ANDALUSIA CITY SCHOOLS
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Policies and Procedures
2022-2023

A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

The information included in this booklet is to provide your child(ren) and you with the policies and procedures related to school system transportation. Parents, teachers and bus drivers in partnership, can elicit safe and desirable behavior from bus riders by encouraging their compliance with these necessary rules for safe conduct.

Andalusia City Schools Board of Education

Dr. Daniel Shakespeare
Superintendent

Bennie Shellhouse
Transportation Director

Andalusia City Schools Transportation Department considers three (3) main objectives that are vital to the success of the program. These are: safety, efficiency, and economy with **SAFETY** being the most important.

Transportation services will be provided to students at both Andalusia Elementary, Andalusia Jr High School, and Andalusia High School who live within the city limits of Andalusia. The information that follows is designed to inform parents and students in order for this valuable service to continue to be provided in a safe and efficient manner.

REGISTRATION TO RIDE A SCHOOL BUS

In order to plan for transportation needs, parents of AES/AJHS/AHS students will receive a Bus Survey Form each spring. This form will be used to register returning students for bus service for the next school year. Parents should fill out the form accurately and completely, as the information will be used to plan bus routes/stops. Students may have **no more than two** designated stops.

New students who register during the first week of school will have their registration processed and will be assigned a bus as soon as possible. All "New Rider" bus registrations and permanent bus changes will be subject to a **two-day processing** period before the authorization to ride a bus becomes official.

NOTE: Only students who pre-register will be allowed to ride the bus the first day/week of school. ALL STUDENTS MUST HAVE A REGISTRATION FORM ON FILE TO RIDE A BUS. A NEW REGISTRATION FORM FOR ALL STUDENTS BEING TRANSPORTED BY ANDALUSIA CITY SCHOOL BUSES IS REQUIRED FOR EACH SCHOOL YEAR. Students who change buses or stops during the school year must submit a new registration form or Bus Transfer Request Form before any changes can go into effect.

DETERMINING WHICH BUS TO RIDE

Andalusia City Schools operates a predetermined bus stop system. Bus stops are established along existing routes. The minimum distance between stops is between one to two tenths of a mile (500 ft. – 1000 ft.) as recommended by the Alabama State Department of Education-Pupil Transportation Section. This minimum distance helps assure a safe distance for bus drivers to leave one stop, move into traffic, and correctly signal their intention to stop again.

- **STOPS WILL ONLY BE MADE AT DESIGNATED LOCATIONS.** Exceptions may be made due to safety concerns and other related factors. **ROUTES, STOPS AND BUS ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME.**

Andalusia City Schools will provide transportation services only to residential addresses within the city limits of Andalusia. Transportation services **are not** provided to business addresses or for students who live outside the city limits of Andalusia unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent.

A listing of bus stops within each bus zone along with pickup/drop off times and bus color will be available at Andalusia Elementary and Andalusia Jr High School as well as by visiting andalusiacityschools.schoolinsites.com and selecting **Transportation** on the left side of the homepage and then choosing **Bus Stops and Times.**

- School Transportation is designed to be safe, efficient and economical while serving as many students as possible. **It is not an individualized transportation service, there is little opportunity to alter or change schedules and routes to meet individual family circumstances.**

PERMISSION TO RIDE ANOTHER BUS

STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO CHANGE BUSES DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR UNLESS THEY HAVE A CHANGE IN RESIDENCE OR SAFETY CONCERNS (OVERCROWDING OF BUS) NECESSITATE SUCH A CHANGE. REQUESTS TO RIDE A BUS OTHER THAN THE ONE ASSIGNED WILL NOT BE GRANTED.

