

Parent Handbook

School Bus Transportation



Office of Human Capital & Operations
Transportation Department
2023-2024

Revised 06/1/2023
Policy Number [8600](#)

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BUS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

- Students utilizing school bus transportation must use their school issued student ID when boarding the school bus and again at departure. This additional safety measure has been implemented to support ability to identify all students onboard in the event of an emergency. The school ID only records record of ridership when a student taps the ZPASS device to record their entry and exit. The initial school ID, lanyard and plastic cover is provided @ no expense. If misplaced, a \$5 replacement fee is required. Refusal to utilize school ID for school bus transportation will result in disciplinary action up to and including bus suspension.
- School bus transportation is provided for all students. Students attending their home zoned school will be provided a bus stop location within walking distance. Students attending their school of CHOICE will be provided a depot stop location. Depot stop locations may not be within walking distance and may require parent/guardian assistance to/from designated depot stop location.
- Students residing within a two-mile radius of the school they attend are not eligible for school bus transportation.
- Bus transportation is not provided from/to the location of babysitters, day care facilities, grandparents' home, parent's work or friend's home.
- Students are expected to be at the designated bus stop location at least 5-7 minutes prior to the AM scheduled bus arrival time. In accordance with Florida Statutes, parents must arrange for supervision at bus stop locations for PK/K/1st grade students.
- Students are to respect the property of others and maintain good behavior while at bus stop locations. If misbehavior occur at bus stop location, consequences will be assigned per the Transportation Discipline Matrix included in this handbook.
- Requests for stop changes or additions must be requested through the routing department and approved by the Director of Transportation.
- Registration forms will be distributed to students during their 1st week of utilizing school bus transportation. It is imperative the form is completed, including 2 emergency contact numbers and returned to driver within 48hrs. In the event of an emergency, the information supplied will be used for contact. If registration form is not returned; the student will lose the privilege of riding the bus until the form has been submitted.

F.E.F.P.-SCHOOL BUS SURVEY PERIODS FOR STATE FUNDING

- Survey 1- July
- Survey 2- October
- Survey 3- February
- Survey 4 - June
- Magnet & Choice schools are supported by providing depot stop locations. Depot stops are designated areas within the community in which parents are required to transport students to/from; providing supervision prior to pick-up and beyond drop-off. Depot stop locations are not required to be within walking distance from home address.
- The School District receives state funding for transporting students who reside 2 or more miles from their assigned school or lives in a hazardous walking area. To ensure adequate funding (money to support providing transportation to your student) please be sure your child(ren) ride the bus at least once during the designated FEFP survey periods.

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

For the first ten days of school, until route times are firmly established, please have your student to the bus stop location at least ten minutes prior to scheduled pickup times. Please be aware as bus ridership increases/decreases, bus stop AM/PM times are subject to change.

During the school year buses may be delayed due to a substitute driver being assigned, mechanical failures, road detours, train stalled on track or rainy weather may occur at any time causing your child's bus to run late. Our first concern is always the safety and well-being of our students. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

K/1ST GRADE PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

Please purchase and place a book bag tag with your student's full name, physical address, bus route number, grade level and school name. This helps transportation professionals to make sure students of this young age are getting off at the proper stop location. Without proper identification, it is difficult for bus operators/attendants to assist. It is the parents' responsibility to arrange for supervision at 5-7 minutes prior to bus stop during AM/PM stop times. Failure to do so, will cause the driver to have to return to your stop beyond dropping all other students at their stop locations. At the 3rd occurrence of no supervision at stop location, the Department of Children Family Services will be contacted and informed on violation to this policy.

STUDENTS W/ DISABILITIES/CURB TO CURB TRANSPORTATION

If you anticipate needing to cancelling pickup due your student not attending school, please call 772-978-8819 or 771-978-8840 as soon as you know. If calling before or after business hours, please leave a detailed message including your students name, assigned route number, the school they attend, date(s) of bus cancellation along with your name and contact number. After 3 days of non-pickup, the bus will not return until our office has been contacted and notified services are needed.

SRHS IB/PROGRAM TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

Students attending the Alternative Center for Education (ACE) or the Sebastian River High School International Baccalaureate Program, please contact your school for transportation assignments.

IB program students residing outside of the SRHS attendance zone in need of transport to/from SRHS, must contact SRHS administration for transportation information/arrangements.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

All School buses are owned and operated by the School District of Indian River County. Each are equipped with video surveillance cameras. Videos are viewed randomly for ensuring proper school bus behavior and providing transportation professionals ongoing training throughout the year.

The Director of Transportation, Operations Managers and/or the Principal of students in which a bus violation is reported, will have access to view for investigative purposes to determine actual events. Videos are confidential and are not open to viewing by anyone outside of School District Personnel.

