shall not tamper with the emergency doors or equipment.
- Items prohibited from the bus include: breakable containers, sharp items, weapons, firearms, flammables, skateboards, roller blades, boom boxes, large, bulky items which cannot be held when placed on the floor between legs, all forms of animal life (except service animals).
- Passengers in school buses equipped with seat belts shall be required to wear the seat belt, properly adjusted, whenever the bus is in motion.
- Students shall follow emergency exit drill procedures as instructed by the driver. Drills will take place 3 x per school year.
- Students must remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.

### **Behavior**

- Be courteous, no profane language will be allowed. Profanity directed at the bus driver will lead to suspension from the bus.
- *Eating and drinking on the bus is prohibited*, unless on a field trip and allowed by the bus driver.
- No smoking or ignition source of any kind on the bus, including e-cigs/vaping.
- Devices must be silenced and not cause distraction for the driver.
- Do not throw anything from the school bus. Do not litter on the bus. Trash containers are located at the front of the bus.
- Parents of students identified as causing damage to buses shall be charged with the cost of the repairs.

When another staff member, coach or volunteer is assigned to accompany students on the bus, that person shall be primarily responsible for the behavior of the students. However, the bus driver shall have final authority and responsibility.

Methow Valley School District uses audio-video cameras on school buses for the purpose of reducing discipline problems, thus providing a safer environment for the transportation of students. The reason for recording the transportation environment is to provide school officials, drivers, and parents/guardians with documentation when dealing with inappropriate student behavior.

Washington State Transportation operation rules can be viewed at the following link:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=392-145>