Student Loading Responsibilities

Bus Drivers strive to be consistent in their pickup and drop off times. However, some events, such as inclement weather, affect the driver's ability to be on time. Parents/students should plan for a ten-minute window for morning pickup. Students should be ready for pickup at least 5 minutes before the buses scheduled arrival time and be prepared to wait at least 5 minutes after the arrival time. Bus drivers will not honk their horn or make any other attempt to get students to the bus. **PARENTS AND THEIR STUDENTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO BE READY TO BOARD THE BUS WHEN IT ARRIVES. BUSES WILL NOT WAIT FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT AT THE STOP READY TO LOAD WHEN IT ARRIVES.**

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Often times, weather conditions create changes in transportation service. Parents/guardians should know that as a general rule, storm type weather would greatly impact time of pickup/delivery of students. Due to the numbers of students being transported, it is unrealistic for bus drivers to perform door-to-door service under these conditions. However, bus drivers will strive to make accommodations for students as much as possible. Bus drivers, parents, and students should exercise good judgment during extreme weather conditions. **SAFETY FOR STUDENTS SHOULD BE THE BASIS FOR ALL WEATHER RELATED DECISIONS REGARDING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES.**

***NOTE: BUSES WILL NOT BEGIN OR CONTINUE ROUTES UNDER TORNADO WARNINGS.**

Parents/Guardians are responsible for the safety of students while going to and from loading/unloading points, and for students meeting the bus on schedule. Your child should know what to do in case he/she arrives home and there is no one there. It is extremely important that your child and you have a plan in case of this emergency. Students must ride on their assigned buses to and from school and will be picked up and delivered **only** at their assigned designated stops. Bus drivers are not responsible for the safety of students once they exit the bus.

TRANSPORTATION OF BAND INSTRUMENTS AND LARGE OBJECTS

Students are to keep books, body parts, backpacks, etc. out of the aisles at all times. Band instruments, books, coats, school equipment, and other objects may be transported on the bus provided they can be controlled by the student in the seat (not aisles). Other arrangements must be made to haul objects too large to be controlled in the seat by the student. Items too large to be held by the student may be transported if the item does not obstruct the aisle, entrance, or interfere with other student's space or the driver. Students are not allowed to store items in the front of the bus under the dash or next to the driver. The driver may request written approval from the school and transportation supervisor on certain objects.

The primary concern in the transportation of any object on the school bus will be student safety. No object will be allowed on a school bus if it is determined that the object poses a threat to the safety of any student.

STUDENT ARTICLES LEFT ON BUSES

Students who leave needed articles on buses (backpacks, books, lunch boxes, etc.) should notify the school administration. Parents/Guardians will be contacted by the school and told where the buses are located to retrieve the article. BUSES THAT HAVE LEFT THE SCHOOL CAMPUS WILL NOT RETURN IN ORDER FOR STUDENTS TO RETRIEVE ARTICLES LEFT ON THE BUS.

RULES FOR SAFE BUS RIDING

The sole purpose of a school bus is to transport students safely to and from school. The school bus is considered to be an extension of the classroom and all code of conduct rules apply. Our goal is to ensure that all students who ride the school bus exhibit good behavior while on the bus. In the event the bus driver deems it necessary to issue a disciplinary notice, an administrator will take appropriate action as outlined by the school's *Code of Conduct* and/or as outlined in the *Transportation Handbook* in respect to each child's educational program.

Listed below, you will find a list of offenses by *Category* and the *Response* action to each offense category to help guide bus discipline issues. Please remember, that all federal (504, IDEA), state (RtI), and local rules and regulations will be followed when determining the implementation of *Positive Behavior Supports* AND *Response Categories* to ensure the safety of all students.

Safety on the school bus means:

- No student who rides the bus gets hurt.
- No student does something which causes someone else to get hurt

WE CAN HAVE SAFETY ON THE SCHOOL BUS WHEN ALL STUDENTS RIDING THE BUS OBEY THE RULES!

