USD 503 Parsons PARENT/STUDENT TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK



Student Riders Are Very Special
2026-27

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PARENT-STUDENT TRANSPORTATION HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to provide parents and students with the Rules and Regulations of the State of Kansas and USD #503 Policies and Procedures concerning student transportation. Our goal and obligation is to provide **safe** student transportation. Please read this booklet carefully and discuss it with your children. Keep it handy for future reference. The direct help of parents in promoting obedience to school bus rules greatly assists the drivers in maintaining proper discipline.

Our drivers meet all state and district certification requirements. These include: (1) maintaining a current CDL B driver license, (2) passing a biennial physical examination, (3) completing a First Aid/CPR Course and a Defensive Driving Course, (4) passing the district's driver training program which includes behind-the-wheel training prior to transporting students. In addition, a periodic check is made of each driver's driving record and drivers are subject to federally mandated drug and alcohol testing.

Our drivers also receive ongoing training in accident prevention and safety. We work continuously to maintain proper student discipline on the bus. Our district has a good safety record; please, for everyone's sake, do your part to help us keep it that way. With the pupils' cooperation and your support, we believe the Parsons District can maintain a safe and efficient transportation program.

Parsons school bus service is owned and operated by the district. All route and activity buses are equipped with two-way radios and cameras. Each bus must pass a Kansas State Highway Patrol safety inspection. In addition, the district has a preventative maintenance program to keep the buses in excellent condition.

Our basic philosophy is based on three areas: SAFETY, efficiency, and service, in that order. We provide a group service unlike taxi service, which serves individuals. We strive to provide adequate service at a reasonable cost to our patrons. We cannot stop at every house, wait for students, or adjust our pick up schedule to meet the schedule of individual families.

SAFETY CONCERNS AND PROCEDURES

For the safety of the students and the driver, the driver will not allow any parent, adult or stranger on the bus or in a vehicle while loading or unloading students, other than authorized school personnel.

The following safety concerns and procedures apply anytime the pupil is riding a school bus (regular routes, activity or field trips). In addition, on activity or field trips, pupils shall follow directions of a teacher or a chaperone appointed by the school.

By state law, the driver is in charge of all passengers while they are riding, loading on or unloading from the bus.

Any act, which may endanger the safety of others, may be cause for temporary or permanent suspension of bus riding privileges.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Bullying on USD #503 property, in a USD #503 vehicle or any USD #503 sponsored activity or event is prohibited. As used in the district policy, the following definitions apply.

1) "Bullying" means: (a) Any intentional gesture or any intentional written, verbal or electronic, physical act or threat that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student or staff member that a reasonable person, under the circumstances, knows or should know will have an effect of:

    a. Harming a student or staff member, whether physically or mentally.

    b. Damaging a student's or staff member's property.

b. Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of harm to the student or staff members; or

c. Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of damage to the student's or staff member's property.

2) "School vehicle" means any school bus, school van, other school vehicle or private vehicle used to transport students or staff members to and from school or any school-sponsored activity or event.

Please refer to the Parsons District Schools USD 503 Parent/Student Handbook for details on these policies for each building

LOADING PROCEDURE

1. Pupils must be on time! Be outside at the stop. In extreme weather, pupils may wait inside, but must be on the way to the bus as it approaches. The bus cannot wait beyond its regular schedule for those who are tardy. If the student rider is not visible to the driver, the bus will leave.

2. Bus riders shall conduct themselves in a safe manner while walking to the bus stop, waiting for the bus, and boarding the bus. Walk on the far left-hand side of the road facing traffic when going to the bus stop. Never stand in the roadway. Stand single file in an orderly manner while waiting for the bus. If crossing the road to board the bus, do so only after directed by the bus driver and after looking both ways before entering or crossing the road. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the red safety lights are flashing before attempting to cross the road. The bus will stop at least six feet away from the closest student.

3. All student riders in a family should be at the loading site together when boarding the bus.

LEAVING THE BUS PROCEDURE

1. Never cross behind the bus. When crossing the road after de-boarding, walk along the side of the road in front of the bus until the driver's face is seen. Wait until the bus driver signals to cross. Then, walk checking traffic in both directions before crossing the other lane of traffic.

