

Waxahachie Independent
School District
**School Bus Rider's
Safety Handbook**



Transportation Department
631 Solon Rd
Waxahachie, TX 75165
Main number 972-923-4632

*Our vision is to be a district where innovation
thrives and growth is limitless.*

Dear Parents and Bus Riders:

Waxahachie ISD offers the privilege of bus transportation for all eligible students. Eligibility is determined by application of Board policy.

We believe that our bus service enhances the learning experience of each student. We are the first faces that they see each school day, and we want to start each day on a positive note. We have established these transportation rules in order to provide our students with a safe, comfortable, and pleasant ride to and from school each day.

Effective transportation service requires cooperation among bus drivers & staff, school administrators, students, and parents/guardians. We ask that you read and discuss this handbook with your students to promote a clear understanding of the responsibilities and expectations.

We appreciate your cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

Christian Garippa

Director of Transportation

Parents and Bus Riders,

The goal of this Bus Rider's Handbook is to help provide a safe and enjoyable experience for children who ride school buses. Parents should take time to read and discuss the material in this handbook with their children. **Riding a regular school bus is not a state requirement**, it is a privilege provided by the school district and should be treated as such.

General Rules

1. The bus is an extension of the classroom, and the bus driver is an extension of the teacher. All District policies are observed on district transportation. Obey all instructions given by the bus driver.
2. All students must be able to board and exit the bus without parental supervision and find their way to and from the bus stop and home.
3. Students shall face forward for the trip and keep their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the bus aisle.
4. Obey the instructions of the bus driver. A student should never address a bus driver disrespectfully or refuse to cooperate with them.
5. *Students must board and leave the bus at designated stops only.*
6. Only students who are eligible to ride will be transported. Everyone must ride their assigned bus to and from their assigned bus stop.
7. In an emergency, you must have a signed Emergency Bus Rider request form from the school administrator with a consent and signature allowing permission for that student to ride home with another child. The request must be given to the driver when you board the bus.
8. The parent(s) are responsible for providing transportation to school if a child misses the bus.
9. Buses are equipped with an audio and video observation system.
10. Students shall never attempt to operate the passenger door or other driver controls.
11. All students will sit with the same gender unless otherwise directed by the driver.
12. No video or picture taking is allowed.

HUB Bus Stop Guidelines

All WISD students who are attending an academy campus and are utilizing a HUB bus stop must abide by the following guidelines:

1. All parents must fill out a bus contract for each student.
2. Parents will need to contact the Transportation department to confirm busing information and eligibility before students will be allowed on the bus.
3. Hubs will be at WISD campus.
4. All students must have their school ID daily to board the bus.
5. Misbehavior will result in returning to their campus. All student guidelines must be followed.

Id Badge Guidelines

All WISD students are required to have a school issued ID Badge while boarding the school bus. All students must scan their ID Badges when they board and when they exit the bus.

Transportation Procedures for Students

1. The first two weeks of school will be for training and reminding students about badges before consequences begin.
2. Students who do not have a badge for the first time will receive a verbal warning from the driver.
3. Students who do not have a badge for the second time will receive phone calls.
4. Students who do not have a badge for the third time could be suspended from the bus.

Procedures for Waiting for the Bus

1. Be at your bus stop 10 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. The Driver will not stop, honk, or wait. Riders must be visible to approaching bus.
2. Stand on the sidewalk, or back from the roadway approx. 10 feet while waiting for the bus. If you are in a darkened area, you may wish to use a flashlight.
3. When the bus approaches form a line and be prepared to load immediately.
4. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the driver signals you to board.
5. If you miss the bus, go home immediately. Parents should have a backup plan.
6. Parents should instruct their children on what procedure to follow if they miss their bus

Loading the Bus

1. Do not push or shove.
2. Use the handrail and steps.
3. The bus will not move until all students are seated.
4. Drivers, at their discretion, may assign seats.

Conduct on the School Bus

The rules of conduct on the school bus includes, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Students must always remain seated. Please keep your hands to yourself and face the front of the bus.
2. Any or all seats may be assigned at any time at the driver's discretion. Do not change seats.
3. Nothing may be extended outside the window at any time.
4. Do not tamper with the emergency door or windows. They may not be used for entering or exiting.
5. No type of weapons, explosives, fireworks, sharp or pointed articles will be permitted.
6. No type of alcoholic beverages, controlled drugs, or substances will be permitted.
7. No type of tobacco product or vaping will be permitted.
8. Students must follow the driver's instructions.
9. Cursing, obscenities, harassment, and scuffling are forbidden.
10. Students may not depart at any unauthorized stop unless approval is granted by a school administrator and with an Emergency Bus Rider form.

