

School Bus Discipline and Bus Riding Rules

One of the largest responsibilities as a school bus driver has, next to safe driving practices, is that of controlling or correcting student misconduct on the bus.

Drivers authority over, and responsibility for, students is in effect from the time the bus approaches a stop or leaves the student at a stop and pulls away. In other words, the driver is responsible for the student when that student's adverse behavior will affect the well being of the bus and passengers. Further, a driver has authority over anyone when that person endangers either the bus or its passengers.

For a student, riding the bus should be an extension of his or her educational process. The relationship a driver has with the student, determines whether this process is beneficial or detrimental. Driver misconduct or poor judgement as to how and when to administer discipline is detrimental to everyone and creates great potential for parental complaints, lawsuits, student misconduct and loss of respect not only for that driver, but for the entire transportation team. The responsibility is great but if a driver is fair and consistent, the bus ride to and from school and on trips will be a pleasure for all.

Consistency is the key word for an effective discipline plan. A student should be able to ride any bus and expect to be treated within a reasonably similar manner. Drivers, being individuals, will have some different characteristic methods of enforcing bus rules or maintaining order. There is nothing wrong with a certain amount of personal difference so long as district and state guidelines are being allowed and personal moral or religious standards are not forced upon bus riders.

To facilitate consistency, the following guidelines and rule violation responses shall apply:

District rules are printed per class on the back of conduct reports.

Class A Rules

- Violation #1 - Verbal Warning
- Violation #2 - Request for parental assistance
- Violation #3 - Written Warning
- Violation #4 - Three-day suspension
- Violation #5 - Five-day suspension
- Violation #6 - Suspension for remainder of current semester

Class B Rules

- Violation #1 - Three-day suspension
- Violation #2 - Five-day suspension
- Violation #3 - Suspension for remainder of current semester

Class C Rules

- Violation #1 - Five-day suspension
- Violation #2 - Suspension for remainder of current semester

Contracting

Entering into a contract with a student is a “last resort” effort to correct misconduct. Contracting may be done ONLY after a student is denied bus riding privileges for the remainder of a semester and then ONLY after a meeting takes place between the students guardian (student present if possible), the bus driver and transportation supervisor. There must then be mutual agreement between these parties that a contract might correct the students behavior. Should the student violate the stringent rules set forth in the contract, the original suspension will be enforced. Contracts will generally terminate at the end of a given semester. Students will NOT be contracted more than one time per school year.

It should be noted that not every possible response to a combination of rule violations is listed. For example, if a student has violated CLASS A rules enough to warrant a three-day suspension, and then violates a CLASS B rule for the very first time, a five-day suspension would be called for since a three-day suspension had already been imposed.

Therefore the discipline is progressive.

Although this seems a fairly rigid system, should a driver determine some flexibility is needed, that driver should consult with his/her supervisor to help ensure the action is correct and fair to others. This will also help keep the Supervisor informed should a problem arise.

To insure proper disciplinary progression, drivers will maintain a record of each individual student’s disciplinary steps. This record will be kept in the route book or on the bus for easy referral by substitute drivers. Also, individual conduct reports will be filed in the Supervisor’s office for driver referral.

At the end of each semester, each student's disciplinary records will be cleared. The exception being, any action taken toward a student within the last five days of a semester will be carried over to the next.

Remember, transportation's goal is to deliver students to school and home safely and efficiently. So keep a sense of humor and use your best judgement, but most of all, care.

BUS RIDING RULES: VIOLATIONS OF CLASS A, B, C RULES

Class A Rules

1. Abusive body contact and/or abusive language aimed at other passengers or passers-by; spitting while on bus.
2. Failing to follow the driver's instructions in crossing the road or using other than assigned bus or bus stop.
3. Putting any part of body out of bus windows.
4. Standing or walking while bus is moving, turned facing rear of bus, blocking aisle with any part of body or personal effects.
5. Excessive noise, yelling out of bus window.
6. Depositing or throwing any litter inside bus or out of windows or doors of the bus.
7. Transporting reptiles, animals, or glass containers.
8. Refusing to move over in a seat so others may sit down.
9. Eating or drinking en route buses without driver's permission.
10. Failure to obey promptly the directions of driver which are based on rules and regulations established by Oregon Department of Education, district policy or transportation department procedures.

Class B Rules

11. Using profane language or obscene gestures.
12. Unauthorized exit from bus.
13. Riding any bus while riding privileges are suspended.
14. Any type of damage to bus seats, walls, floor, ceiling, etc. Throwing dangerous objects inside the bus, or at the bus from the outside.
15. Failure to give name and school to driver when requested or giving incorrect name or school.
16. Fighting or physical assault against another passenger.

Class C Rules

17. Chewing tobacco, smoking, lighting matches or lighters on bus.
18. Any physical abuse, disrespect or abusive language aimed at the bus driver.
19. Any firearms, weapons or other potentially hazardous material on the bus.
20. Unauthorized operation of any bus control or mechanism; honking the horn, activation of emergency exit warning devices or sitting in the driver's seat.
21. Consumption or possession of a controlled substance.
22. Any act of direct disobedience that the driver, after consulting with the transportation supervisor, determines is a clear and present danger to the safety and well-being of the other passengers.