2. Remain off the roadway until the bus pulls away. If a child checks the mailbox, wait in the drive until the bus pulls away before checking the box.

3. Never return to the bus for any reason after de-boarding.

It is recommended that students have a book bag or sport bag in which to carry all papers, books, shoes, and all loose items, etc. This is especially important for younger riders who might forget the danger of chasing a paper or other dropped item under the bus.

Preschoolers who have an IEP that requires transportation who wait for brothers or sisters should stay well away from the road and never go near the bus at any time.

BUS RULES FOR RIDERS

1. **Follow the bus driver's instructions promptly.**

A. If animals, snakes, birds or large items are to be used for a school activity, permission should be attained at least a day before you plan to bring the items on the bus.

B. Headphones or cell phones will be allowed on the bus at the driver's discretion.

C. Possession of water dispensing devices, such as water pistols, squirt bottles and water-filled balloons shall not be permitted on the bus.

D. The bus driver may assign seats.

2. Remain seated.

A. Sit in seats as assigned by the driver.

B. Take seats quietly and quickly.

C. Do not extend arms, hands, heads, or objects out through bus windows at any time.

D. Never walk or stand in aisle while bus is in motion. When unloading from the bus, do not leave your seat until the bus has stopped.

3. Face forward with aisle clear.

A Remain seated facing forward with feet out of the aisle while the bus is loading, unloading, and while the bus is in motion.

4. Speak in quiet tone of voice.

A Good conduct shall be observed on district buses at all times. Ordinary conversation in a quiet tone will be permitted but noise, profanity, crowding, pushing, or fighting will not be tolerated.

5. Keep hands, feet and objects to oneself.

A Be courteous to the driver and to fellow passengers. Rude remarks will not be allowed.

B. Passengers are not in any way to distract the driver while the bus is in operation.

C. Do not destroy property.

D. Violence is prohibited.

6. Eating or drinking on the bus.

A Eating or drinking will be allowed on the regular route buses if no trash remains on the bus.

B. Absolutely **NO** sunflower seeds will be tolerated on the buses at any time.

C. Keep the bus clean.

KINDERGARTEN AND OTHER FIRST TIME RIDERS

Young riders are special in several ways. The younger the child, the more responsibility and care adults in charge must provide. Parents, please be sure these first-time riders understand bus rules and the importance of following them. These young riders should understand that they could be hurt by the bus or by other traffic unless they are careful. The ideal situation is for the youngster to have a healthy respect for the "big yellow fellow" without being fearful of the bus.

Remember that young riders need to be reminded of the rules and praised for practicing safe ridership.

Even at a young age, students should be taught to assume responsibility for their safety. No matter how careful and conscientious a bus driver is, there are times when the child is outside of the bus that the driver simply cannot protect the child from harm. Students should practice the habit of checking traffic for themselves after getting the signal to

cross from the driver.

If your child is new to the district or for some reason has not ridden our buses before, be sure you take time to go over the rules of safety with the child before his/her first ride on the bus. Contact the bus driver for more information.

QUALIFYING PRESCHOOL BUS RIDERS

Be sure to talk with your child about bus safety. Teach them to obey the bus driver and to always check traffic for themselves after getting the signal to cross from the driver.

A parent or responsible adult must be present when preschool students are being delivered after the morning and/or afternoon classes. If no one is present, the driver will finish the route and return the student to his/her school. The parent or day care provider is then responsible for picking their student up from school.

Procedures for Preschool pickup/drop off:
A parent/caregiver must be visible before a driver drops off a preschool student. When a parent/caregiver is not visible the driver will:

- Honk to notify household that they are present
- Radio the school of origin to phone the parent/caregiver or emergency contact (if a phone is not present the house).
- After all steps above are followed, the driver will proceed with route. For drop off the driver will return the child to school of origin.

ELIGIBILITY

Students with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) will be transported by regular education transportation service unless their IEP specifically states another type of transportation service. Students with an IEP whose program is **outside the district** (a "co-op" class), will be transported, to their attendance centers, from either their legal residence or a day care provider whose day care service is located within the Parsons School District.

