

TO: Parents of M.S.A.D. No. 64 Students
FM: Daniel A. Higgins, Superintendent of Schools
RE: **School Bus Safety – Rules and Regulations**

In order to assure that the bus driver can attend to the safe operation of the bus, the need for the students' strict observance of school bus rules and regulations is imperative. Your child's bus driver has a tremendous responsibility and we expect him/her to do everything in his/her power to deliver your children safely. Your school personnel are also alert to potential dangers and counsel your children on safety procedures and habits. We need your help to reinforce the importance of safety.

Please share our concern and efforts for your child's safety by taking time to go over the following rules with your child. You can make the difference between a safe or unruly bus by supporting the bus driver in the enforcement of these regulations. If there are problems, feel free to discuss them with the driver or bus contractor for your area. If you need further help, talk with your child's principal or call this office.

1. **The privilege of pupils to ride on the bus depends on their behavior and the observance of the rules.** Any action which endangers the safe operation of the bus may cause the suspension of the pupil's privilege to ride on the bus.
2. Pupils walking on the highway to a bus stop should always walk on the left, on the shoulder of the road, facing traffic.
3. Pupils who cross the road shall cross in front of the bus on signal from the bus driver when s/he has determined that all traffic has stopped.
4. All pupils will be ready in the morning at the time the school bus usually arrives at the pick-up point. The bus cannot wait for those who are tardy.
5. During the morning pick-up, pupils will be discharged only at the regular designated stops at their schools. Permission cannot be granted to allow pupils to leave the bus at any other place.
6. Pupils will take the seat assigned to them by the bus driver.
7. **When the bus is in motion, pupils are not to stand or move about.** Pupils are to remain seated while approaching their school or their home until the bus comes to a full stop.
8. Pupils will obey the driver promptly and politely as s/he is in full charge of the bus and the passengers, and the safety of all rests on his/her shoulders.
9. Normal conversation among pupils is allowed on the bus. Loud, boisterous speech, foul/abusive language, shouting out of the windows, or throwing objects of any kind will not be tolerated. Objects are not to be placed in the aisle of the bus.
10. Damage done to seats or other equipment will be paid for by the responsible party or parties. Appropriate disciplinary action will also be taken by the driver.
11. Pupils are asked to refrain from unnecessary conversation with the driver. Above all, courteous treatment of the driver and other pupils will be the rule.
12. Pupils shall help in keeping the bus clean.
13. Pupils will receive instruction in safe riding practices and participate in emergency evacuation drills at least twice each year.
14. **Pupils will remain a safe distance (at least ten feet) from the bus as it approaches the pick-up area in the school yard or bus pickup point.**
15. Pupils will not bring any gun, loaded or unloaded, knives, or any other dangerous objects on the bus.
16. Pupils are not permitted to smoke on the bus nor possess any tobacco products.
17. Possession of liquor or drugs is prohibited and no pupil who is under the influence of either liquor or drugs will be permitted to enter the bus.
18. Pets or animals are prohibited on the bus except in certain approved circumstances (a pet whose presence is necessary as part of a reasonable accommodation for a disabled individual.)

DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

A. Minor Infraction

Minor infractions of the school bus rules and regulations will be reported to the parents of the student by the bus driver through use of the Bus Misconduct Report with copies sent to the Superintendent of Schools, Principal and bus contractor.

1. First Offense: The pupil and his/her parents will be notified in writing by the bus driver of the offensive behavior within 24 hours of the incident.
2. Second and Subsequent Offenses: The pupil's parents will be notified orally and in writing at the earliest possible time (orally with 12 hours and in writing 24 hours) of the nature of the offense, and the action to be taken. Second and subsequent offenses will receive suspensions in accordance with the provisions listed under Items B and C below. The Superintendent of Schools, Principal and the bus contractor will receive the copy of the report within 24 hours.

B. Major Infractions

The following types of behavior will constitute a major infraction of the rules and regulations governing school bus conduct and will result in automatic suspensions according to the schedule listed: fighting, smoking, destruction of bus/property, possession of alcoholic beverage or drugs, using foul/abusive language, creating disturbances or throwing objects which would interfere with the safety of other passengers. The School Bus Suspension Report shall be completed by the bus driver with one copy to the parent, one to the Superintendent of Schools, one to the Principal of the school and one to the bus contractor.

C. Suspension Schedule

Bus suspensions are subject to review by the Principal and/or Superintendent upon appeal by the parent.

1. First Offense: The first suspension shall be for not more than two days, except in extreme cases when a driver may suspend a student on the first offense for a longer period after conferring with the Superintendent of Schools or building Principal and notifying the parents orally within 12 hours and in writing within 24 hours.
2. Second Offense: The second suspension shall be for not more than five days with the same exceptions as noted in Item 1 above.
3. Third Offense: The third suspension will require that the pupil and his/her parents must appear before the Superintendent of Schools before being admitted back onto the bus.
4. Fourth Offense: On the fourth suspension, the student and his/her parents will be notified in writing and orally of a hearing date, time and place, before the Discipline Review Committee of the Board of Directors. Such a hearing will be considered a preliminary due process hearing for loss of transportation privileges on a permanent basis.

D. Student suspension shall commence on the next scheduled pupil day. **A student who is suspended from one bus is automatically suspended from all buses during the duration of the suspension.**

E. All infractions are subject to review and action by the School Principal