DO NOT LOSE YOUR RIDING PRIVILEGE! – FOLLOW THESE RULES

1. OBSERVE THE SAME CONDUCT AS IN THE CLASSROOM
2. BE COURTEOUS, USE NO PROFANE LANGUAGE
3. DO NOT EAT, DRINK, OR CHEW GUM ON THE BUS
4. HELP KEEP THE BUS CLEAN
5. COOPERATE WITH THE DRIVER
6. DO NOT BE DESTRUCTIVE
7. STAY IN YOUR SEAT
8. KEEP HEAD, HANDS, AND FEET INSIDE THE BUS
9. REMEMBER THAT THE BUS DRIVER IS AUTHORIZED TO ASSIGN SEATS

HELP THE BUS DRIVER DRIVE SAFELY

- Follow the driver's instructions
- Talk quietly and stay seated
- Be courteous to the driver, other children, and passing motorists

LEAVE THE BUS CAREFULLY

- Always walk in single file
- Move away from the bus door as soon as you are off the bus
- Never play in the bus loading zone

CROSS ROADS VERY CAREFULLY

- When the bus is using flashing lights, wait for the driver's signal to cross
- Always be alert for possible dangers
- When crossing streets after the bus has left, always use the crosswalk
- Look both directions before crossing the road – NEVER RUN IN FRONT OF A CAR

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION CATEGORIES OF VIOLATIONS

CATEGORY I

- Throwing objects
- Failure to remain seated or to be seated properly
- Extending any part of the body out of a window
- Loud or unnecessary noise
- Gum chewing/eating/drinking
- Improper bus loading or unloading
- Inappropriate behavior at the bus stop
- Failure to adhere to ECD policy

RESPONSES FOR CATEGORY I:

1st Offense

- 5 days suspension from the bus

2nd Offense

- 10 days suspension from the bus

3rd Offense

- Suspension from the bus for the remainder of the school year

CATEGORY II

- Rude or discourteous conduct toward others
- Disobeying directions from the bus driver
- Possession of tobacco products
- Punching/hitting/tripping
- Tampering with bus equipment
- Destruction of property*
- Obscene or profane communication
- Disrespect for authority

RESPONSES TO CATEGORY II:

1st Offense

- 10 days suspension from the bus

2nd Offense

- Suspension from the bus for the remainder of the semester or the school year

***Parents/Guardians will be financially responsible for any damages to a bus by their children. A minimum fee of $100 will be charged to repair or replace a bus seat. Students will not be able to ride until payment is made.**

CATEGORY III

- Theft

- Throwing object(s) or shouting out of the bus window
- Possession of dangerous weapon
- Use of fire or explosives
- Fighting
- Threatening behavior or harassment
- Possession, use, and/or sale of drugs or alcohol
- Viewing, using, or possession of obscene, profane, or sexually oriented material
- Providing false information regarding bus drivers and/or other students behavior or conduct

RESPONSES FOR CATEGORY III

1st Offense

- Expulsion from the bus for the remainder of the year school year.

USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES BY STUDENTS

Students being transported by school system buses are subject to the school system's policy regarding electronic communication devices. For safety reasons, the following policy will be enforced regarding electronic communication devices (ECD):

> A student may possess a cellular telephone or other electronic communication device provided it is turned off and kept out of sight while being transported on a school system bus to and from school.

Failure to adhere to the stated policy may result in the confiscation of the ECD and the student being subject to Category I disciplinary actions.

USE OF VIDEO CAMERAS ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Board of Education supports the use of video cameras on school buses as a means to monitor and maintain a safe environment for students and employees. The video cameras may be used on buses used for transportation to and from school, field trips, curricular events and extracurricular events. The

contents of the videotapes may be used as evidence in a student disciplinary proceeding. To protect the privacy of all students, videotapes will only be viewed by Andalusia City School Administrators and Law Enforcement Officials as needed, unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent.

NOTICE

The school system will annually provide the following notice to students and parents within 15 days after the beginning of the school year:

> The Board of Education has authorized the use of video cameras on school system buses. The video cameras will be used to monitor student behavior in order to promote and maintain a safe environment for all students. Students and parents are hereby notified that the content of the videotapes may be used in a student disciplinary proceeding. The content of the videotapes are confidential student records and will be retained with other student records. Videotapes will only be retained if necessary for the use in a student disciplinary proceeding or other matter as determined necessary by the administration. Videos will also be used to provide lessons to students on proper bus behavior.

