



Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools

510 Peach Street
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
(715) 424-6701

September 1, 2020

Dear Parents:

It is the responsibility of the Wisconsin Rapids School District to transport over 4,000 students to and from school each day. This enormous task must be accomplished in the safest and best way possible. The responsibility for this task is in the hands of the school bus driver, who must keep order on the bus while safely driving your children to and from school. Disruptive behaviors endanger the safety and welfare of the entire school bus, and will not be tolerated.

With the safety and welfare of your children in mind, guidelines are set for student transportation which will be followed by all of the schools in the district. Attached is a copy of these guidelines for your information.

Please discuss this material with your children. If we all cooperate, we can make the ride on the bus a positive experience.

Sincerely,

Daniel Weigand

Daniel Weigand
Director of Transportation

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Attachment

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Parents/guardians and students must realize that the school bus is an extension of the classroom. The bus driver, as the teacher in the classroom, has the responsibility for the safety and welfare of the student while under his/her charge.

Students must obey all rules that apply to bus riding for their own safety and protection as well as others aboard the school bus. Students and parents/guardians alike should be informed that misbehavior will not be tolerated. Students who misbehave on the school bus can be suspended from riding the school bus, in accordance with established procedures.

The following guidelines have been developed for all school-sponsored activities and for the protection and safety of all involved.

Parent Responsibilities

1. Students will ride on assigned buses. Parents must request, in writing, an exception from this rule. Requests shall be made to the designated staff person in charge of the transportation.
2. Students will board and disembark from their assigned bus as designated unless written permission from the designated staff person at the school is granted to be let off at other than the regular stop. The bus driver must be presented with a school issued bus pass in order to accommodate a request. Parents will assume the responsibility of the child when such a request is made and granted.
3. Parents are encouraged to contact the respective school official regarding any problems with school bus transportation. It is imperative that parents, school officials, and bus drivers work cooperatively together to solve any problems, thus providing a safe ride for all.

Student Responsibilities

1. Before loading

- a. Be on time at the designated school bus stops. Help keep the bus on schedule.
- b. Stay off the road while waiting for the bus. Bus riders should conduct themselves in a safe manner while waiting.
- c. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to board the bus. Line up in an orderly, single-file manner. Do not rush to get on the bus.
- d. Be courteous. Don't take advantage of younger children in order to get a seat.
- e. If there is no sidewalk or path, walk on the side of the road facing traffic to get to the bus stop.
- f. Use the handrail and watch your step when boarding the bus.

2. While on the bus

- a. Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times. Food may not be eaten on the bus.
- b. Remember, loud talking and laughing or other behavior that creates unnecessary confusion diverts the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident.
- c. Treat bus equipment as valuable furniture in your home. Damage to seats, etc., must be paid for by the offender or person assigned to that seat.
- d. A musical instrument will be allowed on the bus if the case can be held on the student's lap or between that student's legs. They MAY NOT be in the aisle.
- e. No pets allowed on the bus at any time.
- f. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
- g. Leave no books, lunches or other articles on the bus.

- h. Keep books, packages, coats and all other objects out of the aisles.
 - i. Remain in the bus in case of road emergency, unless directed to do otherwise by the bus driver.
 - j. Do not throw anything out of the bus window. Windows are not to be opened unless authorized by the bus driver.
 - k. Smoking and/or the use, possession, or transfer of a nicotine product, including smokeless tobacco or electronic cigarette (or e-cigarette) or other electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS) products is prohibited.
 - l. Possession of a controlled substance is prohibited.
 - m. Always remain in your seats while the bus is in motion. No standing up or changing seats.
 - n. Always be courteous to fellow pupils, the bus driver, and to passers-by.
 - o. Keep quiet when approaching a railroad crossing stop.
 - p. The driver will not discharge a rider at places other than the regular bus stops unless the student presents the driver with a bus pass obtained from a school official.
 - q. Only regular riders are allowed to ride the bus; no other students will be permitted on the bus unless a bus pass is obtained from a school official and presented to the bus driver.
 - r. In the event of inclement weather, announcements will be made through the District webpage and notification alert systems such as Nixle and/or Skylert, as well as via news media outlets.
 - s. Obey all rules listed by your school bus driver.
 - t. Dangerous articles such as lighters, matches, weapons including but not limited to firearms, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and dangerous weapons as defined in state statute are prohibited.
3. **After leaving the bus**
- a. Students should wait for a signal from the driver prior to crossing the road, and then cross the road at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
 - b. Never walk behind the rear of the bus.
 - c. If you can touch the bus after unloading, you are too close and are in potential danger.
 - d. Help look after the safety and comfort of small children.

