

## **NONINSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS**

### **Student Safety – Walking, Biking, and Riding Buses**

#### **Student Conduct on Buses**

##### **Overview**

If the transportation system of the Snohomish School District is to function safely and effectively, parents and students must assume an obligation to the program and to the people responsible for its operation; primarily to the drivers of the buses. This obligation involves an understanding of the basic rules for school bus riders and a cooperative endeavor to see that these rules are followed. The Snohomish School District views the bus as an extension of the classroom. Therefore, the expectations we have for classroom and school behavior are applicable to bus behavior.

All students in the Snohomish School District who ride a school bus to and from school and on special activity trips are subject to rules and regulations as published by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the chief of the Washington State Patrol, the Director of Highways, and the Snohomish School District Board of Directors. These rules pertain to regular bus drivers, substitute drivers and all passengers while on the bus. Riding a Snohomish School District bus is a privilege extended to all students of the district commensurate with the following specific guidelines and rules. This privilege may be withdrawn for violation of these rules.

##### **Guidelines**

Any misconduct by a student, which in the opinion of the bus driver or bus supervisor, is detrimental to the safe operation of the bus will be sufficient cause for the principal to suspend the transportation privilege.

##### **Rules of conduct for students riding buses:**

1. Students will obey the driver and any aide assigned to the bus by the District. The driver is in full charge of the bus and passengers and will be obeyed. If an aide is assigned to the bus by the District, he/she will be primarily responsible for the safe student conduct on the bus. When transporting classes or teams, the teacher or coach will be primarily responsible for the behavior of the students. Students will obey both the driver and the aide, teacher, coach or other staff member.
2. Board bus when the driver indicates that it is safe for you to do so. Always cross in front of the bus. Students will never cross the roadway behind a bus.
3. Students will ride only their regularly assigned bus and leave the bus at their regular stop unless with a bus pass or authorized by the school District. To ride another bus or get off at a different stop requires parent/guardian permission and authorization of the school.

4. Students will get on/off the bus in an orderly manner and will obey the instruction of the driver or school safety patrol on duty. There will be no pushing and shoving when boarding or leaving the bus. Once off the bus, students will adhere to rules for pedestrians.
5. Students will stand away from the roadway curb when any bus is approaching or leaving a stop.
6. Students going to and from their bus stops where there are no sidewalks will walk on the left-hand side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic. Students will go directly to their home after leaving the bus.
7. Students will not extend any part of their body out of bus windows at any time.
8. Students will not open bus window without the driver's permission.
9. Aisle ways must be clear including books, personal belongings and body parts
10. Students will not carry or have in their possession items that can cause injury to passengers on the bus. Such items include, but are not limited to, sticks, breakable containers, weapons or firearm, straps or pins protruding from clothing, large, bulky items which cannot be held or placed between legs, etc.
11. Students will not have animals on buses, except for an approved animal providing assistance to a disabled student.
12. Students assigned seats will use only that seat unless permission to change is authorized by the driver.
13. Students will go directly to a seat once inside the bus and remain seated at all times unless the driver instructs otherwise.
14. Students will observe rules of the classroom conduct while riding on buses. Noise will be kept down to avoid distracting the driver. Students will refrain from the use of obscene language or gestures.
15. Students will refrain from talking to the driver unless necessary.
16. Students will remain quietly seated, not exhibit disruptive behavior and turn off all noise-making device at highway rail grade crossings.
17. Students will not smoke, vape, or ignite lighters or matches on buses.
18. Students will not eat on buses, except when specifically authorized and supervised by an accompanying teacher, coach or other staff member. Buses will be kept clean.
19. Students will not sit in the driver's seat or to the immediate right or left of the driver.
20. Students will use seat belts on buses when available.
21. Students will follow emergency exit drill procedures as prescribed by the driver.
22. Students will not tamper with emergency doors or equipment.
23. Parents of students identified as causing damage to buses will be charged with the cost of the incurred damage. Students causing the damage may be suspended from transportation.
24. Student misconduct will constitute sufficient reason for suspending transportation privileges.
25. Students will be at the bus stop five (5) minutes before scheduled arrival time and be accountable for their action. Students will follow proper load and unload procedures.
26. When the driver asks, "may I have your attention please", all eyes on the driver and remain silent.

27. Seat to seat, back to back.
28. Leave valuables at home.
29. Respect yourself others and property.

### **Disciplinary Procedures:**

Principals are responsible for correcting students whose abusive behavior results in a bus-incident report or violates the rules above. The principals will receive written reports from the bus drivers or transportation supervisor.

The principal will insure that students comply with the specified regulations. Principals will maintain open lines of communication among school officials, bus drivers and the transportation department.

