NWILCS BUS EXPECTATIONS

The purpose of bus transportation is to provide safe, comfortable and economical transportation for those scholars who live beyond the walking distance established by Northwest Indiana Lighthouse Charter Schools. Ridership is a privilege. Buses will not operate over roads that are not properly maintained, on private lanes leading from residences to the highway, or on roads where adequate bus turnarounds are not provided. The rules governing scholar behavior apply to all transportation provided by the school. At no time are parents or any other individuals beyond the transportation vendor personnel, school personnel, and scholars permitted to board the bus without written permission from the school principal. Parents should always show courtesy to the bus drivers and attendants.

At the Primary Campus: *Any changes to transportation must be communicated to the main office before 2:30PM and 11:30AM on early release days.*

Scholar Expectations at the Bus Stop:

Scholars must:

- Exercise safe pedestrian practices while on the way to the waiting area for the bus stop
- Be at their bus stop at least 10 minutes before the regular pick up time
- Wait in an orderly manner
- Be aware, cautious, and respectful of traffic
- Respect surrounding property

Scholar Expectations When the Bus Arrives:

Scholars must:

- Remain in the waiting area until the bus has full stopped
- Check traffic from all directions, then check again
- Make certain bus warning lights are activated before approaching the bus
- Board the bus promptly and proceed directly to the first available or assigned seat
- Report immediately to the driver or attendant any illness or injury sustained on or around the bus

Conduct on the Bus:

Scholars must:

- Go directly to a seat and remain properly seated while the bus is in motion
- Use language that is appropriate for the school setting
- Keep the bus near and undamaged. Willful or careless damage must be paid for by the scholar performing the act or his/her parent/guardian.
- Talk quietly and politely
- Keep arms, legs, and head inside the bus
- Keep aisles and exits clear
- Keep hands and feet to selves always; avoid fighting or slapping
- Remember that school rules apply to the school bus. For example, use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs is not allowed
- Be respectful of others outside the bus
- Limit carry-on items to those that can be held on lap
- Refrain from drinking or eating
- Weapons, lighters, matches, etc. are prohibited

Infraction	First Referral	Second Referral	Third+ Referral
Violations of Safety Procedures • Boarding/exiting unsafely • Walking in the aisles while bus is in motion • Arms, legs, head out of window • Horseplay • Making excessive noise • Eating, drinking, chewing gum, littering on the bus	Written Warning/ Parent/Guardian Contact	1-3 day suspension off the bus	5+ day suspension- Permanent removal from the bus
Disrespectful Actions • Vulgar language or gestures • Not following driver/attendant's directions	Written Warning/ Parent/Guardian Contact	1-3 day suspension off the bus	5+ day suspension- Permanent removal from the bus

• Talking back to driver/attendant • Throwing objects out of the window • Damaging the bus <$100 • Parental Violation of Parental Expectations			
Serious Infractions • Hitting, kicking, spitting, shoving others • Fighting (both parties receive consequences)	5+ day suspension- Permanent removal from the bus		
Severe Infraction • Possession of: Tobacco, alcohol, drugs, weapons • Damaging the bus >$100	Permanent removal from the bus		

<u>Scholar Expectations When Exiting the Bus:</u>

Scholars must:

- Remain seated until the bust comes to a full stop
- Exit the bus at the bust stop area in a prompt and orderly manner
- Take at least 10 steps away from the bus when exiting
- Allow scholars in the front of the bus to exit first
- Check traffic from all directions, then check again
- If crossing the street, make certain bus warning lights are activated. Cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus, and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross. A scholar needing to cross a road shall do so before the bus pulls away to ensure traffic is stopped while the scholar crosses. Always cross in front of the bus.
- Obtain permission from the bus driver to retrieve items dropped outside the bus

<u>Primary Campus Scholars:</u>

If a scholar is in grades K-through 3 at the Primary Campus: If there is no one at the bus stop to meet the scholar, the bus will return the scholar to the school. The school will contact the parent/guardian or another designated person to pick up the scholar. If the scholar is not picked up within 30 minutes, the scholar will be brought by the school

resource officer to the local police station. In addition, the department of child services will be contacted. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS to this rule!

