

## STILLWATER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

The primary goal of the Transportation Department is to provide safe and efficient transportation to all eligible students. To help us accomplish this goal, please read through this document and encourage your children to follow the bus rules.

**Anyone not assigned to the bus may not enter a school vehicle unless the driver of the vehicle asks them to do so or in case of a vehicle emergency needing police, fire or ambulance support. Any individual who violates this regulation will be subject to any applicable school board policy without further warnings.**

### Bus Stops

Bus stops are placed at centralized locations that can be safely accessed by a significant number of students. Wherever possible, bus stops are placed within a half mile of student residences.

Students are to ~~use the stop closest to their home~~ **ride to and from only their assigned bus stop. Students are responsible for loading and unloading at their assigned bus stop.** Bus stops are created based on a student's residence. Stops will not be moved or created to accommodate alternate drop off locations.

Students may be allowed to ride to or from an alternate existing stop with the approval of the transportation department.

If you have concerns about your child's safety while waiting at the bus stop, you are encouraged to accompany your child to the bus stop or arrange for a neighborhood buddy to walk with your child.

Students should dress appropriately for the weather, be at the bus stop at least five minutes before the regular arrival time of the bus and wait at least ten minutes before returning home. Buses that arrive at stops within five minutes of the scheduled time will not be sent back to a stop and students will need to find another means of getting to school.

### Bus Discipline

A student's behavior on the bus directly impacts the safety of all other students on the bus, as well as the safety of other drivers. To safely transport students, the bus driver must be able to concentrate on driving the bus without distractions. Therefore, unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated and could result in the loss of bus transportation privileges. **Since the bus ride is an extension of the school day, any behavior violating school policy will be reported to the student's school for possible additional consequences.**

~~Parents/Guardians should also be aware that the inside of a bus is a confined space where children are sitting close together, often with several age groups mixed together. This creates an atmosphere where even minor misbehavior can be an unsafe distraction to the driver. Also, since so many children are together at the same time, peer pressure can cause a child to exhibit behaviors that are not typical for that child. As a result, children may not exhibit the same behaviors on the bus as they do in the classroom, at home, or in a less stressful environment. Parents/Guardians are requested to instruct their children to exhibit appropriate bus behavior.~~

Drivers are trained to recognize and deal appropriately with misbehavior. They do not arbitrarily choose a student to "pick on". Many times, the best way to keep a child out of trouble is to separate him/her from other children who cause trouble or cause the child to act out. For this reason, the bus driver's first level of preventive action is an assigned seat. Parents/Guardians, or students, may request an assigned seat to keep the student out of trouble. SAFETY IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY!

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The driver's attention is divided between the traffic outside the bus and the children inside the bus. A driver can only monitor students through a mirror while maneuvering a large vehicle through traffic. Misbehavior, which distracts the driver, could result in a catastrophe while the same behavior in the classroom may result in only a slight disruption of the learning process. Parents/Guardians should keep these factors in mind when instructing their children in bus behavior or in dealing with bus misbehavior. **THIS IS A TEAM EFFORT...**and we appreciate the support we receive from parents/guardians.

Drivers may assign seats based on numerous factors. An assigned seat may or may not be a punishment. This is a part of the behavior management process and is put in place to help foster a safe environment.

For ~~minor~~ **most** disruptive misbehavior, the procedures below will be followed.

### Driver's action

1. Verbal ~~warning~~ **statement to the student of expectations and consequences.**
2. Assigned seat. The duration of the seat assignment to be determined by the driver. Bus drivers have the authority to assign seats to any student for any length of time for any reason.
3. A "~~Bus Rider Conduct Report~~" **student behavior report** will be submitted to **the** transportation department office for bus discipline **as outlined below.**

### Transportation Office **Department** action

First ~~Bus Rider Conduct~~ **Student Behavior** Report: Transportation staff will ~~attempt to~~ notify the parent/guardian of inappropriate actions, so they can be corrected before the student loses riding privileges.

Second ~~Bus Rider Conduct~~ **Student Behavior** Report: Transportation staff will attempt to notify the parent/guardian that inappropriate behavior is continuing and the student will be denied transportation if the behavior is not corrected immediately. **Student will be denied bus transportation for three (3) days.**

Third ~~Bus Rider Conduct~~ **Student Behavior** Report: Student will be denied bus transportation for **three five (5) days.**

Fourth ~~Bus Rider Conduct~~ **Student Behavior** Report: Student will be denied bus transportation for **five ten (10) days.**

Fifth ~~Bus Rider Conduct~~ **Student Behavior** Report: Student will be denied bus transportation for the remainder of the year. This will also include class trips and extra-curricular activities.

The discipline steps listed above are normally followed to correct **and manage** inappropriate behavior. However, ~~steps may be skipped if the behavior merits a more severe disciplinary action to insure the safety of other passengers~~ **if the behavior merits a more severe disciplinary action to insure the safety of other passengers, students may be removed immediately for a longer period of time. Additionally, students' bus riding privileges may be suspended while an incident is being investigated.**

## STILLWATER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES (Cont.)

Some acts that may result in immediate suspension include but are not limited to:

1. Any act that jeopardizes the safety of the students, the school staff, or the public at large (throwing things on the bus, putting body parts or objects out of the window, failure to cooperate and follow instructions from the staff)
2. Willful disobedience of a directive from a school official, including transportation department staff
3. Any illegal act
4. Vandalism
5. Bullying
6. Harassment
7. Physical or Verbal assault
8. Possession/sale/use of alcohol/tobacco/drugs/vapes
9. Possession of any weapon

Students whose behavior jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus, or challenges the authority of the driver or school personnel, will lose their bus transportation privileges without receiving previous warnings. Immediate loss of bus transportation privileges will also result from vandalism, fighting, abusive language or gestures, failure to cooperate with the driver or other school personnel, possession or use of drugs, weapons, throwing/spitting objects or any action that jeopardizes the safety of passengers, school personnel, or the public.

