



**2018-2019**

**PARENT & STUDENT**

***School Bus Rider Handbook  
with Rules and Guidelines***

**School Board Approved on 7-9-2018**

# School Bus Rider Guidelines



**PARENT/GUARDIAN: Please keep these guidelines for future reference.**

The Guthrie Board of Education realizes that school bus transportation is an integral part of the modern day educational process. At the same time, the State of Oklahoma has determined that school bus transportation is to be considered a **privilege** and **not a right** of the students attending the state's public schools (70 OS 9-101). Because of these two facts, and because the Board has decided to extend transportation privileges to those who are eligible, the following procedures have been established to facilitate safe transportation of the district's students.

These procedures are not in place to create a hardship on parents or guardians. They are in place to provide for the safety of all students who are transported by bus. They will not supersede, but are in addition to all Board adopted policies, and building level student handbooks as the bus is an extension of the classroom.

We carry the most precious cargo in the world: our children. We ask that you appreciate the efforts being put forth to care for your children and to cooperate with school administrators in their pursuit of safe transportation.

## **2018-2019 ELEMENTARY BUS TRANSPORTATION CHANGES**

**GPS, beginning this school year, has changed from Grade Site Schools to Neighborhood Schools which include Pre-K – 4<sup>th</sup> grade at all four elementary schools Central, Charter Oak, Cotteral and Fogarty. Because of this new setup at our elementary schools, how we transport students has been revised**

- Each Elementary School Site is assigned bus routes for their sites along with stops at GUES, the Junior High and High School
- Each student rider will be assigned a bus to the elementary school associated with their primary address
- There will be new bus stop locations throughout the district and school boundaries.
- Walk zone to each school is 1 1/2 miles from your house
- Walk distance to each stop is up to 1/2 mile from the bus stop to your house
- We will no longer provide transportation by shuttling students from school to school

### **RIDING A DIFFERENT BUS**

Students who wish to ride another bus other than their assigned bus (i.e. from or going to a friend or relatives house, childcare, etc.) will provide their own transportation. This means parents are responsible for providing this type of transportation.

## **Registration of Riders**

**Each student must be registered as a bus rider before they can ride a school bus.** Proof of residency is required, see the “Parent’s Backpack” on the website for more information.

The GPS Transportation Department has several ways to register your student(s).

1. **ONLINE** : We encourage each household to register their student(s) online at **<http://guthrie.ezrouting.com>**, with this option you can make any necessary changes (like phone numbers, address, etc) that might happen during the school year without having to come into our office. \* With this option we can have your student(s) assigned to a bus in approximately 3 days.

2. **WEBSITE** : A link to EZRouting is available along with a registration that can be printed off and brought to the transportation office or faxed to (405) 282-5948 (**[www.guthrieeps.net](http://www.guthrieeps.net) click on Departments and drop down to Transportation**).

3. **OFFICE**: Paper registration forms will be available for those who choose this option.

Proof of residency is required, see the “Parent’s Backpack” on the website for more information.- Parents must complete this form and return it to the transportation office at least 5 days before the student starts riding the bus.

**Upon completing the registration process. You and your student(s) have agreed to comply with the bus rider policies which have been approved by the GPS Board of Education.**

## Route Students

**Students will ride only their assigned bus. Students will only get on and off the bus at their assigned stop. If a Route student does not ride for two (2) consecutive mornings, without notifying transportation the bus will not return or stop until you notify the Transportation Office (405-282-5919) that the student(s) will again be riding.**

### RIDING A DIFFERENT BUS

Notes to the driver are not acceptable.

ANY Students who wish to ride another bus other than their assigned bus (i.e. coming from or going to a friend or relative's house, childcare, etc.) will provide their own transportation. **This means parents are responsible for providing this type of transportation.**

Emergency Rider Waiver: A written request **MUST** be submitted to GPS Transportation before a waiver will be considered (this waiver can be found on the district website under transportation).

In special unforeseen circumstances (i.e. out-of-town, emergency, etc.), it **MAY** be possible for a student to obtain permission to ride another bus or get off at another stop. However the waiver will only be issued on a space available basis and on a case by case basis. These waivers are for **ONE DAY ONLY**.

# BUSTER SAYS

SEAT TO SEAT – BACK TO BACK -- STAY  
SEATED – ARMS AROUND BACKPACK!

## BUS DISCIPLINE

It is our goal at Guthrie Public Schools to provide an orderly and safe transportation experience. **Riding the bus is a privilege** and as such can be granted or taken away based on the students' conduct and behavior.

Discipline is the responsibility of parents, students, teachers, bus drivers and administrators.