DESIGNATED PERMANENT PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF LOCATION OR A CHANGE IN PICK UP/DROP OFF

Each student, including Preschool and Kindergarteners, must have a designated pick-up address and a designated drop-off address that is consistent daily. The pick-up and drop-off addresses may be different from each other, but each must remain consistent. These addresses must be declared during enrollment.

A permanent change may be made in a student's designated pick-up or drop-off location by contacting the respective school office. Changes will be accommodated as long as there is bus space available.

If your student needs to be picked up or dropped off at a location that is not their normal stop on the route; arrangements may be made if one of the below mentioned procedures is followed:

1. A note signed by the parent/guardian stating need and location - this note is to be turned into the respective school office or
2. A phone call from the parent/guardian to the respective school office notifying the need and location to a different designated stop.
3. If a student deliberately gets off of the bus in a location other than their designated spot, the student can and will be suspended from riding the bus as deemed by their building principle.

Change of pick up/drop off location on the route may be allowed **with a note for each occurrence** signed by a school official (i.e., principal, secretary or designee). In an emergency, the school official may sign a note to allow a student to ride on a different bus route if space is available.

If a student is to be picked up at the school or has permission to walk, direct the student not to get on the bus.

Once a student gets on the bus he will be released only upon approval of the school official.

Never attempt to "flag down the bus" when it is in route. Students cannot be released along the route. This is a hazardous practice for the student, the bus, and other traffic. Similarly, do not attempt to "catch the bus" at another stop if your student missed the bus in the morning. Either take the child to school, or take the student to another stop farther ahead on the route and have him/her board with others at that stop. It is extremely unsafe for a student to approach the bus from the back or side of the bus.

BUS CONDUCT NOTICE

In the event a student does not adhere to the regulations (see page 2&3, Bus Rules for Riders), a "Bus Conduct Notice" may be given to the student. Behavior that endangers the safety of other riders or excessive misconduct may be grounds for the student to be placed on the school's Discipline Plan.

Time on the bus is a part of the school day, and the rules of conduct, which apply to the classroom also; apply to the school bus. For this reason, the school principal has the responsibility of working with the parent, student and driver in matters pertaining to student behavior on the bus.

Please give your full cooperation to support the safe operation of the student transportation program.

CAMERAS ON BUSES

Security cameras are installed on all of our buses. If an incident occurs on the bus; the taped incident will be reported to the transportation director and the respective building principal. The transportation director and building principal will review the incident and will take the necessary disciplinary actions. ·

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If there is enough snow or adverse weather that you question whether or not school will be in session, please monitor your television or radio. If school is canceled, you will receive an automated call announcing the cancellation. The Superintendent will determine if school is to be cancelled after checking road and weather conditions and consulting with other school officials. The Superintendent will notify the local media only when school will be called off. (Please remember, school is not called "on"!)

Please do not call the schools or the transportation director to inquire if school will be in session. Listen to a local TV or radio station.

DRESSING FOR SAFETY

Students should wear appropriate clothing to be protected in all weather conditions. This includes rain gear (head covering, coats, and boots) for wet weather and warm winter clothing for cold weather (caps, winter boots, winter coats and gloves). While students do not have to be out in the weather for very long very often, they should be prepared to wait at the bus stop in all weather conditions and to be prepared for emergencies. Even though we maintain our buses through a program of preventive maintenance, a breakdown could occur causing students to have to wait longer for the bus or wait on the bus until help arrives. Buses do occasionally become stuck in the snow. Students should always have adequate protective clothing to be safe in these circumstances.

GUEST PASSENGERS

No one other than the students assigned to a bus route will be permitted to ride the school bus to or from school. However on occasion we are willing to accommodate a request for a student to ride home with another student,

ONLY if prior arrangements have been made with the respective school office by the parent/guardian of the regular bus student.

FIELD TRIP NOTIFICATIONS

Guthridge Elementary School, Garfield Elementary School, Lincoln Elementary School and the Parsons Middle School will send notifications home with students when they are planning a field trip. This form will give parents information about the trip that their child will be taking.

