



Serving The
BASTROP INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
2020-2021

School Bus Riders Safety and Discipline Handbook

GoldStar Transit is proud to be the transportation provider for the Bastrop I.S.D. The District, in cooperation with GoldStar Transit, has adopted standard regulations and procedures for the transportation of eligible students and has provided discipline measures for violations of the rules. They are herein outlined for your information and for the guidance of your child. Please read the enclosed material and acknowledge receipt by completing and returning the enclosed Bus Rider Information Card within **five** days to your bus driver.

The goal of this handbook is to help provide a safe and enjoyable experience for children and adults who ride school buses. Parents or guardians should take time to read and discuss the material in this handbook with their children. Riding a school bus is a privilege, provided by the district, and should be treated as such. Every effort is made to see that the transportation provided is safe, comfortable and pleasant.

Student bus stops are designed with student safety; visibility of other vehicles; and distance between stops and proximity to hazards. Buses will not travel roads not maintained by a government entity and will not enter private property. Texas law requires motorists to stop and remain stopped when the red lights are flashing on a school bus. Please obey these laws for the safety of the students loading and unloading the bus. If you should need information concerning bus routes or discipline policies, do not hesitate to call GoldStar Transit at (512) 321-5262.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

General Safety Rules

- **Due to the Covid 19 Pandemic all students are required to wear an appropriate face mask. The covering must cover the nose and mouth.**
- Students will be courteous to fellow students, the school bus driver, and assistants. They will follow directions the first time given.
- Students will board and leave the bus at their designated stops only, both in the AM & PM.
- Only students who are eligible to ride may be transported and must have a Bus Rider Information Card on file.
- Parents or guardians must send a note to school for administration approval to request that their student ride a different bus or depart the bus at an unassigned stop.
- If students do not ride for three consecutive days, drivers are not required to make the stop until a parent or guardian calls GoldStar Transit at (512) 321-5262 to resume pickups.
- It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide transportation to school or home if a child misses his/her school bus. The student should NEVER chase after the bus.
- **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.**
- **The parent or guardian of a pre-kindergarten or kindergarten student must be at the stop to deliver or greet the student.** If the pre-kinder or kinder student has a sibling riding the bus they may load or unload with them **if the sibling is at least in the third grade and at least 8 years of age.**
- **If the bus is equipped with seatbelts, the student will be required to have the seatbelt properly fastened at ALL times.**

Procedures for Waiting for the Bus (On the Road and at School)

- The parent or guardian is responsible for the student until they board the school bus.
- It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to get the student to the bus stop **10 minutes** before the scheduled pickup time. The driver is not required to wait or honk.
- Bus riders will abide by the District's Code of Conduct and school rules & regulations, including conduct as would be expected in the classroom, or at school; and the student dress code. BISD recognizes that a school bus is by definition an extension of the classroom. Certain rule or conduct violations may result in additional discipline at the campus.
- Bus riders must conduct themselves in a safe manner while waiting for the bus to arrive.
- Students should stand at least 10 feet from roadway.
- The student should be careful when approaching school bus stop areas and stand on a sidewalk or wait for the driver to open the door before moving to board the bus.
- The driver will not pick up a student unless they are at their designated stop.
- If the student misses the bus, they should go home immediately and contact their parent or guardian. The student should NEVER chase after the bus
- The parent or guardian should instruct the student on what procedures to follow if the bus is missed.

Getting on the Bus

- Bus riders do not push or shove.
- Bus riders use handrail and steps.
- Bus riders go to their assigned seat immediately.
- **Bus riders will properly fasten their seatbelt.**
- The bus will not move until all bus riders are seated.