The student is responsible for his/her individual conduct. Because not every problem that may arise can be foreseen, students should use good common sense to govern their behavior. They should treat each other, the bus driver, faculty, staff and property with respect. They should be aware that when their behavior distracts from the ability to provide safe transportation services a consequence and or punishment will result.

It is the responsibility of the parent to instill in their child the value of appropriate behavior, good conduct, and to reinforce the policies and goals of the school.

It is the bus driver's responsibility to set high standards for student behavior and to enforce the rules as they relate to transporting students.

It is the responsibility of the administrator to take disciplinary action when general transportation rules and school policies have been disregarded or when crimes under Oklahoma Statutes have been committed.

The administrators will also step in; after all other possibilities have been exhausted, to administer more severe consequences to those students who continually disrupt the quality or safety of the transportation experience.

**The disciplinary process is cumulative throughout the school year.** Students are held responsible to be good bus citizens over the entire course of the school year.

1. Students are expected to:
  - a. behave well while on the bus
  - b. board the bus quietly
  - c. take their assigned seats
  - d. remain seated, sitting forward
  - e. converse quietly with their nearest neighbor.
2. The bus driver is in charge of the bus.
3. The bus driver will assign seats.
4. Student behavior is expected to be like that in the classroom.

## The Rules

The violation of any of the following rules will place the student into the bus discipline system.

### THE BUS DRIVER IS IN CHARGE OF THEIR BUS

(Just like the teacher in a classroom)

Student behavior is expected to be similar to that in the classroom.

1. Cell phones and some other electronic devices (for music, and other appropriate uses) are allowed only if headphones / earbuds are used and it does not create a disturbance on the bus. NO Cameras and any other device that may disturb or distract the driver or students are not to be used on the bus. Taking pictures or videos or making voice recordings of another person on the bus is prohibited (device may be confiscated).
2. Disrespect, defiant conduct, obscene language, or gestures directed toward the driver or students can result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the bus.
3. A student will sit where he/she is asked to sit either permanently or temporarily at the driver's discretion.
4. Students shall ride only their assigned bus. Students will **only** be allowed to get on or off at their assigned stop location. Permission may be granted to ride another bus or get on or off at another location on a case by case basis however, this requires a parent/guardian signed form and approved by Transportation **BEFORE** a change can take place.



5. When requested by the driver, students must immediately and correctly identify themselves. Failure to do so will result in a 3 day suspension from ALL buses.
6. **Students must arrive at the bus stop ten (10) minutes prior to designated bus pick-up time** and wait in a safe and orderly manner out of the roadway and off private property. Students must not approach the bus until it has come to a complete stop and are signaled by the driver to board the bus.
7. Students must enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner in view of the driver. If they must cross the road, they must do so in front of the bus (never behind it) and wait for the driver to signal the student when it is safe to cross.
8. Students are to remain properly seated (seat to seat: back to back) facing the front of the bus at all times. No standing, no moving from seat to seat, no facing backward, no sitting on your knees, no sitting on your back pack or other personal items.
9. No student shall at any time extend head, hands, arms, or any body part out of the windows whether the school bus is in motion or standing still.
10. Students will reimburse the school district for damage to school buses resulting from student misconduct and may be subject to loss of riding privileges and suspension or expulsion from school.
11. Students will refrain from excessive noise, shouting, boisterous behavior, fighting, vulgar or obscene language or gestures, racial or sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and bullying.

12. Students must not have anything in their possession that might cause injury to another, no weapons of any kind, including but not limited to knives, guns, sharps, fighting gear, etc.
13. No smoking, vaping, chewing, or spitting of tobacco or use of any type of flame or sparking devices. Illegal substances or alcoholic materials or their paraphernalia are not allowed on school buses.
14. Eating or drinking on a school bus is not permissible: no gum, no candy, no pop, no pastries, no other types of food or confectionaries. In hot weather, one bottled water is permitted per student. Exceptions to this rule only apply to documented medical needs. Students must maintain clean bus interiors by keeping trash off the floor. Students may **not** throw refuse out of the windows.
15. **Aisles must be kept clear.** Personal belongings, books, instruments, projects, etc. must be held on a student's lap.
16. Large items which cannot be held in the student's lap will not be transported on the school bus; this includes large band instruments.
17. If a student does not ride for two (2) consecutive mornings, the bus will not return or stop until you notify the Transportation Office that the student will again be riding.
18. No hats, no hoodies or other garment that makes it difficult to identify the student is allowed to be worn on the bus.

