

LAGUNA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Laguna Department of Education K'awaika Schools



Transportation Handbook

“Life is a Journey”

2023-2024

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

The Laguna Department of Education (LDOE) Transportation Office welcomes you to another exciting school year. We realize that the most important part of our job is the safety of our passengers — our children. This is a cooperative effort of many people: the School Board, Superintendent, Principals, transportation staff, students and families.

The LDOE Transportation Office oversees all routes for busses and transports children to and from school on a regular basis. In order to ensure the safest and most efficient ride, all school buses, bus drivers, aides, bus routes, bus stops, and loading/unloading zones are evaluated on a continual basis. This office and every school bus driver must comply with New Mexico State regulations and guidelines.

This handbook has been designed to provide families and LDOE personnel, drivers and interested parties, with a source of information affecting the administration of our transportation operation. It is based on the State of New Mexico Standard for Providing Transportation for Eligible Students 6.41.4 NMAC. Strict adherence to the expectations outlined not only reduces liability but also supports our primary concern, the safe transportation and overall safety of children within the LDOE system.

This handbook has been developed to better inform parents and students of the importance of our school transportation program. We hope to make students and parents aware that SAFETY is our number one goal. Please read this manual and become familiar with its regulations. It can be a valuable tool. We are all committed to providing solutions for education by doing what we do best — delivering quality student transportation — so the schools can do what they do best — delivering quality student education.

Sincerely,
Ron Rodriguez, Transportation Coordinator
Pueblo of Laguna Department of Education
Office: (505) 375-3559

GENERAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITY TRIPS

Activity trips are school sponsored student activities (e.g. field trips, athletic events, and musical concerts). All transportation to school sponsored activities will be in school bus type vehicles (mini-vans are prohibited). Only students, sponsors, and approved chaperones will be transported on school buses and appropriate school activity vehicles.

Staff cannot transport students in privately owned vehicles. Parents/Guardians who choose to transport individuals to events/activities assume all risk, liability and responsibility and cannot hold the Laguna Department of Education at fault. **In the event of Parent Transport, student will not be allowed to ride bus back to school.**

DELAYED START SCHOOL DAYS

A delayed school day begins 2 hours later than a regular school day. Hazardous road conditions and extreme weather are common reasons to delay school. On 2-hour delay days, the buses will run two hours later than normal.

A decision to delay school shall be made by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Notification will be given to TV and Radio Stations no later than 6:00 a.m., as well as all drivers and staff. If weather conditions worsen, and it is necessary to cancel school for the day, an announcement will be made no later than 8:00 a.m. You can find information on our Laguna Department of Education website - <http://www.lagunaed.net/>.

A delayed start school day will be considered a regular school day and unless weather or road conditions warrant it, all activities may go on as scheduled, including activity trips. If, however, school is canceled, all athletic and other activities shall be canceled. This would include all practice sessions. Participation in a tournament, either at home or away would be allowed to continue at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee.

“DO NOT RESUSCITATE” REQUESTS

If a parent/guardian requests to withhold life saving techniques in the event of a respiratory or cardiac arrest suffered by a severely impaired or terminally ill student, the request **shall not** be honored. The following procedures will be followed:

1. School bus personnel will, to the best of their ability, administer First Aid/CPR to students in the event of an accident or life-threatening emergency. The driver or attendant shall radio the Transportation Coordinator to activate the Emergency Medical System (911) immediately.
2. Upon arrival, EMT Personnel will then take over treatment of student. Any decisions concerning transport or treatment will be handled by EMTs.

ELIGIBLE SCHOOL BUS RIDERS

Students enrolled in schools within the Laguna Department of Education will be provided transportation from the bus stop nearest his/her permanent residence to his/her assigned school. A student will not be afforded transportation, if attending outside of his/her attendance center, unless specified by an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

EVACUATION DRILLS

It is the responsibility of the driver to conduct student emergency evacuation drills or emergency evacuation demonstrations twice each school year for each route assigned. The LDOE Transportation Coordinator will work with school administrators to develop emergency evacuation plans that will be effective for students whose disability may impede conventional methods of evacuation.

The types of drills to be exercised are:

- A. Everyone exits through the rear emergency door.
- B. Everyone exits through the front service door.
- C. Students sitting in the front of the bus exit through the front service door and students sitting in the back half of the bus exit through the rear emergency door.

