

SCHOOL BUS CODE

Responsibilities of Transported Student

The School Bus Code is a supplement of the Board's Disciplinary Code and has been adopted to enhance safety for all students, board staff, and the general public. The school bus is considered an extension of the classroom and all Bessemer City Board of Education rules apply while being transported and while waiting at the bus stops. Food items may be transported; however, they may not be eaten or visible.

The violation of any school bus rule may result in suspension from the bus in addition to any other disciplinary action prescribed in this *Parent-Student Handbook*.

- Transportation services are a privilege, not a right
- Transportation is available to all Bessemer City School students that live beyond the legally prescribed two (2) mile walking distance from their zoned school (Safety Exception)
- Students will be assigned to a particular school bus by the appropriate transportation personnel. Students are not permitted to ride any bus other than their regularly assigned bus without written permission from a school administrator
- Each student will ordinarily be transported to or from a bus stop in proximity to his/her residence. If a student is to be transported from school to an address other than his/her residence, he/she must go to the same address every day
- There will be no transportation provided for students wishing to go to another address for occasional visits, parties, extracurricular activities or other social events, except upon written request by the student's parent or guardian, specific written permission from a school administrator and transportation supervisor
- The location of bus stops shall be determined at the sole discretion of the Transportation Department. All requests for a new/changed bus stop location must be made in writing to the school principal and then forward to the Transportation Department. The Transportation Department will make the final decision after conferring with the local school principal
- Only students living along a bus route will be assigned to the bus serving that route. Other students will not be allowed to ride unless written permission is obtained from the appropriate transportation personnel
- If a student misses the bus at their assigned stop, they should find other means of transportation to school on that occasion and never chase a bus down to another stop. This creates a very dangerous situation for the students which could result in serious injury. Chasing a bus down to board at another stop may result in a bus suspension
- In emergency situations, the Transportation Department reserves the right to change bus routes in order to get all the children home in a timely and safe manner. This may include combining double run routes into single run routes which could result in elementary and high school students riding the bus together in these instances

Video cameras will be placed on school buses to be used as a tool for school personnel to monitor behavior, and shall not limit the bus driver's authority or the discretion of a school official in implementing and enforcing the provisions of the *Parent-Student Handbook* and this School Bus Code. Any carry-on equipment (i.e., book bags, band instruments or uniforms, sports equipment, science projects, school fundraisers items, etc.) must be held by the student owner or placed under the seat and must not interfere with either the seating or the safety of other students on the bus.

Transportation

Parents and students should be aware that the sole purpose of a school bus is to transport students safely to and from school. Since the school bus driver carries this heavy burden of responsibility, the school bus is considered an extension of the classroom and all Bessemer City Board of Education rules apply.

The following guidelines are to be followed when riding the bus. Any student not abiding by these guidelines may be subject to discipline as outlined in the **DEFINITIONS AND RULES RELATING TO FORMAL DISCIPLINARY ACTION** in this publication.

- Students will be picked-up and dropped-off at their residence or designated bus stop only
- Students should be at the bus stop at least ten (10) minutes prior to the designated time
- Once students arrive at their school bus stop, they are subject to the rules of the school system
- Students must obey instructions given by the driver
- Students must be courteous to fellow pupils and the bus driver (Do not annoy other students)
- Playing, threatening, and/or fighting are not permitted on or around the bus or at bus stops
- Students should remain silent when approaching and crossing railroads
- Students should talk only in a normal voice and not use profane or obscene language
- Students should remain properly seated, not change seats
- Students should keep all body parts and objects inside the bus
- Students are not allowed to eat, chew gum, drink, smoke, or strike matches and lighters on the school bus
- Weapons of any kind are not permitted on the bus
- Students are not allowed to tamper with any of the equipment on the bus, especially ALL emergency exits
- Students are not allowed to litter the bus, or throw objects within or outside the bus

