

THE SCHOOL BUS GUIDE & School Bus Code of Conduct



HALL COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Mike Garner, Transportation Supervisor

Information for Parents and Students about School Transportation

A public school transportation program has but one purpose - to safely transport the students. Therefore, it is extremely important that each student be aware of his/her role and responsibility in seeing that the entire operation works smoothly and efficiently.

Several of the important areas in which students are asked to cooperate are as follows:

SAFE RIDING - 10 SAFETY RULES

1. Arrive at your bus stop 5 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time.
2. Dress for the weather - umbrella and raincoat for rain; coat and gloves when cold.
3. Never stand or play in the road. Wait for the bus a safe distance from the road.
4. Always use the handrail when boarding or leaving the bus. Do not wear clothing or carry bags that have strings or straps that could get caught in the handrail.
5. Remain seated when the bus is moving. Your seat is designed to protect you in the event of an accident.
6. Never try to reach anything under or beside the bus. If you drop something while crossing in front of the bus, do not return to pick it up. The bus driver cannot see you. After crossing safely, ask the driver for help.
7. Observe silence when approaching and while stopped for railroad crossings so the driver can hear if a train is coming.
8. Look carefully before crossing the road. Do not assume that a car will stop for you - wait to be sure it is stopped before crossing. Watch for your driver's signal before crossing the road.
9. Always cross in front of the bus - never behind it!
10. Talk quietly. Do not "horseplay". Your driver must give full attention to driving to ensure your safety.

BUS STOP CONDUCT

Students who misbehave at the bus stop may be subject to disciplinary action.

- A. If you must cross a street or road to get to the bus stop on the opposite side, wait until the bus arrives and cross in front of the bus only after the stop sign on the bus is activated and only when signaled by the bus driver.
- B. Be at the bus stop on time, but not too early. The bus driver is responsible for the maintenance of his schedule and cannot wait for tardy pupils. Each student should have books in hand and be ready to board the bus by the time the driver opens the door.
- C. Any student who leaves the school grounds while waiting for a bus to arrive will not be allowed to ride a bus home after returning to the school grounds. Individuals who leave the school grounds will be reported to the principal for disciplinary action.

ENTERING AND LEAVING THE BUS

- A. Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before attempting to board or leave the bus.
- B. Load starting at the rear of the bus, sitting three to a seat, unless otherwise directed by the driver.
- C. Enter and leave the bus in an orderly and quiet manner.
- D. Enter and leave the bus only at the front door, except in case of an emergency.
- E. After leaving the bus, if you must cross the highway, walk at least ten feet in front of the bus, then:
 1. Make certain the bus is stationary, the door is still open and the stop signal is extended.
 2. Upon signal from the driver, proceed across the roadway in the following manner: Walk (don't run) in front of the bus within sight and hearing of the driver, look both ways and stay out of the line of

traffic until the path across the roadway is free of any danger.

3. The danger signal is a blast of the horn. Stop immediately and look at the bus driver.
- F. A student will not be put off a bus for misconduct at any place other than his home or school.

CONDUCT ON THE BUS

- A. Obey the bus driver.
- B. Do not disturb the bus driver while he/she is driving.
- C. Boys and girls will be seated separately.
- D. Stay in your seat and do not change seats unless so directed by the driver - and then only if the bus is stopped.
- E. Sit down while the bus is in motion.
- F. Keep voices low. Avoid shouting or whistling.
- G. No bullying, "rough housing", pushing, fighting, throwing things, or profane or abusive language.
- H. Do not open or close windows of the bus without the driver's permission.
- I. Keep all body parts inside the bus.
- J. Help keep the bus clean, sanitary, and orderly. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment. Willful damage or destruction of any part of the bus is prohibited and any such damage must be paid for by the student or parent.
- K. A student shall not operate the door nor stand in the driver's compartment.

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE GUIDELINES

Students are being prohibited from acts of physical violence, bullying, physical assault or battery, verbal assault, and disrespectful conduct toward the driver or other persons on the school bus. Georgia law defines physical violence as (1) intentionally making physical contact with another that is of an insulting or provoking nature, (2) intentionally making physical contact which causes physical harm to another. Georgia law also mandates that students found by a tribunal to have committed an act of physical violence against a teacher, bus driver, school official, or school employee involving intentional physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature shall be disciplined by expulsion, long-term suspension, or short-term suspension. If intentional physical violence against one of the above employees causes physical harm (unless in self-defense), the student shall be expelled from the public school system for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public school and referred to juvenile court. Students in kindergarten through grade eight who commit the above acts may, on the recommendation of the tribunal and at the discretion of the school system, be permitted to re-enroll in the regular public school program for grades nine through twelve.

THE FOLLOWING ARE RESTRICTED ON THE BUS:

- A. Eating is not permitted on the bus during the school day.
- B. No glass container of any kind will be transported.**
- C. Beverages will not be permitted regardless of the type of container used. Exceptions may be made during exceptionally hot weather.
- D. The use of tobacco is forbidden.
- E. Gum is also forbidden.
- F. Students will be permitted to carry only books and other items related to school work which can be held in the student's lap. Large musical instruments, sports equipment, snakes, and live animals will not be transported. Band instruments may be transported if they can be held in the student's lap and if they do not take up seat space.
- G. Electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones, or any other electronic device that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's safe operation of the bus are prohibited.
- H. Students are prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's safe operation of the school bus.