MODIFIED TRANSPORTATION BASED ON 504 PLAN/COMPARABLE TRAVEL TIME

LDOE recognizes its obligation to provide transportation to students with disabilities. Transportation needs for students with disabilities who request transportation, as a related service, shall be determined and specified on an individual case-by-case basis by each student's Individual Education Program (IEP) committee. The committee shall utilize evaluation information from a variety of sources, including but not limited to, parent information, other related services assessments, medical information, technology assessment, and other information from the student's multidisciplinary team evaluation.

Decisions regarding transportation as a related service shall be guided by the principle of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE); therefore, students with disabilities shall be transported with neighborhood peers who are not disabled, unless restricted by health or safety considerations. When modifications to standard transportation are necessary, transportation personnel shall be afforded the opportunity to participate in the development of the IEP. The IEP document shall clearly state the transportation needs/modifications identified by the IEP team. If future circumstances require significant changes in services, any team member, including transportation personnel, may request that the committee reconvene to consider the student's transportation needs.

The parent/guardian of students who have been approved for modified transportation services will allow the school three working days to implement any changes in pick-up and/or drop-off locations. The driver is not allowed to change or modify a bus route. All changes must go through the Transportation Office. The parent/guardian will have the student ready to board the bus at the assigned pick-up time. In order to meet school schedules, the driver will wait no more than five minutes for a student under the 504 plan to arrive at the bus.

The following will bring our policy in line with federally mandated regulations:

1. All students being transported to their home or school, either on a regular route or a modified route, will arrive and depart at times that do not shorten their school day.
2. A student receiving modified service to his/her residence or school should receive reasonable accommodation for comparable travel time with neighborhood peers who ride a regular bus.

The transportation provider will refer to the student's Confidential Emergency Information form, when delivering a student receiving modified transportation services, if the parent/guardian is not present to receive the student.

1. If, on the transportation form, the parent/guardian has authorized that the student can be left unattended, the bus driver may leave the student at the delivery location.
2. If the parent/guardian has not authorized that the student can be left unattended, the bus driver will not leave the student unattended.
 - A. The local transportation provider will attempt to contact the student's parent/guardians at work or at other phone numbers provided, or call emergency contacts listed on the form.
 - B. While attempting to make contact with the student's parent/guardian or the emergency contacts listed on the form, the bus driver may proceed on the designated route to deliver any other passengers onboard to their destinations and then return to the student's delivery location.
 - C. If the transportation provider is still unable to make contact with the parent/guardian or with emergency contacts listed on the card, the provider will make an effort to transport the student

- back to the school. Staff will accept the student and continue to attempt to contact the parent/guardian or the emergency contacts.
- D. Parents/guardians will be responsible for collecting the student.
 - E. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the student may be referred to the appropriate personnel for child protective services (police). Social services will be notified.

SCHOOL BUS ROUTES - LES AND LMS

**LES/LMS routes are subject to change at any time due to student enrollment.*

- Bus #15** Mesita Low Rent Area, Sub-Division Area.
- Bus #11** Casa Blanca Area, Seama Village & Subdivision, Seama Overpass and Sunnyside Area
- Bus #13** Martinez Ball Field, Paraje Village, New Laguna Low Rent, Encinal Village and Subdivision and New Laguna Village.
- Bus #16** Paguete Subdivision, Old Bridge Road, Pork Chop Hill, Chinatown Rd, Old Post Office, Green Acres and Turquoise Trail @ Veterans Road.
- Bus #12** Mesita Rito, Mesita Village, Old Highway 66 and Laguna Arrowhead.
- Bus #14** Laguna Subdivision, Green Acres Tribal Road @ Veterans Road and Laguna Village.

All school bus routes are to be run in a manner that is in line with all Federal, state and local laws and regulations:

1. Notes from parents to drivers authorizing the bus driver to drop off students at a point other than their regular stop **SHALL NOT BE PERMITTED**.
2. Established routes will not be altered unless authorized by the LDOE Transportation Office.
3. Changes in departure time must be cleared by the LDOE Transportation Office.
4. The use of dead-end roads and streets, and dog-leg routes where a bus is required to turn around by backing-up are not permitted unless approved in advance by the LDOE Transportation Office.
5. Students will not be allowed to walk to and from school, unless authorized, in writing, by the principal.
6. All bus stops must be approved by the Transportation Coordinator. Students shall be grouped together at a designated area to be picked up and dropped off. Placement of such stops shall always be selected with the students' safety as priority.
7. The Transportation Office will accept phone call requests to move a bus stop when property damage is occurring at a stop. All other requests should be made in writing, clearly stating the reason for the desired change.
8. School Bus Drivers shall maintain a student roster and a seating chart. Student rosters shall contain the following information:
 - A. First and last name of all students assigned to that bus.
 - B. Address and telephone number.
 - C. Bus Enrollment Card – all parents/guardians must complete the card and provide emergency information. ALL students who ride the bus are required to provide a completed form to the school bus driver. The school bus driver must keep this list up-to-date. Information contained

on the student roster sheet shall remain confidential, but a copy must be on the bus at all times. Student rosters will be made available to school officials and law enforcement officers upon request.