- Students are not allowed to leave the bus except at the regular bus stop without written permission from the administration
- No objects should be transported on a school bus that may compromise the safety of the students or the driver. (This includes, but is not limited to animals, fireworks, sharp objects, glass, balloons, and any other objects that could obstruct a driver's vision, distract a driver's attention, or otherwise endanger the lives of anyone who rides a school bus)
- Books, packages, coats, band instruments and other items should not be in the aisles or in the driver compartment and should not be left on the bus. These items must be held in the child's lap and must not occupy the seat of another child
- Students are not allowed to transport Prescription or Non-Prescription medications on the bus
- **The use of cell phones or other personal electronic communication devices are prohibited**

DISCIPLINARY INCIDENT DEFINITIONS FOR TRANSPORTED STUDENTS

Every student who utilizes transportation services is subject to the Bessemer City Code of Student Conduct. Failure to comply with following rules may result in an office referral and may result in permanent removal from the bus.

Class I- Minor School Bus Offenses

101. **Excessive Distraction of other students** – Any conduct and/or behavior which is disruptive to the orderly operation of the school bus (e.g., excessive talking, provoking students, moving from assigned seat on the school bus, etc.)
102. Failure to follow proper procedure at bus stops including, but not limited to the failure to do the following:
 - a. Walk on the left, facing traffic, to the bus stops and stay off the roadway at all times while waiting on the bus.
 - b. Be at your stop ahead of the scheduled bus arrival time and be prepared to board the bus.
 - c. Wait until the bus comes to a **COMPLETE** stop and a signal from the driver before attempting to get on or off.
 - d. Cross the roadway, if necessary after leaving a bus, in the following manner:
 - Make certain that the bus is stationary
 - When exiting from the bus, stand on the side of the road at a point 10 feet in front of the bus and wait for proper signal to cross
 - Upon a signal from the driver, look to the right and left and proceed across the roadway in front of the bus. **NEVER CROSS BEHIND THE BUS!!**
103. Use of profane or indecent language

104. Blocking, restricting, or otherwise placing objects on or in the aisle, steps or emergency exits on school bus
- a. **1ST BUS INFRACTION** - Conference with student, warning, parent notification
 - b. **2ND BUS INFRACTION** - Conference with student, one (1) day bus suspension, parent contact required
 - c. **3RD BUS INFRACTION** - Conference with student, three (3) day bus suspension, parent conference required
 - d. **4TH Bus INFRACTION** - Fourth and each subsequent infraction will be treated as a class II offense

CLASS II- INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL BUS OFFENSES

201. Battery upon students – Actually and intentionally touching or striking another student against the will of the other
202. Leaving class or campus without permission or entering or exiting the school bus before it has come to a complete stop
203. Directing obscene or profane language to a school system employee
204. Intermediate disruption on a school bus
205. Throwing or expelling anything from the school bus
206. Failure to keep head, hands and feet inside the bus windows at all times
207. Tampering with door handles and other safety equipment at any time unless directed to do so while on the bus
- a. **1ST INTERMEDIATE BUS INFRACTION** - Conference with student, and five (5) day bus suspension, parent will be contacted
 - b. **2ND INTERMEDIATE BUS INFRACTION** - Conference with student ten (10) day bus suspension, parent conference
 - c. **3RD INTERMEDIATE BUS INFRACTION**- Student's bus privileges will be revoked

CLASS III & IV - MAJOR SCHOOL BUS OFFENSES

Any Class III and IV offenses occurring on a bus or at a bus stop will be considered a major bus infraction. Students will be suspended pending hearing. Exceptional Education and Section 504 students will be disciplined according to current policies for students with disabilities.

Student Arrival at School/Dismissal at End of School Day

Students not transported by bus (i.e. car riders and/or van riders) should not arrive prior to the arrival of the first bus since supervision is not available. It is the parent's responsibility to pick up their student when school dismisses. Habitually late pick-ups may be reported to the police department or The Department of Human Resources. Bessemer City Schools offers bus services for all students K-12.