In the event that a scholar is returned to the school three (3) times by the bus due to no one being at the bus stop to receive the scholar, the scholar's transportation privileges will be suspended for three (3) school days. Following the suspension, if the scholar is returned to the school due to no one being at the bus stop to receive the scholar again, he/she will be removed from the bus for the remainder of the year.

East Chicago Campus Scholars:

If a scholar is in grades K-through three (3) at the East Chicago Campus: If there is no one at the bus stop to meet the scholar, the bus will return the scholar to the school. The school will contact the parent/guardian or another designated person to pick up the scholar. If the scholar is not picked up within 30 minutes, the scholar will be brought by the school resource officer to the local police station. In addition, the department of child services will be contacted. *The only exception to this rule is if the scholar has a sibling riding the same bus that is 4th grade or older, the older sibling may walk the younger sibling home from the bus stop.

In the event that a scholar is returned to the school three (3) times by the bus due to no one being at the bus stop to receive the scholar, the scholar's transportation privileges will be suspended for 3 school days. Following the suspension, if the scholar is returned to the school due to no one being at the bus stop to receive the scholar again, he/she will be removed from the bus for the remainder of the year.

Parent/Guardian/Designee Expectations in regard to NWILCS provided Transportation:

- Parents/Guardians/Designees are expected to provide a bus registration for each student they are requesting to have NWILCS bus transportation. Each registration MUST be for the correct school building in order to be provided the requested transportation.
    - Parents understand that providing the "Sibling Name" on a bus registration does not constitute providing a separate registration.
- Parents/Guardians/Designees understand that NWILCS will provide a designated stop that will be within 0.4 miles of the provided address. Stops will not be changed if they are within the parameters of this policy unless it is warranted via Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and required in accordance with the student's disability.
- Parents/Guardians/Designees are expected to contact the school office for any and all requested changes to bus stops. Parents further understand that no bus driver,

dispatcher, or employee of First Student will be able to make any changes without approval of NWILCS.

- Parents/Guardians/Designees will not threaten or use profane or threatening language toward any bus driver. If the parent has a warranted complaint, they must contact the child's school office to report the issue which will then be investigated.
- Parents/Guardians/Designees understand that under NO circumstances is a parent allowed to board a bus for any reason.
- Parents/Guardians/Designees understand that any violation of these parental expectations can result in suspension(s) or expulsion of their child(ren) from use of NWILCS bus transportation for a designated time period, the remainder of a semester, or the remainder of the school year.
- Any bus riding scholar from the Primary Campus in Gary MUST have a parent/guardian/designee present to bring the scholar to the bus stop in the morning and MUST be present to pick the scholar up at the bus stop after school. **Failure to do so will result in the scholar being returned to the Primary Campus and it will be the parent's/guardian's responsibility to pick up the scholar at the building.**
- Any bus riding scholar in grades K through 3 at the East Chicago Campus MUST have a parent/guardian/designee present to bring the scholar to the bus stop in the morning and MUST be present to pick the scholar up at the bus stop after school. **Failure to do so will result in the scholar being returned to the East Chicago Campus and it will be the parent's/guardian's responsibility to pick up the scholar at the building. *The only exception to this rule is if the scholar has a sibling riding the same bus that is 4th grade or older, the older sibling may walk the younger sibling home from the bus stop.**

NWILCS has the right to refuse transportation to any scholar not abiding by the stated expectations. If a scholar initially does not follow bus expectations, the scholar will receive a verbal warning and parents/guardians are notified. On the second offense, the scholar will be suspended from the bus for 1-3 school days. Parents/guardians are notified in writing. If a scholar fails to follow bus expectations for the third time, the scholar is suspended for 5+ days and can/will be removed from the bus for the remainder of the year. In such cases, the school will then call the parent/guardian who must then come to the school to pick up the scholar. Parents/guardians will be responsible for the transportation of any scholar who has lost school bus transportation privileges.

NWILCS BUS EXPECTATIONS

I have received the 2026/2027 Bus Expectations for Northwest Indiana Lighthouse Charter Schools. I understand that I am responsible for having my child at the bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled pick up time. I understand that if my child is in Kindergarten through 3rd grade I must be at the stop to receive my child at drop off. I further understand that repeated acts of misbehavior or my child being repeatedly returned to the school due to no one being present at the bus stop to receive him/her can/will result in removal from the bus.

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

_____

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

_____

First/Last Name of Scholar & Grade

Bus # _____ Bus Stop: _____