

## **2022-2023 Waxahachie ISD Student Bus Rider's Safety Handbook**

Dear Parent:

The Waxahachie Independent School District provides bus transportation to and from school as a courtesy service for eligible students residing in the district. The State of Texas prescribes the conditions governing school bus operations.

Eligible students are defined by State statute as those residing in the district at least two miles from the school they should attend, as measured by the nearest practical route. The nearest practical route is the nearest traveled public road, which may or may not, be the road used by the school bus. Address eligibility is continually audited. When an address is found to be ineligible (because of street openings, construction changes, etc.), notification will be made as soon as possible with a grace period allowed for parents to locate alternate means of transportation.

In order to meet the conditions outlined by the State and provide safe, prompt movement of eligible students, the school district has adopted standard regulations and procedures and has provided disciplinary measures for violations of the rules. They are herein outlined for your information and for the guidance for your child.

The school district is pleased to provide transportation for its eligible students and solicits your assistance in helping create a safe, healthy operation. We ask your cooperation with school personnel in developing proper behavior patterns for those pupils who ride the buses.

If you need information concerning bus routes, please visit our web site at [www.wisd.org](http://www.wisd.org).

If you should need information, concerning student misconduct reports please contact transportation.

Thank you,

Phil Gurke  
Transportation Director

Parents and Bus Riders,

The goal of this Bus Rider's Handbook is to help provide a safe and enjoyable experience for children who ride school buses. Parents should take time to read and discuss the material in this handbook with their children. **Riding a regular school bus is not a state requirement**, it is a privilege provided by the school district and should be treated as such.

## **General Rules**

1. *All students must be able to enter and exit the school bus at their bus stop without the help from the driver.*
2. All student must be able to board & exit the bus without parental supervision and find their way to & from the bus stop and home.
3. Obey the instructions of the bus driver. At no time, will a student address a bus driver in a disrespectful manner, or refuse to cooperate with the driver.
4. *Students must board and leave the bus at designated stops only.*
5. Only students who are eligible to ride will be transported. Everyone must ride their assigned bus to and from their assigned bus stop.
6. You must have a signed Emergency Bus Rider Request from the principal to ride with another student or get to off at a bus stop other than your own. The request must be given to the driver when you board the bus.
7. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to school if a child misses the bus.
8. Bus are equipped with an audio/video observation system.
9. Students shall never attempt to operate the passenger door or other driver controls except in case of emergency.
10. Students shall face forward for the duration of the trip, and shall keep their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the bus aisle.
11. All students will sit with the same gender unless otherwise directed by the driver.

## **HUB Bus Stop Guidelines**

All WISD students who are attending an academy campus and are utilizing a HUB bus stop must abide by the following guidelines:

1. All parents must fill out a bus contract for each student.

2. Parents will need to contact the Transportation department to confirm busing information and eligibility, before students will be allowed on the bus.
3. All students will be provided an ID badge with the bus stop and bus number on it. The ID badge must be brought to school daily.
4. Parents have to be at the bus stop to receive their students, or the students will be returned to their campus.
5. Transportation will be reviewed, out of safety concerns, if a student has to be returned to their campus repeatedly.

## **Id Badge Guidelines**

All WISD students are required to have a school issued ID Badge while boarding the school bus. All students must scan their ID Badges when they board and when they exit the bus.

## **Transportation Procedures for Students**

1. The first two weeks of school will be for training and reminding students about badges before consequences begin.
2. Students who do not have a badge for the first time will receive a verbal warning from the driver.
3. Students who do not have a badge for the second time will receive a written warning from the driver and the parent will receive a phone call and letter from transportation.
4. Student who do not have a badge for the third time could be suspended from the bus.

## **Procedures for Waiting for the Bus**

1. Be at your bus stop 10 minutes before scheduled pick up time. *Driver will not stop, honk, or wait. Riders must be visible to approaching bus.*
2. Stand on the sidewalk, or back from the roadway approx. 10 feet while waiting for the bus. If you are in a darkened area, you may wish to use a flashlight.
3. When the bus approaches form a line and be prepared to load immediately.

4. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the driver signals you to board.
5. If you miss the bus, go home immediately. Parents should have a backup plan.
6. Parents should instruct their children on what procedure to follow if they miss their bus.
7. The school bus is an extension of the classroom; all school rules and regulations apply. These include conduct and dress code.