BUS SAFETY PROCEDURES & EXPECTATIONS

Safe and efficient transport of students is the goal of the Transportation Department. All rules that apply to school grounds and school activities apply to the school bus. Riding the school bus is a privilege. Misconduct while riding a school bus represents a serious threat to the safety of all occupants of the bus as well as other motorists, pedestrians, and members of the community; therefore, students must follow bus safety and courtesy rules. Safety and security measures on the school bus include video/audio recordings of all passengers including driver/attendant. Parents are responsible for the supervision and safety of students until boarding and after departing the bus. Students are only permitted to ride their assigned bus; notes to ride an unassigned bus is no longer accepted. The Director of Transportation may grant approval under an emergency w/ documentation to support the need.

School buses are the safest means of transportation for students to get to school and back. Millions of children all around the world start and end their day with a trip on a school bus. Safety of the children on these trips is of utmost concern to both the transportation professionals, school authorities as well as parents.

Children get to school by walking, bicycling or parents drop them or by school bus.

Comparison studies with other modes of transport conclude that school buses are seven times safer than average family cars. The sheer size of the bus, its vibrant yellow color, and additional safety features like seatbelts, stop signs, big mirrors and flashing lights ensure that students are in safe hands while travelling by the school bus.

It is important that students adhere to all safety rules/procedures put into place. Respectful communication and following the instructions of the bus driver and bus aide is of utmost importance. Distractions increase risk, safety first is safety always, so everyone is required to do their part!

<p>1. At the Bus Stop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive at designated bus stop location five to seven (5-7) minutes early • Stay a safe distance from the roadway: at least ten (10) feet • Be cautious of traffic • Wait in an orderly manner 	<p>2. When the Bus Arrives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure bus has come to a complete stop, flashing lights are on and stop arms and crossing arms are out prior to approaching bus • If crossing the street to board the bus, make certain cars have stopped in both directions and always cross in front of the bus. • Board the bus in an orderly manner (allowing younger children to board first) being certain to tap your student ID onto ZPASS device to record your entry to school bus • Go directly to assigned seat
<p>3. On the Bus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be respectful of the driver/attendant and passengers and adhere to bus safety rules at all times • Be polite and speak with an ‘inside voice’ • Use appropriate language • Remain seated until arriving at your stop • Keep all body parts inside the bus • Keep bus neat and clean • Do not eat or drink • Wear seatbelts • Cell phones are permitted to be used on the bus but cannot be used to take pictures or video record; incoming calls are not to be placed on speaker mode • Headphones are required when using audio feature on electronic devices to prevent distracting driver 	<p>4. Exiting the Bus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow school bus exit procedures • Exit in an orderly manner at designated stop only being certain to tap your student ID onto ZPASS device to record your exit from school bus. • Check all directions for oncoming traffic • Cross the street, if required, only in front of the bus after traffic has stopped in both directions • Avoid danger zones
<p>Students are required to communicate respectfully and follow directions of the bus operator & bus aide</p>	

VIOLATIONS OF BUS SAFETY RULES

- Refuse to sit in assigned seat
- Use electronic devices to take or send pictures, images, or videos
- Engage in fighting, rough housing, making loud noises, and/or distracting or disruptive behavior
- Throw objects inside or out of bus window
- Vandalize school board property (school bus)
- Engage in public displays of affection and sexual behavior
- Be disrespectful and disobey the bus driver or assistant
- Delay the bus route schedule
- Board bus with banned items which includes live animals, glass containers, skateboards, rollerblades, laser pointers, and objects that could be used to inflict bodily injury
- Board bus with balloons, flower bouquets, and large musical instruments
- Engage in bullying and/or harassment of peers, or any conduct that endangers the safety

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION FOR BEHAVIOR & SAFETY INFRACTIONS

Transportation professionals (drivers and attendants) are required to implement interventions to encourage improved behavior and compliance with bus safety rules prior to submitting a discipline referral. Once a student has been provided one (1) documented intervention and misconduct continues to occur, a discipline referral will be submitted to school administrators, so an appropriate consequence can be assigned using the progressive discipline plan indicated below. Interventions used include but are not limited to redirection, seat change, conference with student, and allowing opportunity for apology/restitution.

Minor Bus Behavior Violations

- Eating or drinking on bus.
- Failing to sit in the seat assigned by bus operator and/or attendant.
- Back talking/exhibiting rude behavior towards bus operator, attendant or others.

Minor Infraction Consequences

First Offense	Verbal/Written reprimand from the Principal
Second Offense	Parent Contact/Phone Conference
Third Offense	1 –day suspension from school bus transportation
Repeated Offenses	Repeated minor unacceptable behaviors will be considered willful disobedience and/or open defiance of authority, resulting in bus behavior agreement, suspension from the bus for the remainder of nine weeks and/or out of school suspension and/or possible recommendation of expulsion from the school bus.