Student Control on Buses

Students must obey all rules that apply to bus riding for their own safety and protection as well as others aboard the school bus. Students and parents alike should be informed that misbehavior will not be tolerated. Students who misbehave on the school bus can be suspended from riding their school bus. The following procedures will be followed by the bus company and school officials when appropriate. It is of course possible that a student may have to be removed immediately for the safety of all involved. If and when this should happen, the bus driver shall contact the bus company who will contact law enforcement to pick the student up and release them to the parent or legal guardian.

Steps in General Concerning Student Control on School Buses

1. The driver will first attempt to talk with the student individually whenever possible to resolve a problem. A description of the problem may be written up at this time, provided to the bus company and forwarded to the building principal.
2. If talking with the student should prove ineffective, the student may be assigned to a specific seat by the driver for a period of time. The building principal will be notified of assigned seats and inform the appropriate school official.
3. If #1 and #2 have been tried unsuccessfully and the problem continues, the parent and/or school shall be contacted for further disciplinary action.
4. For serious infractions, steps #1, #2, and #3 can be eliminated.

Steps and Action in Revoking a Student's Riding Privilege

1. The following behaviors may merit suspensions from riding the school bus. Such suspensions will be determined by the respective school officials.
 - a. Insubordination: Defined to mean a direct refusal to follow the instructions of the bus driver or others in charge.
 - b. Violations of policies on smoking, drugs, and alcohol: Defined to mean any act leading to or participating in these activities.
 - c. Fighting: Defined to mean any act leading to aggression or harm, or physical assault upon a person or persons, regardless of whether or not promoted by the action of others.
 - d. Profane Language: Defined to mean abusive or derogatory remarks intended to be uncomplimentary or unacceptable.
 - e. Destruction of the Bus: Defined to mean any act relating to the marring, cutting, tearing, or general destruction of the bus facilities.
 - f. Repeated Offenders: Defined to mean students who have been referred for minor infractions of bus safety not less than once nor more than three times inclusively.
 - g. Bringing Dangerous Articles on to the Bus: Defined to mean items such as lighters, matches, weapons including but not limited to firearms, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and dangerous weapons as defined in state statute.
2. The following suspension guidelines will be followed for students who have their bus riding privilege revoked. The parents will be contacted by the Director of Support Services whenever a bus riding suspension is involved.

Recommended Steps:

- 1st offense: warning/parent contact
- 2nd offense: final warning/parent contact
- 3rd offense: 3 to 5 day suspension
- 4th offense: 5 day suspension
- 5th offense: expulsion from riding the bus

In extreme cases, a decision will be made to terminate bus transportation immediately. This decision will be made after discussions have been held between school district officials and the bus company. Parent contact will be made in these situations.

Bus Company Guidelines

1. The bus driver is responsible for discipline on the bus.
2. The bus company may, in extreme cases of a serious nature, notify law enforcement and have a student removed from the bus.
3. The bus company may (in cases not as serious as #2) contact school district officials to have a student removed from the bus.
4. Drivers shall not refuse a student transportation home after school unless they are suspended from riding.
5. The bus company is encouraged to talk to students and parents, if necessary, to try to resolve a problem.
6. The bus company is encouraged to meet with school officials, parents and the student in cases of misbehavior.
7. The bus company may assign students to seats on the bus.
8. Drivers may write misconduct reports on students and turn those reports into the bus company who will forward the reports to the building principal for action.