Florence County School District Five
Operations Department
Transportation

The State Department of Education (SDE) Regulates School Bus Transportation.
A local school system can give service only within the limits of the resources made available by State Government. (Absenteeism, discipline problems, breakdowns, inclement weather, etc. may result in second trips and routing disruptions.)

Bus Routes – SDE Regulation F: A regular route pattern is usually established by traveling along main roadways and centralized streets within a community or area.

Extent of Transportation: The Legal residence must be greater than 1.5 miles from the nearest pedestrian entrance point, and student must reside in attendance area. (special and normal sidewalk points on any school property) (SC-59-67-420)

Depth of Service: School Busses shall not leave the regular route pattern to travel along roadways unless the student's legal residence is greater than three-tenths of a mile from the regular route pattern. (SC-59-67-420)

School Bus Stops: School bus stops shall not be closer than two-tenths of a mile at safe points (as defined by State traffic criteria). (SC-43-80-F)

Inclement Weather: Buses shall not be permitted to leave the regular route during inclement weather.

Bus Stop Supervision: Parents and guardians are responsible for the safety and conduct of their children going to and from, and while at, the bus stop. (SC State Law)

Assigned Bus Stops: All students must ride specifically assigned buses, and board or exit at specifically assigned bus stops.

Availability of Buses: The funding for school buses is the responsibility of your elected State Legislature. FCSD5 can offer services only within the limits of available resources.

Crossing a Roadway: No student is to cross any 4- lane roadway system at any time when engaged in school bus transportation services.

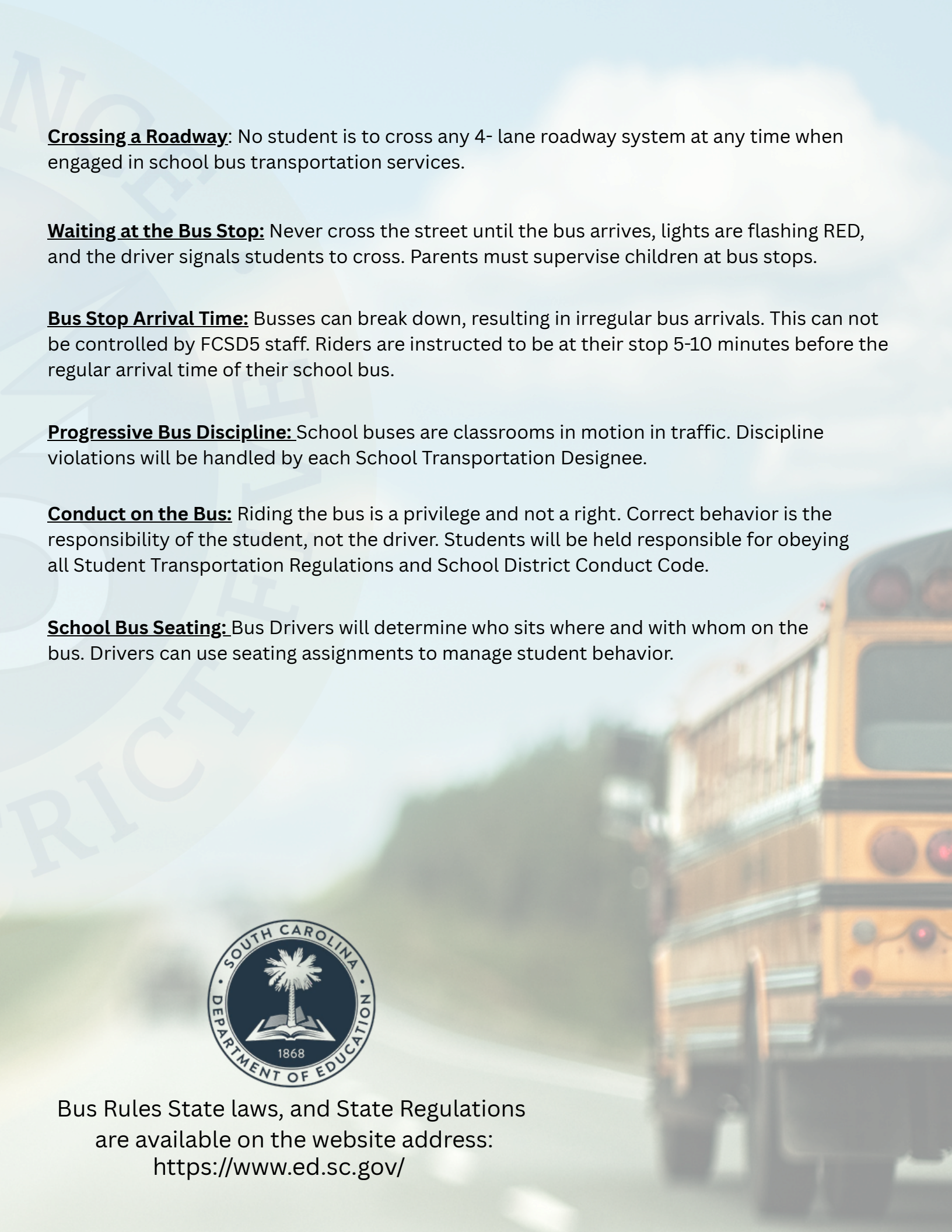
Waiting at the Bus Stop: Never cross the street until the bus arrives, lights are flashing RED, and the driver signals students to cross. Parents must supervise children at bus stops.

