

BUS RULES

Policy 5131.1

All bus routes have established designated stops which have been determined by the Board of Education. The Board of Education's responsibility for students begins when the student enters the bus for transportation to school and ends when the bus discharges the student at his or her designated stop after the school day ends. Changes in bus routes and/or designated stops are the responsibility of the Transportation Coordinator and may not be changed without her authorization.

If a student does not arrive home within a reasonable time after his or her usual arrival time, parents should call the school. If no one answers at the school, the parent should contact the bus company at 342-2217.

The Portland Board of Education recognizes the district's continuing responsibility to maintain and improve the welfare and safety for its students on school transportation vehicles. Therefore the district has installed video recording equipment on all school buses to monitor school transportation and will videotape bus routes at random during the school year. Each bus has been equipped with a video monitor box, in which a video recording device may be installed. Students will not be notified when a recording device has been installed on their bus.

If, at any time, a school bus is observed doing anything not consistent with good safety practices, this fact should be reported immediately to the school principal who will communicate the information to the Superintendent of Schools. Whenever possible, the following information should be provided: bus number, location of the bus, and the date and time of the occurrence.

Bus Driver Responsibilities

Bus driver shall be in charge of the bus at all times.

Bus driver will be provided with forms which shall be used to report any student(s) who breaks the rules.

These forms shall be sent to: school principal, Central Office and the bus company terminal manager.

When, during the ride home from school, the bus driver deems it unsafe to continue driving the bus due to disruptive actions by students, he or she may pull the bus over to the side of the road until the disturbance subsides. Once a run is underway, only under emergency situations may the driver return the bus, with students aboard, to school.

Bus driver shall pick up and drop off students at designated stops only as determined by the Superintendent or his designee.

School Administrator's Responsibility

The school administrator is responsible for assuring that appropriate disciplinary action(s) is taken when an incident regarding the conduct of a student is reported.

Disciplinary Action

Failure to comply with school bus rules and regulations will make a student subject to disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the principal and in compliance with Board of Education policy. The following represent some of the options that may be used.

- Conference involving students, parents, bus personnel, and school administrators.

- After school detentions.

- Suspension of bus riding privileges.

- Suspension from school.

Disciplinary action to be taken is the sole responsibility of the school principal. The severity of the disciplinary action will depend upon the nature and frequency of the infractions.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for the conduct of their children while they are waiting for the bus and returning home from the designated bus stop.

It is the responsibility of the parent to assure that the student is waiting at his or her designated stop on time. Should a student miss the bus, the parent must find alternate means of transport-ing the child to school. No school bus will return for a student who misses his or her bus.

With regard to kindergarten students, parents of morning kindergarten students must be at home when the school bus returns the student or must designate a responsible person to receive the child. If the person designated to receive the child is other than the parent, the parent must notify the school principal in writing.

During inclement weather, a bus driver may determine that a hill or street cannot be negotiated safely.

Parents should use their best judgement in a case like this and make alternate arrangements to assure that the child gets to school and back home.

General Rules and Regulations

Defacing or damaging of school buses will not be tolerated. Students responsible for damage to school buses will pay reparation. Cases of willful marking or damaging a school bus will be grounds for the suspension of bus riding privileges.

While waiting for the school bus, students are to stay off private property and refrain from causing a disturbance.

Students who must cross a street after alighting from a school bus must cross in front of the bus.

Those items which are not appropriate on school property are not appropriate on a school bus.

Student Responsibilities

Student Bus Conduct Rules

The following list of rules are to be observed by all students riding school buses and are to be strictly enforced by all bus drivers:

1. The driver is in complete charge of the bus and the children being transported. The driver may make changes in seating, arrange for discipline as it is required, and may take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of his/her bus and its passengers.
2. Students must be on time and at all times must cooperate in keeping the bus on schedule.
3. Students must cross the road, if necessary, only in front of the stopped bus, under the direction of the driver through a hand signal from the driver.
4. Students must keep the aisle clear of books, bags, instruments and other possessions.
5. Students must remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion. Students may leave their seats only when the bus is stopped and directed by the driver or stopped at their destination.
7. The front rows of the bus are reserved for the younger students (middle school on 7-12 buses; K-3 on K-6 buses).
8. No student shall leave the bus without permission from the driver or school authorities except at the student's regular bus stop or at the school.
9. Conduct on the buses will be like classroom conduct except that reasonable conversation is permissible. Inappropriate behavior of any form or manner is not permissible.
10. Drivers will report any misconduct on their bus and any disciplinary action they may take to the principal of the school using the district referral form. The principal may suspend students' bus privileges for up to 10 school days at a time.
11. Students who damage or deface bus or equipment on the bus will be held liable for such damage.
12. Conversation with the driver while the bus is in motion is not permitted except to call the driver's attention to any inappropriate behavior or conduct that might jeopardize the safety of one of its riders.
13. Students must not, at any time, extend their limbs or heads out of a bus window.
14. The use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs or any controlled substance in any form on a school bus is prohibited by state law.
15. No indecent or profane language will be permitted, and there will be no loud or disturbing talking. Inside voices should be used at all times.
16. Bus windows shall not be opened without the driver's permission.
17. Upon entering or leaving a school bus, students will avoid crowding or disturbing others. Students boarding a bus at a point where others debark from it will always stand back away from the door and let those who are getting off out before they attempt to board the bus.

18. Students must not throw any articles away in or about the bus.
19. The bus must be kept clean, and students must cooperate in this by not leaving waste paper or trash of any kind that will clutter up the bus.
20. Students who do not follow appropriate bus rules may be assigned a seat by the bus driver or school administrator.
21. Students should not touch anyone else's belongings.
22. Students should not throw, kick, trip, or hurt anyone's person or belongings.
23. Students should not use hurtful or mean names and language.
24. Students may not eat or drink on the bus.