Getting off the Bus

- Stay seated until the emergency brake is set and the bus is completely stopped.
- Unbuckle seatbelt.
- Wait for your turn to leave the bus, pushing and crowding will only slow exiting and may cause an accident.
- Use the handrail and take one step at a time when leaving the bus.
- Students living on the right side of the roadway will depart the school bus in an orderly fashion and move where the bus driver can plainly see all students. Students should be alert to danger signals from the bus driver.
- Do not check the mail after exiting the bus. Students should exit the bus and immediately depart to their place of residence.
- Students will not cross the street behind the school bus.
- The driver will not discharge riders at places other than the regular school bus stop or at school.
- A BUS RIDER PERMIT must be obtained from the campus office for any changes from a student's regular stop or assigned bus home.
- Overcrowding of some buses will prevent a permit from being issued to ride a different bus home with a friend.

Crossing the Street or Highway

- All students living on the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point of 10 feet in front and 10 feet to the right of the bumper and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross. Generally BISD and Gold Star Transit attempts to avoid stops where student must cross roadways, but there are some roads and certain bus stop conditions where this practice is allowed.
- Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
- Never cross the road behind the bus.
- CAUTION! Be alert for the vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading and unloading students.
- Obey all traffic signals and signs on your way home.

Code of Conduct Rules

It is essential to the mission of providing safe, efficient transportation for the students of Bastrop ISD that the students display proper conduct. Only well behaved students should be afforded the privilege of student transportation. Automatic disciplinary action will be taken with students who:

1. Willfully or through negligence cause damage to the bus.
2. Their behavior is such that it harms or causes embarrassment to their fellow students, bus driver, or school or in way interferes with the safe operation of the bus.

The school bus is considered an extension of the classroom and the same rules of conduct apply on the bus that would in school. The only exception is that normal conversation is allowed. **Video cameras are used to monitor safety and student discipline.** In the interest of maximum safety, the following regulations will apply to all students that ride a bus:

1. The driver is charged with the safety of the students and the vehicle and is to be obeyed at all times.
2. Students who show disrespect for the driver will face disciplinary action.
3. Students should be at their assigned stop 10 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. Drivers cannot wait for tardy students.
4. When waiting for a bus, students should be at least 10 feet back from the street and at their designated stop.
5. Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before attempting to get on or off the bus.
6. Students traveling from school must get off at their assigned school or home bus stop unless a signed permission slip is obtained from the school office.
7. Students must ride the bus to which they are assigned. Bus hopping will result in disciplinary action.
8. Unauthorized riders are not allowed on the bus. Drivers may refuse transportation to those with whom they are not familiar.
9. When loading or unloading, backpacks are to be worn on student's backs with both shoulder straps supporting the backpack as designed. The student may carry the backpack in front of them securing it with both arms holding it against the chest until the rider reaches the seat.
10. Backpacks should be positioned on the student's lap or on the floor between the legs and feet.
11. Students should not carry any object on the bus that cannot be held on their lap including; large band instruments, school projects, etc. There is no provision for safe storage of such articles on the bus.
12. **Seatbelts are to be worn and properly fastened at all times.**
13. Students need to maintain a low level voice when conversing with friends.
14. Unnecessary conversation with the driver is unsafe and is not permitted.
15. For the safety of all passengers there is no talking at railroad crossings or unprotected highway crossings.
16. Pets and animals of any sort are not allowed on the bus and must be transported by other means.
17. Bus drivers will assign seats and seating charts will be carried on the bus. Changes will be made as needed for student safety.
18. Students are to remain in their assigned seats facing forward with feet out of the aisle. Students are not permitted to move around while the bus is in motion.
19. Students must not extend their hands, arms, legs, heads or items out the bus window at any time.
20. The possession of any weapon, explosives, fireworks, unsheathed sharp object, peashooter, water balloons, laser pointers or any other articles that can cause pain or injury to others are prohibited. School supplies that fit this description should be kept in student's backpack and not used on the bus.
21. Throwing, shooting or blowing wads of paper, peas, pins or other articles on bus is not permitted. Spitting on the bus or out the window is not allowed.
22. Wrestling, fighting, scuffling, horseplay, bullying, or picking on others students will not be tolerated.
23. The use of profanity, vulgar language, obscene gestures or verbal abuse such as name-calling, racial, ethnic, sexual or derogatory statements will not be allowed.
24. The use of all tobacco products is prohibited on the bus. This includes nicotine gum and electronic nicotine devices.
25. There is no food of any kind that is allowed to be consumed on the bus. This is to include gum, and /or candy of any kind. The only drink permissible is bottled water.
26. Students are not to leave any trash or rubbish behind them on the bus.
27. Students who damage the bus in any way will be denied transportation until the damage is paid for. A student should report any damage to the bus as soon as it is noticed. This is to include camera systems that are located in the front and back of the bus.
28. **A Parent/ Guardian is liable for property damage caused by either the neglect, willful or malicious conduct of a child under their duty of control. Property may be defined as any district owned equipment or resource and BIRD reserves the right to pursue all reasonable legal actions necessary to seek reimbursements for either the repair and or replacement of said property.**
29. Cell phones, radios, CD players, handheld games, laptops, school issued electronics, and other electronic devices may be used as long as it is not disruptive to the other students, the driver, or the monitors. Any electronic used for audio must be used with a hearing device such as earphones or ear buds. Taking pictures and/or videotaping on the bus is prohibited. Transportation personnel are not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items. Drivers have the option to restrict the use of cellphones and electronic devices.
30. **Students are required to have a face mask on prior to boarding the bus. Students must keep the face mask on at all times, until the student has completely departed the bus.**

