

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF STUDENTS USING SCHOOL BUSES

The following guidelines outline parent/guardian responsibilities relative to families using District school buses and transportation services.

1. Riding the school bus is a privilege. This privilege may be temporarily suspended or permanently revoked if a student's misconduct violates School Bus Conduct Rules, jeopardizes the safe operations of the school bus or the safety of the children riding this bus. See Board policies EEA and JICC, and District regulations JICC-R.
2. Parents/guardians are responsible for the safety of their children from the time they leave home in the morning until the time they board the school bus; and at the end of the school day from the time the school bus departs the loading/unloading area and the children reach home. Once the child enters the school bus, the authority lies with the bus driver and the school.
3. Students should leave home early enough so that they arrive at the designated school bus stop point five (5) minutes before the scheduled arrival time of the school bus.
4. Parents/guardians should be aware of their responsibility not only for their child's behavior while on the school bus, but also their responsibility for damage caused by their child(ren) to the property of others, including the school bus. When a child walks to and from the bus stop, and while he/she waits at the school bus stop, and when he/she walks home from the school bus stop at the end of the school day, he/she must show consideration and respect for the property of those citizens whose homes and places of business are located along these routes.
5. Parents/guardians, together with the child, should develop a route to and from the school bus stop, or school, which minimizes the exposure of the child to vehicular traffic. Shortcuts through isolated fields and woods or across streams or railroad tracks can often be dangerous. Entering of abandoned houses or deserted buildings by children on their way to or from school should not be condoned. The route should be direct and uninterrupted.
6. Parents/guardians should walk with younger children to and from the school bus stop, using this opportunity to teach the child(ren) proper pedestrian practice. If the parents/guardians cannot accompany their child(ren), arrangements should be made, if possible, for older children (brother, sister, or neighbor) to escort the younger children to and from the school bus stop or school.
7. Parents/guardians should develop in their child(ren) an awareness of the molestation (personal harassment) problem. Encourage children not to accept candy, soft drinks, money, toys or rides from strangers or to associate with anyone they do not know. If your child is confronted with these problems on his/her way to or from school, he/she should tell you or his/her teacher as soon as possible. This is a situation that should be referred to the police.
8. Parents/guardians should realize that weather determines how a child is to be dressed. Encourage your child to wear the type clothing that will not only keep him/her warm and enable him/her to see where he/she is going, but also permit him/her to be seen. If the child(ren) cannot be seen by the drivers of vehicles, they are in danger. For example, white clothing is difficult to see in snow, but makes one clearly visible at night. If the weather is inclement, the child should be dressed for the occasion and leave a few minutes earlier than his/her normal starting time in order to reach the school bus stop or school safely and on time.
9. In inclement weather announcements regarding the closing of schools or delayed opening begin at approximately 6:00 a.m. During severe weather conditions, pertinent information concerning the transportation program will be announced on the radio.
10. The application of common sense is the best method of determining the role of the parents/guardians regarding the safety of children traveling to and from school, either as a passenger on a school bus or as a pedestrian.

Legal References:

RSA 189:6a, School Bus Safety

RSA 189:9-a, Pupils Prohibited for Disciplinary Reasons

Legal References Disclaimer: *These references are not intended to be considered part of this policy, nor should they be taken as a comprehensive statement of the legal basis for the Board to enact this policy, nor as a complete recitation of related legal authority. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.*

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