11. Non-eligible students may not ride the bus at any time. Students are “non-eligible” if they reside inside of a 2-mile radius of the campus they attend, and if they are not on a regular WISD bus route.
12. No objects may be thrown, tossed, or pitched inside or outside the window.
13. All personal items must remain in students’ bags or purses, including footballs, basketballs, writing devices, skateboards, etc. while on the bus. They are not to be played with or passed around to others.
14. All carry-on items will be held in the student’s lap. Nothing will be allowed in the aisle or blocking the exits. Items that block the view of the Driver are not permitted.
15. Do not mark, cut, scratch (or enlarge a cut/scratch) or dismantle any part of the bus or its contents. The student/parents are responsible for the cost of repairs. Transportation privileges will be suspended until arrangements for payment are made and the level of discipline is satisfied.
16. Students who allow their electronic devices which include cell phones, speaker box, I-Pods, handheld game systems, etc., to become a distraction/disruption to the driver will be directed to put items away until they exit the bus. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. Students are to have the sound “off” or use headphones that do not distract the driver. If a student cannot hear the driver because of the device's volume, and the Driver must repeat directions, this will be viewed as a distraction to the driver.
17. Please, no videos or pictures allowed for safety measures.
18. Drivers are not required to wait for students at the bus stop, or to sound the horn while students come out of the residence. Students must be at the bus stop ten minutes before the bus arrives.
19. WISD students and staff are the only authorized persons to board school buses. If a parent needs to talk to the Driver, please move to the Drivers window to communicate.
20. No type of animal, pet, or bird is permitted on the bus.
21. Fighting is absolutely forbidden. Immediate consequences will be taken including suspension while we investigate.
22. Students may not eat, drink, or litter while on the bus.
23. Any new student who rides a WISD bus that is not assigned to him/her, must first receive an authorization form from the office. A transportation authorization slip signed by a campus official must be given by the student to the bus driver. *You must contact Transportation to ride the bus.*
24. Seatbelts are a State Law for everyone to wear.

Getting off the Bus

1. Stay seated until the bus completely stopped.
2. Use the handrail and take one step at a time when leaving the bus.
3. Wait for your turn to leave the bus, pushing and crowding will only slow exiting and may cause an accident.
4. Keep loose clothing and drawstrings away from the handrail.
5. Stay clear of the bus. Do not chase or hang onto the bus at any time.
6. If any article drops or rolls near or under the bus, DO NOT go after it. Go to the door of the bus and ask the driver for help.

Crossing the Street or Highway

Every attempt has been made to establish bus routes that prevent students from crossing the streets. If a road crossing is inevitable, the following producers must be followed:

1. All students living on the left of the roadway shall exit the bus, move to a point 10 to 12 feet in front of the right bumper, and wait for the driver to signal to you that it is safe to cross.
2. Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. NEVER cross the road BEHIND the bus.
4. CAUTION: Be alert for vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading or unloading students.
5. Cross all streets at intersections. Obey all traffic signals and signs on your way home.

Prohibited Items

1. All tobacco related products, including lighters, matches and vapes.
2. Live animals or insects.
3. Glass containers.
4. Alcoholic beverages.
5. Weapons, explosive devices, harmful drugs, or chemicals.
6. Any object (musical instruments, shop project) is too large to be carried by the student. All other items must always be kept on the student's lap.
7. Food or drinks (eating on the bus is a choking hazard and is not permitted).

Accidents or Emergencies

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. All students must stay on the bus. Students will not be allowed to leave with anyone including parents.
3. If you must get off the bus, stay in a group.
4. The following procedures will be used for emergency evacuation.
 - a. The student nearest the back door will open it and hold it open.
 - b. Leave the bus in a single file as quickly and as quietly as possible.
 - c. Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door.
 - d. Once outside the bus, follow the driver's instructions completely.

Extra-Curricular Trips

1. Bus rider rules apply to all school sponsored events.
2. Discipline will be the campus principal/ department director or the trip sponsor's responsibility.
3. The bus must be clean when returning from the trip.

Discipline

The school bus is an extension of the classroom. Transportation works closely with all Campus Administrators to ensure the safety of the students. Misconduct will be punished in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct: the privilege to ride in a district vehicle, including a school bus, may be suspended, or revoked. All school board policies that apply to student conduct and other student related activities apply to the school bus.

Steps and consequences for improper conduct on the bus include the following:

Minor Offenses

- 1st- Verbal warning with written documentation from the driver.
- 2nd- Written warning with written documentation from the driver.
- 3rd – Written referral and phone call to parent.
- 4th-Referral to campus with documentation of previous warnings and parent contact. Possible disciplinary action.

Major Offences

- Fighting
- Possessing a weapon
- Safety Violations
- Smoking/vaping/alcohol

Major Offenses will result in immediate referral to campus with video and suspension by investigation from the Transportation Supervisor/Coordinator.

The Transportation Rep may call a parent conference if a serious misconduct occurs.

Transportation has the right to skip steps or repeat steps at the discretion of the Transportation Director.