School bus transportation is a privilege afforded pupils by the Board of Education; it is not a right. The purpose of the policies herein is to help create a safe and wholesome atmosphere for the students who ride the bus.

SCHOOL BUS ELIGIBILITY POLICY (EDDB)

(April, 2002)

Students are eligible for transportation by school bus provided they live within the attendance area of the school they attend. Bus routes are established under the direction of the Superintendent and in accord with recommendations of the Division of Pupil Transportation, Georgia Department of Education.

Additions to existing routes are based upon the following guidelines:

- (1) The student must live at least 3/10 miles from the present bus route and,
- (2) The student must live on a state or county maintained road with adequate space for the bus to turn around and,
- (3) The road must be wide enough for the bus and another vehicle to pass.

Students are assigned to a particular bus route and can only change buses with the approval of the Principal and the Transportation Department. Students must get on and get off from their assigned bus at selected bus stops unless

written permission is granted to let off at a stop other than the designated stop. This request from the parent must be made in writing to the principal. Parents will assume the responsibility of the child when such a request is granted.

BOARD BUS DISCIPLINE POLICY (JCDAD)
(February, 2003)

The transportation of students is an important function in our school system. Every precaution must be taken to see that students are transported safely. The same behavior is expected on the school bus as is expected in the classroom. The Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures that apply for the school, also apply while students are being transported by any vehicle provided for the transportation of students. In addition, it is important that students abide by the bus discipline policies as outlined herein.

Fighting on the bus and abusive language or profanity toward the bus driver will result in a minimum of five days suspension from the bus. A student whose behavior warrants that the bus return to the school will be suspended from riding the bus for a minimum of twenty (20) school days.

Bus Drivers will report specific disciplinary problems to the principal or assistant principal in writing on the Bus Conduct Report Form. If the driver is uncertain about who was unruly or who caused the disturbance, the driver will report the incident to the principal for investigation. After the principal administers the proper disciplinary action, a copy of the Bus Conduct Report Form will be forwarded to the parent, the bus driver, and the Transportation Supervisor that day or the following school day. This form will indicate the action taken by the principal. The principal will maintain a file of the Bus Conduct Report Form.

As required by Georgia law, a student found to have engaged in physical acts of violence* shall be subject to the penalties determined by a tribunal. If a student is found to have engaged in bullying or in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus, a meeting involving the parent/guardian and appropriate school district officials shall be held to develop a school bus behavior contract. This contract shall provide for progressive age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Contract provisions may include but shall not be limited to assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus.

It shall be the responsibility of all principals to abide by the following procedure for enforcing the bus conduct policy:

- **FIRST OFFENSE**: The principal shall take proper disciplinary action, which may include suspension from riding the bus, based on the nature or severity of the offense.
- **SECOND OFFENSE**: The principal shall suspend the student from riding the bus for at least five (5) school days.

- **THIRD OFFENSE**: The principal shall suspend the student from riding the bus for at least ten (10) school days.
- **FOURTH OFFENSE**: The principal shall suspend the student from riding the bus for at least twenty (20) school days.
- **FIFTH OFFENSE**: The principal shall suspend the student from riding the bus for at least sixty (60) school days.
- **SIXTH OFFENSE**: The principal shall suspend the student from riding the bus for at least one hundred eighty (180) school days.

* **See Physical Violence Guidelines above.**

**STUDENTS WHO ARE SUSPENDED FROM THE BUS
ARE SUSPENDED FROM ALL BUSES.**

**UNSERVED SUSPENSION WILL CARRY OVER TO THE
NEXT SCHOOL YEAR.**

SEVERE WEATHER

Should severe weather necessitate closing or early dismissal of school, this information will be broadcast over WDUN Radio (550 AM) and other area radio stations. School closing announcements will be released to the media by approximately 6:00 a.m.

School buses will not leave school during a tornado or severe weather WARNING. Buses will run regular routes when the warning is canceled.

BUS LOADING ZONES

Parents are asked to please avoid bus loading zones at the schools during the times when buses are loading or unloading students. If you need to pickup students in the afternoons, please wait until the buses have left the campus.



COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION / HARRASSMENT

The Hall County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin, sex or disability in any student program. It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act and all accompanying regulations. Any student, parent or other person who believes he or she or any student has been discriminated against or harassed based on any of the factors listed above should promptly report the same to the principal of the school or the appropriate coordinator listed below, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination or retaliation for making a report to their school counselor.

**The Title VI Coordinator is Katherine Culver, Hall County School System, Special Education Department, 711 Green St., Gainesville, GA 30501.
(770) 534-1080**

**The Title IX Coordinator is Mr. Gordon Higgins, Hall County School System, 711 Green St., Gainesville, GA 30501.
(770) 534-1080**

**The Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator is Katherine Culver, Hall County School System, Special Education Department, 711 Green St., Gainesville, GA 30501.
(770) 534-1080-**

**The McKinney-Vento Act system liaison for Homeless or Unaccompanied Minors is Ms. Dania Peguero, School Social Worker, Hall County School System, Student Services Department, 711 Green St., Gainesville, GA 30501.
(770) 967-5846**

Will Schofield, Superintendent
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Gainesville, Georgia 30501
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