

TOLLESON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
DISTRICT #17  
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT



Bus Rider Handbook

## **Bus Transportation**

All students eligible for transportation have the right to safe and efficient transport. Disciplinary measures will be handed as deemed appropriate. Should revocation of bus privileges be required, parents will be responsible for transporting the student to and from school.

### **REGULAR EDUCATION BUS CONDUCT**

Riding the school bus is a **privilege** granted by the school district and is not a right of the student.

#### **ONLY STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR BUS TRANSPORTATION WILL BE PERMITTED TO RIDE THE BUS.**

All students riding on regular routes to/from school, Field trips, after school activities, or alternative education routes are under the direct supervision of the bus driver and follow the same rules for bus behavior. It is the Student's responsibility to do the following:

- Be on time for (at the bus stop).** Parent or Guardian will be responsible for transporting students who miss the bus.
- Respect private property at bus stops (no littering, trespassing or vandalism).**
- Conform to the same behavior/rules as required on school campuses.**
- Respect bus property (no littering or vandalism).** Parents will be charged for bus damage caused by students.
- Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner.**
- Keep the bus aisles clear at all times.**

### **REGULAR EDUCATION RULES FOR RIDING THE BUS**

The following rules will be enforced any time students are transported by a district vehicle and guidelines detailed in The Minimum Standards pamphlet published by the Arizona Department of Public Safety.

1. Follow the driver's directions the first time they are given.
2. Stay in your assigned seat at all times facing forward.
3. Keep hands, feet, books and objects to yourself.
4. No loud voices, swearing, offensive and/or obscene gestures, teasing, or abusive Language allowed.
5. No eating, drinking, or gum chewing will be allowed.
6. Any act (i.e., fighting teasing abusive language) that may endanger the safe transport of **ALL** students enroute to or from their bus stop is not allowed.
7. In case of emergency, children are to remain on the bus and follow instructions.

8. Use the most direct route to and from bus stop.
9. Insects, reptiles, or other animals are not allowed on the bus.
10. Any item that could, in the opinion of the bus driver, cause a safety hazard cannot be transported on the bus (i.e. glass objects, ball, bats, sharp metal objects, etc).
11. Backpacks that cannot be carried on the students lap or otherwise securable are **not** allowed on the bus. This includes Suitcase type backpacks with wheels and handles.
12. Severity of bus consequences will vary depending on the offense.
13. Transportation rules and regulations will govern all bus passengers. Written permission from parents, which the school office has approved, is needed to get on or off the bus at any location other than the student/s regular bus stop.
14. Personal hygiene and clothing must meet with school rules. shoes with shoelaces must be tied.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR BUS MISCONDUCT**

In addition to the discipline process covered under the “Regular Education-Rules for Riding the Bus”, there are actions that may be turned over to authorities to handle issues that may involve fines. For example, a student throwing any object from a bus window could receive a \$250 fine for littering. Students throwing any articles at buses or out of the bus windows are responsible for damages that are associated to that action. Bus damages and medical liabilities are to be reimbursed by the parent/guardian. Students are responsible for their actions. Damages could take the form of monetary liabilities for associated medical costs and repairs to property.

### **REGULAR EDUCATION RULES FOR WAITING AT THE BUS STOP**

The recent growth and changes in our neighborhoods have created expectations of behavior at each bus stop to ensure the safety of our students and to respect the private property adjacent to the bus stops. Outlines below are behavior expectations that will make your child’s wait at the bus stop save and promote a sense of community spirit with our neighbors. Please review these very important rules with your student. A student could lose bus privileges if he/she cannot be a good citizen at the bus stop.

If you are a parent that waits at the bus stop with your child, please do not try to maintain control with children other than your own. Problems that need to be addressed By the Transportation Department should be reported to 623-936-9740 ext. 2020.

**1. Please do not have your child at bus any earlier than 10 minutes before the scheduled bus arrival time. This is the number one culprit involving bus stop problems.**

2. Playing in the roadway is very dangerous, especially with the number of other student's at the stop. Cars go by very quickly. A child's perception of distance and speed are inaccurate when watching a vehicle travel toward them.
3. Keep your hands to yourself while waiting to board the bus. Physical aggressiveness is not tolerated. "Playing often turns into arguments or worse.
4. Let your student know that climbing on top of mailboxes is very dangerous.
5. Do not throw rocks, papers. And other items at other people, vehicles, or in the backyards of private property.
6. Respect the privacy of the property at the bus stop.
7. When the bus arrives, line up in single file away from the curb edge. Most bus injuries happen within a short distance from the bus perimeter.
8. Load the bus single file without pushing fellow students; they might fall on/against the steps or under the bus.
9. Do not chase after something under the bus. Notify the bus driver that something went under the bus – the bus driver will help in the retrieval effort.