9. Complaints regarding route schedules or discipline problems will be addressed by the Transportation Coordinator and the Principals from LES and LMS.

SAFETY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each school bus driver and building principal has been supplied with the copies of the School Bus Violation Report form and regulations, which reflect the rules for student conduct. We encourage you to closely review all aspects of transportation outlined in this booklet including expectations of parents, students and staff.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/guardians are part of a successful team effort for safe riding on the school bus. Though parents are not able to ride the bus, their responsibilities include, but are not limited, to the following:

1. Insuring that their child arrives at the designated bus stop five minutes prior to the scheduled arrival of the bus.
2. Providing protection or supervision for their child when unusual conditions warrant precaution beyond ordinary circumstances.
3. Actively cooperating with school officials and school bus operators regarding appropriate conduct of their child at bus stops and while walking to and from bus stops.
4. Assisting with implementation and enforcement of school bus rider safety.
5. Encouraging their children to learn and obey the school bus safety rules and to exhibit appropriate conduct while on the way to or from the bus stop, and while on the bus.
6. Instructing their children about the location of their bus stop and advising them to get off only at their designated stop.
7. Reporting acts of vandalism at or near bus stop to private property or school property.
8. Arranging for their students to have all necessary supplies, materials, etc., in pouch, packet or backpack, to avoid loss or spilling out in bus.
9. Transporting your child if they have an item that is too large for them to hold in his/her lap. Toys, items in glass containers, or other dangerous objects, as well as, large instruments (Tubas, trombones, guitars, drums), or class projects, shall not be transported on the bus.
10. Notifying the school in the event a student does not plan to go to school on a specific day, for students who receive modified services.
11. Assuming responsibility for transporting their child in the event of a bus suspension.
12. Making arrangements to have a responsible person meet the bus, if the child is not capable of staying home alone. Note: it is highly recommended for students at DEC, and in grades Kindergarten, first, and second that a responsible party meet them at the bus stop.
13. Being financially responsible for malicious damage done to the bus.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT

Students should remember that misconduct on the bus not only endangers their safety, but the safety of everyone on the bus. In order to insure the safety of all students whether on the bus, walking to or from the bus, or loading/unloading, the following guidelines shall be observed:

1. Students who walk to meet the bus must walk on the side of the road facing traffic.
2. Students must be at their designated bus stop five minutes before the scheduled arrival time. The bus driver will not wait for students not making an effort (running) to reach the bus. Students receiving modified service shall be ready at the assigned pick-up time.

3. Students who must cross the street to either load or unload the bus must walk at least 8 to 10 feet in front of the bus. They must not cross until they get an “all clear” signal from the driver. Students shall not be allowed to cross multi-lanes/divided roads or heavily traveled roads.
4. Students shall exhibit safe and appropriate behavior while waiting for and boarding the bus.
5. Students must follow proper boarding/departing procedures.
6. Students must obey the driver promptly and at all times.
7. Students must remain seated and keep the aisle and exits clear.
8. Students must sit in the seat assigned by the driver at all times. Students are responsible for damages to the seat he/she is assigned.
9. No item shall occupy needed seating space. No large musical instruments or projects will be carried on the bus.
10. No item shall be placed in the driver’s compartment behind the driver’s seat.
11. Students must take backpacks off and put them on their laps when riding to and from school. All items carried by students should be under their control at all times and carried in their lap. The aisle and exits are not to be blocked.
12. No glass items, animals or balloons shall be allowed. Balloons may limit visibility for the driver.
13. Students are not permitted to have medication of any sort on the bus. If a student is required to take medication at school, parents must deliver medication directly to the school nurse.
14. Tampering with bus equipment or vandalism of bus seats, windows or video cameras is not allowed.
15. Students should not carry on unnecessary conversation with the bus driver.
16. Students shall not use profane language on the bus; neither shall they use obscene gestures or display acts of affection. Rude/discourteous/annoying behavior is not allowed.
17. Students should exhibit a cooperative attitude.
18. Rough or boisterous conduct, including but not limited to bullying, fighting, pushing, and tripping, will not be permitted on the bus.
19. Students will not be allowed to throw things in or outside of the bus. Students shall not attach anything to the bus.
20. Students will not eat or drink on the bus (candy, gum, sunflower seed, pickles, snacks, etc.).
21. Students are not allowed to hang out of the window. Students must keep hands, arms, head and other body parts inside the bus.
22. Students must not open windows without permission of the driver.
23. Spitting and littering is not allowed on the bus.
24. Using electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, cameras, etc.) is prohibited on the bus.
25. The possession, use or distribution of tobacco, drugs or alcohol, shall not be tolerated and shall result in suspension of riding privileges. This includes lighting matches, smoking, using chewing tobacco, or e-cigarettes.
26. Any student under the influence of drugs or alcohol shall not be transported on the bus.
27. Only animals specified in a student’s IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan may be transported on a bus. The animal accompaniment must be justified on the student’s Confidential Transportation Form. A copy of the animal’s current immunization record, registration, and certification, if applicable, must be attached to the Transportation Form.
28. Articles of injurious nature are not allowed aboard the bus.
29. Firearms, knives, explosives, breakable glass, and other dangerous objects shall not be allowed on the bus. **A STUDENT WHO BRINGS A FIREARM, KNIFE OR OTHER DANGEROUS OBJECT ON THE BUS IS SUBJECT TO A 1-YEAR SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL.**