19. No wearing gang colors, displaying gang tags, or making gang symbols.
20. No personal hygiene items such as body spray, cologne, perfume, or items that may affect allergies.
21. No animals, reptiles, fish, or fowl are permitted on the bus.
22. No teasing, bullying, cyber bullying, no sexual misconduct, no loud talking, no unacceptable language, no standing or moving while on the bus.

### **Disciplinary process: Improper Conduct**

For any offense, the bus driver may choose to re-assign the student to a specific seat, confer with the student, or call the parent. If a verbal warning from the driver fails to improve the student's behavior, the offense will be written up by the driver and submitted to a Transportation Supervisor. When a write up is issued, the following progressive discipline process will be in effect:

**1st offense** – Driver issues bus citation to the student for parent notification. A copy of the incident will be sent to the address on file. A letter could be sent or a phone call placed to the parent or guardian by the Transportation Department.

**2nd offense** - A copy of the incident will be sent to the address on file and a phone call placed to the parent or guardian. May require a conference with the student and/or parent. May also issue a mandatory suspension from **all** buses from one (1) to five (5) days. The parent or guardian will be

notified of this by Transportation or their school administrator.

**3rd offense** – A copy of the incident will be sent to the address on file and a phone call placed to the parent or guardian. May require a conference with the student and/or parent. May also issue a mandatory suspension from all buses from six (6) days up to the remainder of the semester. The parent or guardian will be notified of this by Transportation or their school administrator.

**4th offense** - A copy of the incident will be sent to the address on file and a phone call placed to the parent or guardian. May issue a mandatory suspension from all buses for the remainder of the school year and possibly extended to the following school year. The parent or guardian will be notified of this by their school administrator.

Any of the above steps may be skipped dependent upon the severity of the offense. Punishments may be designed to coordinate with the districts school building policies.

### Examples of Improper Conduct (All Offenses)

**Examples include but are not restricted to, any of the following:**

2. Yelling, or screaming
3. Putting your feet or other items in the aisle
4. Rude, disrespectful to anyone on the bus
5. Using bad words, cursing or profanity of any kind
6. Throwing things on the bus
7. Shouting or yelling out of the window.

8. Obscene gestures to other passengers or outside the bus.
9. Taking pictures or videos or making voice recordings on the bus of another person (device may be confiscated).
10. Wearing a hat, a hoodie, or other garment if it makes it difficult to identify the student.
11. Touching or putting hands on another student in an aggressive or harassing manner.
12. Violation of safety procedure that could endanger anyone.
13. Any instance of 'horseplay'
14. Arguing with or showing disrespect to the driver
15. Not sitting in their assigned seat
16. Failure to immediately correctly identify themselves, to the driver.
17. Smoking, chewing, or possession of drugs or tobacco products
18. Vandalizing or damaging bus property is prohibited and students who do so may be responsible for payment to cover the cost of damages.
19. Tampering with bus emergency or safety equipment, video cameras or DVRs.
20. Physical assault of another person.
21. Inappropriate displays of affection.
22. Improperly clothed or inappropriately changing or removing clothes, displaying gang colors, gang tags, or making gang symbols. School classroom dress code, per student handbooks, applies to the bus. NO sports bras, spaghetti straps, short athletic shorts, men's tank-tops, or shirtless etc.
23. Picking on other students
24. Getting on or off the bus at an incorrect location.
25. Any instance of major fighting (Taking part in a violent struggle involving the exchange of physical blows where punches were either thrown or landed or weapons were used).
26. Sexual misconduct (Sexual misconduct encompasses sexual assault, and any conduct of a sexual nature that is without

consent, or has the effect of threatening or intimidating the person against whom such conduct is directed. For Example: exposing his or her genitals; soliciting or requesting another person to engage in sexual conduct under circumstances in which he knows that their requests or solicitation is likely to cause affront or alarm; forcing a victim to touch, directly or through clothing, another person's genitals, breast, groin, thighs or buttocks) or sexual harassment (the making of unwanted sexual advances or obscene remarks; intentional touching without consent, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature to such an extent that it alters the conditions of the person's environment.)

27. Possession of an object that may be considered dangerous or used as a weapon Verbal (to include cursing), threats of violence, or physical assault of the driver or other transportation official by a student or his or her parent, guardian, or representative will result in immediate termination of riding privileges.

## **There is no excuse for any offense**

**When a severe violation is believed to have occurred, bus riding privileges can be revoked immediately and indefinitely for safety purposes. A parent or guardian and the appropriate school principal will be notified by Transportation. The future disposition of the student's riding status will be determined after a thorough investigation is completed by the Transportation and School Administration.**