**If something is not condoned at school, it is not condoned at the bus stop or on the bus.**

### **REGULAR EDUCATION BUS LOADING AND UNLOADING AT SCHOOL**

The bus loading and unloading area at school is also a place where safety should be of primary concern. The designated school bus loading and unloading areas are reserved for that purpose. The Arizona Department of Public Safety mandates that parents are not allowed to drop-off or pick-up their students in designated bus loading areas. The parent drop-off and pick-up locations are specifically designated at each school. contact the school office for information on designated drop-off/pick-up areas.

Much like the bus stop rules, students should know the following:

- 1.Keep your hands to yourself while waiting to board the bus.
- 2.Line up in single file away form the curb edge.

3. Load the bus single file without pushing fellow students.
4. Do not chase after something under the bus. Notify the bus driver that something went under the bus – the bus driver or on site teacher will help in the retrieval effort.

### **PARENT LIABILITY**

Under Arizona law, parents are liable for damage done to school property by their children. A student, who cuts, defaces or otherwise damages any school property, including buses may be suspended or expelled from school. That student's parents will be charged for the cost of such damage. The District expects and budgets for replacement or repair of items and fixtures necessitated by normal wear and tear. We believe that parents and taxpayers should not be required to underwrite premature replacement or repair caused by negligence or malicious vandalism. Our policy on parent responsibility for such costs is, therefore, strictly and fairly enforced.

### **TRANSPORTATION DISCIPLINE PROGRAM ON BUSES**

The methods of accomplishing control for safety can take different directions depending on the incident. The normal course of action is listed here to help ensure that our students meet our expectations and remain safe.

Specific disciplinary and revocation processes may be discussed with the Principal/Transportation Director.

1. **Verbal Request:** The bus driver or attendant will ask students to take corrective action. An example would be a student that is standing at any time during the route. Since students are required to be seated during the route with their back against the back of the seat, standing is not permitted. When a driver or attendant notices a student standing, walking around, or leaning on the seat in front of him, he/she will ask them to be seated. If the student does not know how to sit properly, instruction will be provided. Verbal Requests are given before Verbal Warnings unless the nature of the actions taken by the student represents a lack of sensitivity or common courtesy to the other children or could be a safety issue for the safe operation of the bus.
2. **Verbal Warning:** Verbal Warnings are used when verbal requests become ineffective. An example of a warning is when a student is asked several times to conform to the bus rule/s and fails to do so. A Verbal Warning informs the student that he/she will be written-up the next time they repeat the behavior. Several Verbal Warnings may be given to one student per trip or week. The severity of non-conformance and the level of cooperation between the student and the driver will determine if the Verbal Warning becomes a Written Complaint.

3. **Written Complaint:** A Written Complaint can result from repeated verbal requests or warnings. A Written Complaint may also be accomplished the first time an incident occurs depending on the incident. A Written Complaint is given to correct student behavior. Bus complaints are generally forwarded to the Principal at the school. A copy of the Written Complaint is on file in the Transportation Department for future reference. Poor behavior will not be tolerated, as they are almost always safety related. Parental notification of a Written Complaint may be necessary if the nature of complaints is repeated and/or affects the safety of others. Continuing complaints or one “major” complaint may result in the loss of school bus privileges until a satisfactory resolution can be found.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS PROCEDURES FOR RIDING THE BUS**

In addition to general expectations discussed earlier, the following regulations pertain to needs of special education students. These regulations will help to ensure the most efficient transportation of students.

1. Students must be ready for pick-up at their designated pick-up location at least five minutes earlier than the scheduled pick-up time. If the bus driver does not visibly see the student, the bus will wait one minute. The bus driver will not sound the bus horn, dispatch the bus attendant, or radio the dispatch to initiate a phone call to the house to summon a student.
2. Students who require assistance to get their designated pick-up location will be assisted by parents/guardians. The bus driver or bus attendant cannot leave the school bus, except to operate the wheelchair lifts.
3. Parents /guardians must meet the bus to help with students who require assistance to safely get from their drop-off location to their home. The bus driver and attendant will assist students in getting off the school bus. If a Parent/guardian is not present; the student will be returned to his/her school. The Parent/guardian will then be responsible for student’s transportation home. A “No Show” entry will be made in the pick-up and delivery log at the dispatcher’s office that reflects the time of an unsuccessful delivery. Students who attend out of District facilities will be returned to the Transportation Department to await the Parent/guardian.
4. Any changes to special equipment needed by a student or changes in pick-up or Drop-off locations must go through pupil services. Changes take a minimum of three complete business days to process.