STUDENT RECORDS

The content of the videotapes is a student record subject to Board Policy and administrative regulations regarding confidential student records. Only those persons with a legitimate educational purpose may view the videotapes. To protect the privacy of all students, videos may only be viewed by the Board of Education members, the Superintendent, Central Office Administrative Assistant, Transportation Director, Building Principal/Asst. Principal, Bus Driver, Special Education Staffing Team, and School System Resource Officer.

Videotape recorded during a school-sponsored trip, such as an athletic event, may also be accessible to the sponsor or coach of the activity. If the content of the videotape becomes the subject of a student disciplinary proceeding, it may be treated like other evidence in the proceeding.

NOTICE

Beginning October 1, 2006, new penalties will be enforced for illegally overtaking and passing a school bus or church bus that has come to a complete stop and is signaling that it is loading or unloading passengers. Fines range from $150 to $300 for a first offense up to a Class C Felony punishable by a fine of $1,000 to $3,000 as well as a one-year driver's license suspension for a fourth offense.

TRESPASS WARNING
Charles "Chuck" Poland, Jr. Act (Alabama Act 2013-347)

Any person who attempts to enter a school bus without prior authorization of the driver or other appropriate school official and refuses to leave will be subject to prosecution that may result in fines up to $6,000 and up to one year in jail.

CONFERENCES WITH BUS DRIVERS

Parents who have a need to discuss bus concerns with bus drivers should schedule a conference through the school office. **PARENTS SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO CONFERENCE WITH BUS DRIVERS WHILE THEY ARE DRIVING THEIR ROUTE.**

The Andalusia City School System shall not discriminate or deny access to students desiring to participate in any school sponsored program or activity based on race, gender, religion, color, creed, national origin, or disability.

Please initial to show that you have read and understand the following:

_____ I understand that the bus driver will only pick up and drop off my child at the approved bus stop assigned to my child. Bus Stops will be placed in all neighborhoods according to the addresses provided by each rider. The only exception will be in extreme emergencies approved by the transportation director. Changes in addresses must be made using the proper form at the school your child attends. My child may have no more that two designated bus stops.

_____ I understand as a parent or guardian of a school bus rider, that I am responsible for the safety of my child while going to and from bus stops. After the child exits the bus, the driver is no longer responsible for the safety of the child.

_____ I understand that riding the bus is a privilege, and that my child must ride in a responsible manner, which does not impede the driver from safely transporting children. If my child disrupts the bus in the manner described in this handbook, I understand that he/she will be suspended from the bus for 5 - 10 days or expelled indefinitely according to the severity of the disruption.

____ I understand that if my child causes any type of damage to the bus, including but not limited to writing on bus seats, tearing bus seats, pulling or walking on bus seats so that it destroys the foam inside the bus seat (which provides protection for the riders), I must pay a fine of $100 and my child will be suspended from the bus until that payment is made.

____ I understand that I or any other adult may not board the school bus for any reason. This could result in a $6000 fine and up to one year in jail. I may only speak with bus drivers through the driver side window.

____ I understand that if my child leaves an item on the school bus, the driver will secure it as safely as possible so that it will be on the bus the next day. Bus drivers nor the school system is responsible for any items left on the school bus.

____I understand that if my child does not get on the school bus and is left at the school, I am responsible for picking my child up immediately.

NOTICE OF RECEIPT

STUDENT'S NAME

_____

HOMEROOM TEACHER

_____

GRADE _____

I acknowledge by my signature that I have received and read the Andalusia City Schools Transportation Services Policies and Procedures booklet. I understand that it applies to ALL students and parents of the Andalusia City School System.

_____
Student Signature

_____
Parent Signature

Date _____

PLEASE TEAR OFF THIS PAGE AND RETURN IT BY YOUR CHILD TO THEIR HOMEROOM TEACHER/SCHOOL.