Mid-Range Bus Behavior Violations

- Disrupting, distracting, or disobeying a bus operator and/or attendant.
- Getting out of seat while the bus is in motion.
- Horse-playing, loud talking, playing music loudly, use of profanity, inappropriate remarks/gestures/acts in or out of the bus window at other student’s pedestrians, or motorists.

Mid-Range Infraction Consequences

First Offense	Verbal or Written reprimand from the Principal combined with Parent Contact/Phone Conference
Second Offense	1 to 5-days bus suspension from school bus transportation
Repeated Offenses	Repeated mid-range unacceptable behaviors will be considered willful disobedience and/or open defiance of authority, resulting in bus behavior agreement, suspension from the bus for the remainder of semester and/or out of school suspension and/or possible recommendation for expulsion from the school bus.

Major Bus Behavior Violations

- Placing head, arms, or legs outside the window of the bus while parked or in motion
- Threats against the bus operator, bus attendant, or passengers on the bus
- Fighting on bus
- Smoking on bus
- Possession and/or use of Weapon/Drugs (Any Zero Tolerance Item) on bus
- Throwing objects inside the bus or out of the window of the bus, which may or may not cause injury to persons or physical damage
- Vandalism of seats or other bus equipment
- Opening a school bus emergency exit door while the bus is in motion
- Opening a school bus emergency door and/or exiting the bus when the bus is stopped, unless directed by the school bus operator in an emergency or during an evacuation drill.
- Boarding or attempting to board a bus route other than the student's assigned bus route or attempting to leave the school bus at stop other than the student's assigned bus stop without permission of the school Principal

Major Infraction Consequences

First Offense	1 day to 5 days of suspension from school bus transportation and/or school unless the First Offense is a zero-tolerance behavior such as drugs, weapons, or serious bodily harm. In the case of a zero-tolerance behavior, 10 days of suspension may be administered, as deemed appropriate from school bus transportation and/or school.
Second Offense	Up to 10-days of suspension from school bus transportation and/or school, bus behavior agreement, and Transition Meeting w/ Director of Transportation.
Repeated Offenses	Repeated major unacceptable behaviors will be considered willful disobedience and/or open defiance of authority, resulting in suspension from the bus for the remainder school year and/or out of school suspension and/or possible recommendation of expulsion from the school bus.

*For IDEA-eligible ESE students, suspension and expulsions shall follow applicable laws, School Board policies, and provisions of the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Likewise, for students determined to be disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, suspension, expulsion, and other disciplinary measures shall follow applicable laws, School Board policies, and provisions of the Section 504 Accommodation Plan.

BUS BEHAVIOR AGREEMENT

School Year: _____
IRCS D Student Bus Behavior Contract

Name: _____ ID#: _____ School: _____ Grade: _____ Bus Route: _____
Student

Indian River County School District school bus transportation is a **privilege** provided to students. School bus transportation is not a right. Safety is our #1 priority and in order to make the riding experience safe for all, there are rules that all students must follow while under the supervision of school bus transportation professionals. If students are unable to follow the rules of safe school bus riding, students may be denied the privilege of riding the school bus.

This contract has been developed because of the students rule violation(s) and/or misconduct related to the students safe school bus transportation. This contract must be signed and followed in order to continue riding the school bus. Any violation after signing this contract may result in the denial of school bus privileges for the remainder of the current school year. I have received and read a copy of the transportation rules. I understand that if I choose not to follow the expectations and the rules of school transportation services beyond signing this contract, I will be denied the privilege of riding the school bus.

Student Initials _____ *Parent Initials* _____

I understand that my school day begins at my designated school bus stop and ends after school at my designated school bus stop. I agree to follow the direction of the school bus transportation professionals in a courteous and respectful manner. I agree to sit in my assigned seat & treat other students at bus stop and on school bus in a courteous and respectful manner. I agree to report any concerns I have to my driver instead of taking matters into my own hands. I also agree to treat the property of the school bus and the school bus stop in a respectful manner.

Student Initials _____ *Parent Initials* _____

If my child violates any school bus rules, I am aware that they will be subject to school discipline as well as losing their privilege of riding a school bus.

Student Initials _____ *Parent Initials* _____

Date: ____/____/____

Duration of Contract: Through the End of School Year _____

Student Signature

Parent Signature

School Administrator

Director of Transportation

CONTACT INFORMATION

Business Hours

8am to 5pm

**if you need bus information prior to 8am please call dispatch @ 772-978-8840 or 772-978-8812 if beyond 5pm, call 978-8829.*

 **Need to Contact
Transportation?**

If you are trying to reach transportation,
please call the main number **772-978-8801**
and follow the prompts to reach
office personnel.

