

OPP CITY SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION SERVICES POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ALABAMA SCHOOL BUS SAFETY STATISTICS

- Each year, more than 367,565 Alabama students are transported to and from local schools by bus.
- School buses are involved in only 3/10 or 1% of all Alabama accidents. You are 283 times less likely to be involved in an accident riding in a school bus than any other vehicle.
- Nationally, a school bus is 172 times safer than a passenger train or scheduled airline, and 4 times safer than a transit bus.

Opp City School 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. The implementation of a busing system at Opp City Schools is to provide our school population with safe and convenient transportation to and from the school. 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

New students should complete a bus registration form when registering in the school office.

***NOTE: ONLY STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN REGISTERED WILL BE ALLOWED TO RIDE THE BUS DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL.**

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 registration and permanent bus changes will be subject to a two day processing period before the authorization to ride a bus becomes official.

SELECTING A STOP

A listing of all bus stops from within each bus zone will be published prior to the start of school so that the selection of the stop closest to you may be chosen. Students will be afforded the option of choosing which bus stop they wish to load from in the morning. After choosing a bus stop, however, the driver will allow the student to load or exit the bus only at the stop chosen at the beginning of the year unless a note from the parent or guardian indicates a desire to change stops. While choosing which stop to board in the morning is an option, the bus in which a student rides is not. The city limits of Opp have been zoned for a bus based on population and proximity. Riding a bus outside of your zone upsets this balance and could cause overcrowding of buses.

PERMISSION TO RIDE ANOTHER BUS

Parents who need for their student to ride to a location other than the one in which they were picked up from in the morning **MUST COME BY THE SCHOOL OFFICE TO SIGN A PERMISSION FORM FIRST!**

- TELEPHONE REQUESTS TO RIDE ANOTHER BUS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. STUDENTS
- WHO DO NOT HAVE WRITTEN PARENTAL PERMISSION WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO BOARD A BUS DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE IN WHICH HE/SHE RODE TO SCHOOL!

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- PERMISSION TO RIDE ANOTHER BUS WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY IF WRITTEN PARENTAL PERMISSION IS IN THE OFFICE AND THERE IS ROOM ON THE BUS.

RULES FOR SAFE BUS RIDING

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!**

- **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.
- Take care not to damage seats/windows.
- 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 ROAD 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.
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- **DON'T LOSE YOUR RIDING PRIVILEGE! ~ FOLLOW THESE RULES:**

- Observe the same conduct as in the classroom.
- Be courteous, use no profane language.
- Do not eat, drink or chew gum on the bus.
- Help keep the bus clean.
- Cooperate with the driver.
- Do not be destructive.
- Stay in your seat.
- Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus.
- Remember that the bus driver is authorized to assign seats.

THE PUPIL- PARENT RESPONSIBILITY IN SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

1. The students are under the authority of the principal. The driver of the bus is responsible for student behavior. Transportation to and from school and related events is a privilege. It shall be the responsibility of the students to conduct themselves like ladies and gentlemen at all times while riding school buses. Rules of conduct established by the Opp City School Board are:
 - A. Student shall follow directions of the driver the first time given.
 - B. Student shall arrive at the bus stop before the bus arrives.
 - C. Student shall wait in a safe place, clear of traffic and away from where the bus stops.

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- D. Students shall wait in an orderly line and avoid horseplay.
 - E. Student shall cross the road or street in front of the bus only after the bus has come to a complete stop, the arm is extended, and upon the direction of the driver.
 - F. Student shall go directly to an available or assigned seat when entering the bus.
 - G. Student shall remain seated keeping aisles and exits clear.
 - H. Student shall exhibit classroom behavior at all times.
 - I. Student shall refrain from throwing or passing objects on, from, or into the bus.
 - J. Student shall refrain from the use of profane language, obscene gestures, use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs or other controlled substance while on the bus.
 - K. Student shall refrain from eating or drinking on the bus.
 - L. Student shall not carry hazardous materials (glass containers included), nuisance items (water guns, whistles, etc.), or animals onto the bus.
 - M. Student shall respect the rights and safety of others.
 - N. Student shall not leave or board the bus at locations other than the assigned stops at home or school.
 - O. Student shall refrain from extending head, arms, legs or objects out of the bus windows.
 - P. Student shall refrain from damaging or vandalizing the bus.
 - Q. Student shall cooperate with the driver.
 - R. Student shall refrain from any other action not along the lines of good conduct.
2. When necessary, any problem occurring the last day of the school term will be handled the first day of the following term.
 3. Unnecessary conversation with driver of the bus shall be avoided.
 4. Technical School-Students transported to this school will observe all rules and regulations pertaining to school transportation. Suspension from one school bus applies to the other.
 5. Students are prohibited from:
 - A. Sitting in or on parked buses during the day.
 - B. Cleaning the bus unless they are responsible for littering or causing the bus to be unclean.
 - C. Putting fuel into the bus or any other servicing of bus.
 6. The driver shall immediately report any and all violations of the above to principal for action.
 7. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to study, inquire, and understand the policies and rules of the Board of Education.
 8. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to insure that their children know and obey all rules/regulations and to respect the driver and the rights of the others.
 9. Parents and guardians of all students making approved trip shall sign a form giving their permission for the child to ride on the school bus. This releases the Superintendent, members of the City Board of Education and their employees from any liabilities for any injury sustained by the child while participating in the activity, or riding a school bus to and from the said activity (signed forms must be on file in the principal's office), where proven negligence is not a factor.
 10. Any damage done to a school bus on special trips, beyond normal wear and tear shall be paid for by the particular school (damages caused by a wreck or driver not included). The specific amounts to be determined would depend on whether the students from several schools were involved, in the event of an organizational/club trip, etc.
 11. Students shall be ready to board a bus at the scheduled time. No bus driver shall repeatedly wait for a student at a stop. A warning shall be given to the student the first time this happens. The second time the driver will advise the student that the bus shall not wait again. A report shall be made to principal. When a student moves during the school year and the bus no longer needs to travel to that road, the driver of that school bus has the responsibility to report that fact to the transportation supervisor.