No one is to stop or interfere with the movement of the bus for any reason. If there is a problem that needs to be discussed, please feel free to call the management at GoldStar Transit 512-321-5262.

Discipline

Transportation is a privilege. Students being transported in the Bastrop school buses shall comply with the Code of Conduct. Any student who fails to comply with that code while on school transportation will be subject to disciplinary action and may be denied transportation service at the administration's discretion. It will then be the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian to transport the student. Major infractions including but not limited to fighting, bullying, or possession of an illegal substance will result in an automatic suspension.

Disciplinary actions for minor infractions will be as follows and Administered by GoldStar Transit 512-321-5262

1 st safety violation	GoldStar Transit will communicate with the parent thru the written referral. Parents may be called depending on the severity of the violation.
2 nd safety violation	GoldStar Transit will communicate with the parent or guardian again in a further attempt to correct the conduct.
3 rd safety violation	GoldStar Transit will suspend transportation privileges for three (3) school days.
4 th safety violation	GoldStar Transit will suspend transportation privileges for five (5) school days.
5 th safety violation	GoldStar Transit will suspend transportation privileges for ten (10) school days.
6 th safety violation	GoldStar Transit will suspend transportation privileges for one month. *

*Any suspension of transportation for more than 10 days will be reviewed with the campus principal before being administered. Upon returning to transportation privileges after a 10 day bus suspension a mandatory meeting will be held between the student, parent/guardian, and the transportation management. Suspension times may vary depending on the severity of the violations. Major infractions will be handled on a case by case basis.

Extenuating Circumstances

In the event that a bus must be pulled over to await help from the police department or if the bus must be brought back to the transportation department in order to regain control of the bus or to remove a student from the bus, it will result in an automatic minimum five (5) day suspension of transportation for that student.

If a bus is pulled over for any reason **no child** will be released until the situation is under control. A GoldStar Transit Supervisor or the police will make this decision.

Accidents and Emergencies

Transportation Department may conduct bus evacuation drills each school year for regular and special education students riding from home to school aboard the school bus at the request of B.I.S.D.

The following procedures will be used for evacuation in emergencies:

- A. The student nearest the door will open the door and hold it open.
- B. Leave the bus in a single file as quickly and as quietly as possible to the spot designated by the driver.
- C. Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door and alternate back and forth across the bus (side to side).
- D. Once outside the bus, follow the driver's instructions completely.