STUDENT CONDUCT - CONSEQUENCES

If a student chooses to ignore a rule, the Principal, upon receipt of a written Bus Conduct Report signed by the driver, will take the following disciplinary action(s):

- 1st Offense - A warning to the student, with a copy of the conduct report issued to the parent/guardian. Parents will be expected to help prevent a recurrence.
- 2nd Offense - Disciplinary action will be administered at the discretion of the Principal. Possible options: A report to the parents will be made, suspension of riding bus temporary or permanent, etc.
- 3rd Offense - Automatic suspension of riding privileges will result. The length of suspension will depend on the seriousness of the infraction. A report will be made to the parents.

NOTE: The specific disciplinary action will depend largely on the seriousness of the infraction.

SEVERE DISRUPTION

The following inappropriate and dangerous behavior will result in automatic suspension of transportation privileges as determined by the building principal.

1. Physical harm to student(s).
2. Physical harm to driver.
3. Physical damage to the bus.

In addition to the suspension of transportation privileges, legal action may be taken and may result in criminal charges and/or restitution when student behavior results in damage or destruction of property.

NOTE: Suspension of a student from his/her bus riding privileges does not necessarily mean the student is suspended from school. Suspension from school does imply automatic suspension of bus riding privileges.

VIDEO RECORDING DEVICES

The use of video cameras on a school bus is permitted by law and shall be used at the discretion of the Transportation Coordinator. The video shall be considered confidential and shall not be viewed by anyone other than Laguna Department of Education employees.

Thank you for helping us make traveling to and from school a safe and positive journey.

PUEBLO OF LAGUNA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BUS TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT

LAGUNA ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL

This form is to be completed, signed and given to their bus driver per safety procedures. Transportation to and from school will be restricted until a completed form for each child is returned to school.

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Place of Residence: _____

Parent or Legal Guardian: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Student safety is the most important component of the LES/LMS bus transportation policy. School bus transportation is a privilege that can be withdrawn for unsafe behavior. To insure the safety of the children, the bus driver must be in complete charge of the bus and occupants at all times. Students riding the bus MUST comply with directions given by the driver.

I understand and will abide by the following rules and procedures for student transportation:

1. Students will ride only the bus to which they are assigned.
2. Students will be allowed off and on the bus ONLY at their designated stop.
3. Only permanent written requests from a parent/guardian for bus changes can be honored (i.e., change of residence, change of guardianship). All requests must be approved by the Transportation Coordinator for availability of space for that particular bus route.
4. No one-time change requests will be approved.
5. Disciplinary action will be enforced in accordance with bus conduct expectations and consequences.
6. Parents who wish to hold a student off the bus (due to being picked up) or insure a student gets on the bus (due to not being picked up) must notify the school no later than 2:30 p.m.

By signing below, as the parent or guardian, I acknowledge that I/we have received and read the 2023-2024 School Bus Transportation Handbook. We agree that the rules and regulations to ensure bus safety should be followed.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

**IMPORTANT:
PLEASE COMPLETE, SIGN, AND RETURN TO BUS DRIVER**