When waiting for a bus, or going to and from a bus stop, students are responsible for conducting themselves according to the social and legal mores that apply to adults in public. That is, they must not abuse or cause damage to private or public property; they must not use obscene language or gestures; they must not engage in criminal activity. Failure to adhere to these standards may result in formal complaints by citizens which may be forwarded to principals for possible corrective action.

Abusive behavior on part of a student riding a bus may result in a written report when, in the opinion of the driver or bus supervisor, there has been an infraction of the rules applicable to student conduct. The written report is the primary means by which a driver or bus supervisor communicates a student's conduct to the school and transportation department. This report, in most cases, reflects an infraction of rules which is repeated by the student after his/her having received previous oral warnings from the driver or bus supervisor. In order for drivers and bus supervisors to effectively maintain control on their buses, it is expected that action be exercised by principals when receiving such a report.

When a student's conduct constitutes an infraction of the rules, the driver or bus supervisor will complete a written report on the student describing the incident or damage that occurred. The driver or bus supervisor will provide the student with a copy of the report, and the original report to the principal and submit a copy to the transportation supervisor. The copy of the report concerning special education students will be given to the principal for disposition.

The principal upon receiving the report will investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident and take action according to the procedures set forth in the District's policy pertaining to discipline and corrective action (Policy 3241). When investigating the incident, the primary concern must be with respect to the safe transport of students. Corrective action, if necessary will typically be as follows:

- A. **Warning:** When a student's misconduct is of a minor nature which does not jeopardize the safety or welfare of other students or the operation of the bus.

- B. **Suspension from transportation:** When a student's misconduct is deemed to jeopardize the safety of bus passengers and operation, or when repeated warning notices fail to correct behavior, or when a student incurs damage to the bus.
- C. **Expulsion from transportation and/or school:** When a student's misconduct is of such nature that the safety of the bus operation and/or the occupants was willfully and seriously threatened (i.e., e.g. student assaulting the driver).

The action taken by the principal will be annotated on the report and forwarded to the student's parent for signature. The transportation department will be notified.

Bus drivers have the authority to issue bus warnings or citations for minor infractions. The driver or transportation office will call the student's parents and sent home the citation to parents for signature.

Drivers will be advised to file assault and battery charges against students who physically assault them.

The student or parent of a student who has been suspended from receiving transportation may appeal the principal's decision by submitting a written statement to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will render a decision after evaluating the issues and facts involved.

## **Emergencies**

Accidents. In the event of an accident it is essential that certain steps be taken immediately, especially if anyone has been injured. Assuming that he/she is in physical condition to discharge these duties, the driver should:

1. Calm the students, if any, and ask an adult or older student to take charge of them. Keep them in the bus if it has not been badly damaged, is in an upright position, and is not in further danger;
2. Determine if anyone has been injured; if so, administer first aid;
3. Contact emergency services immediately regarding the accident;
4. Put reflectors in front of and in back of the bus as soon as possible;
5. Notify the transportation office as soon as possible, and the transportation office will notify District officials;
6. No matter how minor the accident, obtain the data necessary for making an accident report. Obtain the names and addresses of witnesses, if any;
7. The transportation office will dispatch another bus to transport the students to their destination if necessary;
8. Do not talk to anyone regarding the accident, except to a law enforcement officer and then not in the presence of others;
9. Do not drive the bus from the scene of the accident until authorized by a law enforcement officer or authorized by the transportation supervisor;

10. Go to the transportation department as soon as possible for a urinalysis and breath alcohol test following the accident and fill out the accident report; and
11. The District will contact the parent(s) of all students on the bus.

Emergency Exit Drill Procedures. These practice drills are to be held on school property only. An Emergency Exit Drill will be performed annually. Procedure for the drills is as follows:

1. Shut off motor, set hand brake, have bus in gear and pull keys.
2. The driver will point out the location and explain the operation of emergency equipment as follows:
  - a. Instruct students on opening, closing, and exiting from emergency exit doors and windows. The driver shall personally supervise the exiting of students through the exit door with the assistance of older students or staff standing on each side of the door to assist students exiting the bus. Persons assisting in the drill shall offer a helping hand palm up and shall avoid grasping a student's hand or arm.
  - b. Show students where the extinguishers are located and instruct students on how to remove and operate the fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers are not to be actually used during the emergency drill.
  - c. Show students where first aid kits are located.
  - d. Show students the location of emergency warning devices and advise them of the proper use of these devices.

During emergency exit drills, students will exit only through the rear exit doors. In an actual emergency they should be instructed to use any and all exit doors that are not blocked.

Only those students whose participation in an exit drill poses a substantial difficulty to themselves or to other passengers will be excused and/or excluded from exit drill participation. Students who are excluded from participation will be given oral instruction in bus safety and exit drills at least three times during the school year.

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