When bus transportation privileges are forfeited, there will be no flexibility regarding the consecutive days involved. **Bus suspension may include class trips and extra-curricular activities. When a student is suspended from the bus** Parents/Guardians will be responsible for their child's transportation while transportation privileges are suspended.

### Bus Rules for Students

All students must follow these rules for the safety of everyone on board. Students not observing these rules will be subject to loss of bus riding privileges.

1. The bus driver **and/or other transportation department staff** has **have** the authority to enforce all bus rules and may add additional restrictions to insure the safety of all passengers or for disciplinary reasons. The driver **or staff** may also assign seats for any reason. Any student refusing to obey the driver's **or staff's** instructions may be removed from the bus and lose ~~his/her~~ **their** transportation privileges.
2. Be at the bus stop and ready to board at least 5 minutes before the scheduled stop time. Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before trying to board and, if you must cross a road, wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross. Always cross the road at least 10 feet in front of the bus, **never behind the bus.**
3. After boarding, **students are to find their seat without delay. Students are to remain in your seat, facing the front of the bus, properly seated until the bus reaches your designated** arrives at their assigned stop (seat to seat, back to back, feet in front of them on the floor). **Students should face the front of the bus at all times (no sitting backwards, on their knees, their backpack, or other personal items.)**
4. Students must use their designated stop or have prior approval from the transportation office to use a different stop. **If there are no students present at a stop for 3 consecutive days, the bus may not return to the stop until a parent or guardian has contacted the transportation office to start transportation again.**

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5. When requested by the driver, students must immediately and correctly identify themselves. If they have a school issued ID, the driver may request to see the ID, and the student is required to show the ID to the school bus staff.
6. Keep the aisles clear. All personal items carried on the bus must be able to fit in the student's lap. Musical instruments, school projects, and anything else that cannot be safely carried in the student's lap should not be brought on the bus. Flowers, balloons, and other party favors are not permitted on the bus.
7. Students will share seats as needed/directed. Up to three (3) students may be placed in any standard bus seat. The rearmost seat is usually a partial seat and can hold up to two (2) students. If the vehicle is equipped with seat belts, they are required to be worn correctly and fastened.
8. Items such as body spray, cologne, perfume, or other items that may affect allergies are not to be applied or used while on the bus.
9. At no time should a student put hands, head, other parts of the body, or any object out the window. ~~Students should not talk to individuals outside of the bus.~~ Throwing items out of a moving vehicle is a criminal offense and will result in immediate suspension from the bus. Students are to put windows up when instructed to do so.
10. Food and drinks (other than water) are not to be consumed on the bus. Suckers are not to be sold or consumed on the bus as they present a choking hazard.
11. ~~Wireless Telecommunication Devices, including eCell phones, are permitted to be carried under the terms of school policy. Use of these devices on the bus is a privilege that may be revoked by the bus driver at any time. Students are to end calls when asked to do so by the driver, regardless of who they are talking to. If parents need to talk to the driver, they need to call the transportation office and schedule an appointment. Discussing student behavior on the bus while he/she is being transported is not appropriate.~~ Using cell phones to record, harass or intimidate others will not be tolerated.
12. Any damage to bus seats, fixtures or equipment must be paid for by students responsible for the damages. Students may be denied transportation until payment is made.
13. Fighting, abusive language/gestures, failure to cooperate with school personnel, possession or use of vapes, drugs, alcohol, or weapons are ~~major~~ all severe violations that will result in automatic bus suspension.
14. ~~Obey all instructions from the driver or other school staff. If a student does not agree with the instructions, the student needs to discuss the problem with their parent/guardian when they get home. The parent/guardian can contact the transportation office at (405)-533-6347 to resolve any disputes.~~
15. ~~Do not argue with the bus driver.~~ Obey all instructions from the driver or other school staff. If you disagree a student does not agree with the driver's actions instructions, the student needs to discuss the problem with you're their parent/ guardian when you they get home. and have them call The parent/guardian can contact the transportation office at (405)-533-6347 to resolve any disputes.

NOTE: BUS RIDERS ARE SUBJECT TO BEING VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDED WHILE ON THE SCHOOL BUS.

**STILLWATER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES (Cont.)**

The Transportation department will apply/adjudicate all rules, regulations, and disciplinary actions. The Transportation Director has the authority to adjust the disciplinary actions as needed.

A parent may request a conference with the Transportation Director or Assistant Director to discuss their student's discipline. Disciplinary actions for students will not be discussed with anyone who is not a parent/guardian or appropriate school staff.

Students observed violating the rules are subject to loss of riding privileges. Suspension from bus transportation does not suspend a student from school. Students still have to go to school unless the school Principal has suspended them as well.

Disciplinary actions assigned to a student may be enforced over school years. For instance, if a student violates the rules on the last day of school, their punishment will continue at the start of the next school year.