### **Loading the Bus**

1. Do not push or shove.
2. Use the handrail and steps.
3. The bus will not move until all students are seated.
4. *Drivers, at their discretion, may assign seats.*

### **Conduct on the Bus**

1. Students must remain seated at all times, and face the front of the bus.
2. Any or all seats may be assigned at any time at the driver's discretion. Do not change seats.
3. Nothing may be extended outside the window at any time.
4. The emergency door and windows may not be entered or exited except for emergencies.
5. No type of weapons, explosives, fireworks, sharp or pointed articles will be permitted.
6. No type of alcoholic beverages, controlled drugs, or substances will be permitted.
7. No type of tobacco product will be permitted.
8. Students must follow the driver's instructions at all times.
9. Cursing, obscenities, harassment and scuffling are forbidden.
10. Students may not depart at any unauthorized stop unless approval is granted by a school administrator.
11. Non-eligible students may not ride the bus at any time. Students are "non-eligible" if they reside inside of a half mile radius of the campus they attend, and if they are not on a regular WISD bus route.
12. No objects may be thrown, tossed or pitched inside or outside of the bus.
13. All items brought on board must fit in the student's lap. Seats will not be taken by large band instruments, schoolwork, projects, or any item which takes up another student's seat. Please make special arrangements for transporting the large articles.

14. Drivers are not required to wait for student sat the bus stop, or to sound the horn while students come out of the residence. Students must be at the bus stop ten minutes before the bus arrives.
15. WISD students and staff are the only authorized persons to board school buses.
16. No type of animal, pet, or bird is permitted on the bus.
17. Fighting is absolutely forbidden.
18. Students may not eat, drink, or litter while on the bus.
19. Students may be denied bus privileges and be required to pay for any damage to any part of the bus including seats and equipment.
20. Any elementary student, who rides a WISD bus that is not assigned to him/her, must first receive authorization form the office. A transportation authorization slip signed by a campus official must be given by the student to the bus driver.

### **Getting off the Bus**

1. Stay seated until the bus is completely stopped.
2. Use the handrail and take one-step at a time when leaving the bus.
3. Wait for your turn to leave the bus, pushing and crowding will only slow exiting and may cause an accident.
4. Keep loose clothing and drawstrings away from handrail.
5. Stay clear of the bus. Do not chase or hang onto the bus at any time.
6. If any article drops or rolls near or under the bus, DO NOT go after it. 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 of the roadway shall exit the bus, move to a point 10 to 12 feet in front of the right bumper, and wait for the driver to signal to you that it is safe to cross.
2. Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. NEVER cross the road BEHIND the bus.
4. *CAUTION:* Be alert for the vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading or unloading students.
5. Cross all streets at intersections. Obey all traffic signals and signs on your way home.

### **Prohibited Items**

1. Tobacco.
2. Live animals or insects.
3. Glass containers.

4. Alcoholic beverages.
5. Weapons, explosive devices, harmful drugs, or chemicals.
6. Any object (musical instruments, shop project) too large to be carried by the student. All other items must be kept on the student's lap at all times.
7. Lighted matches or cigarette lighters.
8. Food or drinks (eating on the bus is a choking hazard and is not permitted).

### **Accidents or Emergencies**

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. All students must stay on the bus. Students will not be allowed to leave with anyone including parents.
3. If you must leave the bus, stay in a group.
4. The following procedures will be used for evacuation in an emergency situation.
  - a. The student nearest the back door will open it and hold it open.
  - b. Leave the bus in a single file as quickly and as quietly as possible.
  - c. Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door.
  - d. Once outside the bus, follow the driver's instructions completely.

### **Extra-Curricular Trips**

1. Bus rider rules apply to all school sponsored events.
2. Discipline will be the responsibility of the campus principal/ department director or the trip sponsor.
3. The bus must be clean when returning from the trip.

### **Discipline**

The school bus is an extension of the classroom. Transportation works closely with all Campus Administrators to ensure the safety of the students. Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct: the privilege to ride in a district vehicle, including a school bus, may be suspended or revoked. All school board policies that apply to student conduct and other student related activities apply to the school bus.

Steps and consequences for improper conduct on the bus include the following:

#### **Minor Offenses:**

- 1<sup>st</sup>– Verbal warning with written documentation from the driver.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>– Written warning with written documentation from the driver.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Warning with written documentation from the driver  
Transportation Supervisor/Coordinator contacts parent.
- 4<sup>th</sup>–Referral to campus with documentation of previous warnings and parent contact.

**Major Offences:**

- Fighting
- Possessing a weapon
- Safety Violations

Major Offenses will result in immediate referral to campus with video, or suspension by Transportation Supervisor/Coordinator.

The Transportation Director may call a parent conference if a serious misconduct occurs.

**Transportation has the authority to skip steps or repeat steps at the discretion of the Transportation Director.**