Bus Stop Arrival Time: Busses can break down, resulting in irregular bus arrivals. This can not be controlled by FCSD5 staff. Riders are instructed to be at their stop 5-10 minutes before the regular arrival time of their school bus.

Progressive Bus Discipline: School buses are classrooms in motion in traffic. Discipline violations will be handled by each School Transportation Designee.

Conduct on the Bus: Riding the bus is a privilege and not a right. Correct behavior is the responsibility of the student, not the driver. Students will be held responsible for obeying all Student Transportation Regulations and School District Conduct Code.

School Bus Seating: Bus Drivers will determine who sits where and with whom on the bus. Drivers can use seating assignments to manage student behavior.



Bus Rules State laws, and State Regulations are available on the website address: https://www.ed.sc.gov/

Authority to Manage Bus: Drivers, by State Law, have the responsibility and full authority to manage the bus. Any problems you may be experiencing should be brought to school principal's designee or to Transportation Staff, never to a driver. (SC-59-67-240)

Riding Unassigned Buses: Unassigned students will not be allowed on another bus without a note signed from parent and approved by principal's signature and then, only if seating is available.

Acts of Vandalism: Parents will be charged should their child damage any bus equipment. Seat covers can cost up to $50. Loss of riding privilege may remain until payment for damages are received.

Never Board a School Bus: Parents/citizens must never interfere with the operation of, nor board a school bus or in any way threaten the driver or students. Staff makes all final decisions, not drivers. (SC-59-67-245) (see last page)

Community Hazards: The initial responsibility for community hazards lies with city/county government, law enforcement, and parents.

Travel on Private Roads: Busses need wide areas for maneuvering, clear of all hazards (limbs, posts, cars, etc.) with sufficient surfaces to support the heavy bus and a 60-ft radius to turn-a-bout. District must have signed release to operate on private roads. (see last page)

Over-Crowded Buses: When growth results in overcrowded buses, second trips are necessary. Some students may arrive at school or at home later than usual.

Communicating: One bus holds 40 to 60 students. It is common for several busses to have operational problems simultaneously. We cannot contact parents and also efficiently manage events when breakdowns occur.

Snow Roads: Snow roads are roads that are shaded by trees such that ice and snow do not melt quickly. Buses may not be able to travel on “snow roads” during some inclement weather.

Interference with School Bus: SC State Law 59-67-245 No person shall willfully interfere with the operation of a school bus, either private or public, by boarding, restricting movement, or threats, either physical or verbal, to the driver or any passenger while the bus is engaged in transportation of pupils to and from school or any lawful school activity or while passengers are entering or leaving the bus, nor shall any person willfully fail or refuse to obey a lawful order of a school bus driver relating to the occupancy of a school bus. The use of threatening, obscene, or profane language addressed to the driver or any passenger entering, leaving, or waiting for a bus is disorderly conduct and any person convicted for the use of such language shall be punished as provided in 16-17-530.

Carry-on Items: Compliance with Federal standards is mandatory by SDE. No animals, insects, weapons, balloons, glass or pressurized containers (e.g. hair spray), or class projects that are large, wooden, etc. – none of these are to be carried on busses by drivers or students. Up to 22"x28" paper posters are allowed if driver vision is not obstructed. Band instruments, or other items, carried on the bus must be of such size that all must be carried in the student's lap. Items on the seats, floor, or obstructing the aisles endanger all passengers on the bus. Class project items and large band instruments must be transported to/from school via private vehicle. Carry-on Items by FCSD3: Instruments the size of a trumpet or larger will not be allowed on school buses. Exception: A trumpet if carried in a “Gig Big” may be carried on the bus since if then becomes an instrument of such size that it can be transported in the student’s lap.

School district transportation personnel are required to use prudent judgment in determining if an instrument will be allowed given consideration to the size of the instrument as well as the size and physical characteristics of the student involved. The final determination rests with the Superintendent of Florence Scholl District Three of her designee.

Changes in Bus Routes: SDE requires busses to be routed over public maintained roadways in the most efficient (mileage) manner possible, targeting 75-minutes per trip allowance. Basic route determination infrastructure: Setting up routes within SDE regulations and SC State Law can occur at the first of each year, or when a violation is discovered. Route changes are created by growth, overloads, bus size available, legal safety actions, bridges out, highway construction, hazardous emergencies as recognized and defined by State standards, etc. or upon discovery of an unapproved route pattern. The Department of Transportation notifies students by word-of-mouth for single stop adjustments, or by handouts for total route changes. SDE requires the local district to periodically re-evaluate its routes as necessary to cope with the above conditions or to bring unapproved routes into SDE compliance.

Turn-about Maneuvering and Ground Surface: On private-owned, unpaved roadways where the distance to a residence is greater than three-tenths of a mile from a regular bus route pattern, but where 1) no adequate bus turn-about area exists, 2) or where the ground surface cannot support a 33,000 lb vehicle, property owners can deed to the appropriate government agency (upon agreement of said government agency) the land necessary for government to construct a school bus turn-about. Turn-about areas, with clear visibility, must be either a 60' radius or a 25' wide by 50' deep area, paved/graveled sufficient to accommodate the turn-about maneuver and the weight of the vehicle. Roadways must be a minimum of 25' wide, clear of obstructions (e.g. tree limbs), and adequate to withstand winter/or inclement weather under the weight of a loaded bus.

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