EVACUATION DRILLS

Two evacuation drills are held each year, at each school, at the direction of the bus driver and under the supervision of the building administrator or designee. The purpose is to prepare the students to recognize conditions that warrant evacuation, to know correct procedures for each type of evacuation, and to teach students to initiate and complete an evacuation without driver supervision, if required. Drivers instruct all students in overall procedures. A leader takes the evacuated students away from the bus; helpers remain at the doors assisting other students from the bus until all are evacuated. .

The most important thing for students to remember in an emergency is to stay calm. Students should never run (this creates panic). Other actions to remember in an emergency are to leave loose items (lunch boxes, books, etc.) in the bus, to assist smaller children, and listen to and obey the driver or appointed leader.

DESIGNATED STOPS

Designated bus stops are established by the district taking into consideration various factors including safety, distance and efficiency among others. Students will need to plan to walk to the district assigned bus stops.

STOP ARM LAW

Please see that all the drivers in your household know how to be safe and legal around school buses. It can be frustrating to get "caught" behind a bus making stops along its route. Some people let their impatience lead to risky actions that endanger students, themselves and other traffic. Some drivers do not know what the law requires of them. Please obey the law and please be patient for the sake of our kids. When you see yellow flashing lights on a bus, this means that the bus will soon be stopping to pick up children. These children could be on either side of the road. When you see red flashing lights on a bus, this means that children are in the process of getting on or off the bus right then. These children may also be crossing the road.
For your own protection, when you see the yellow flashing lights on the bus, **Please Stop.**

GIVE US A BRAKE!

WHEN LEAVING YOUR BUS:

Here's How to Cross the Road SAFELY

WALK along the side of the road until you can see your driver.

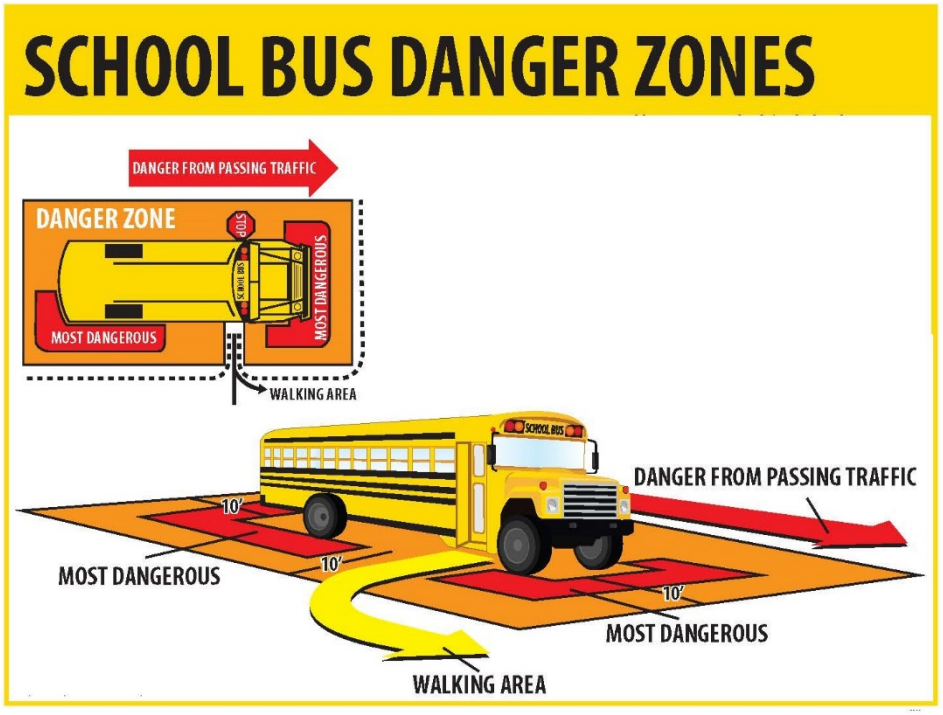
STOP-wait for the signal to cross.

WALK & LOOK for traffic both ways.

If you see a vehicle that has not stopped, return back to the bus immediately.

If vehicles have stopped, cross the road quickly.

Crossing the Highway is DANGEROUS



REMEMBER

WALK

STOP

WALK & LOOK