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12. The bus driver is authorized to assign seats if necessary. After investigation, the principal can make permanent seating assignments if necessary.
13. When a bus must turn around, the turning area shall be adequate and free of all obstacles, or the bus will not enter that area.
14. Students shall be transported from an assigned bus stop nearest their home location to their respective school and transported back to the same bus stop.
15. Students shall respect the rights and safety of others.
16. Students shall refrain from leaving or boarding the bus at locations other than assigned stops at home or school.
17. Students shall refrain from any other action not along the lines of good conduct, including but not limited to exchanging seats while the bus is in motion, throwing things, vulgar language or loud noises or shouting. Students shall refrain from extending hands, arms, legs or objects out of the bus windows.
18. Parents or guardians of students are held responsible for damage to the bus. Parents or guardians are responsible for damages. Money for damages to the bus will be collected by the principal and turned into the Central office.
19. If an offense is serious enough to justify immediate action, the driver of the bus has authority to refuse admittance. The principal will decide if and when the student will be admitted again.
20. Students who drive and parents who come for students shall not enter bus-loading zone at school.
21. Students must have a regular place to meet the bus.
22. Parents are advised to check on established bus routes prior to moving into a new territory. Additional buses will not be routed over an existing route. The Transportation Department will not change bus routes to accommodate baby sitters or transport to alternate locations if not on the regular route.
23. Student use of cellular phones and other electronic devices is prohibited on school buses on regular routes before and after school.

MINIMUM ADMINISTRATION ACTIONS

When students do not follow the rules of the Opp City Board of Education's Student Code of Conduct while being transported by a school bus, the following action shall be used but is not limited to:

1. First Offense - Student/Administrator conference with bus conduct report sent to parents.
2. Second Offense - Student/Parent/Administrator conference.
3. Third Offense - Suspension from school buss.
4. Other - In keeping with Student Code of Conduct

Suspensions from the bus vary in time lengths:

1. First suspension - 3 days
2. Second suspension - 5 days
3. Third suspension - 10 days

Students suspended from the bus three times will receive a long-term suspension if a student discipline referral is turned in after that. Follow due process. Also, follow procedures for students with disabilities as furnished by Special Education Department. Some serious violations of bus rules will result in automatic suspension of bus privileges by principal. These violations are:

1. Fighting
 - a. First offense - student will be suspended off the bus for 30 days and other measures as stated in the school conduct guidelines.
 - b. Second offense - student will be suspended from the bus indefinitely and other measures as stated in the school conduct guidelines.

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2. Weapons on the bus
3. Damage to the bus. (Parents are responsible for cost of
 - a. the damage to the bus.)
4. Use of or possession of alcohol, drugs, tobacco or any other
 - a. controlled substance.
5. Any offense which principal may deem reasonable to fall
 - a. within the category of acts of misconduct. Continued violation of
 - b. bus regulations could result in principal's recommendation of
 - c. expulsion.

BUS DISCIPLINE

1. Riding the bus is a privilege not a right! Misconduct on the bus can result in the student losing that privilege.
2. Principals are authorized to suspend bus privileges depending on the severity of the child's misbehavior on the bus.
3. When a child loses his bus privileges, the parents assume the responsibility for transportation to and from school.
4. When a child accumulates 10 days bus suspension, that child may lose his bus riding privileges for the remainder of the semester. The first offense after returning to the bus may result in loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the year.

USE OF VIDEO CAMERAS ON SCHOOL BUS

The Board of Education supports the use of video cameras on school buses as a means to monitor and maintain a safe environment for student-s 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.

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. In most instances, those individuals with a legitimate education purpose may be Board of Education Members, the Superintendent, Central Office Administrative Assistant, Transportation Director, Building Principal/Assistant Principal, Bus Driver and Special Education Staffing Team. A 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

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 are confidential student records and will be retained with other student records. Videotapes will only be retained if necessary for use in a student disciplinary proceeding or other matter as determined necessary by the administration. Parents may request to view videotapes of their child if the videotapes are used in a disciplinary proceeding involving their child.

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THE OPP CITY SCHOOL SYSTEM SHALL NOT DISCRIMINATE OR DENY ACCESS TO STUDENTS DESIRING TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY SCHOOL SPONSORED PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY BASED ON RACE, SEX, RELIGION, COLOR, CREED, NATIONAL ORIGIN, OR HANDICAP. TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILD, STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO CHANGE BUSES UNLESS PROPER DOCUMENTATION IS PROVIDED TO THE SCHOOL. EACH SCHOOL WILL HAVE A FORM THAT WILL NEED TO BE FILLED OUT PRIOR TO THE BUS CHANGE. PARENTS/GUARDIANS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO CALL OR SEND A PERSONAL NOTE TO THE SCHOOL AND REQUEST A BUS CHANGE.