



2020-2021

PARENT & STUDENT

***School Bus Rider Safety &
Disciplinary Handbook
with Rules and Guidelines***

Board Approved on 8/10/2020

School Bus Rider Guidelines



PARENT/GUARDIAN: Please keep these SAFETY 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 9101). 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 **safety** 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 that 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.

ELEMENTARY and SECONDARY ROUTE BUS TRANSPORTATION

- Each student rider will be assigned a bus to the school associated with their **primary residence ONLY**.
- There will be new bus stop locations throughout the district and school boundaries for ALL route bus riders
- Walk zone to each school is 1 1/2 miles from your residence.
- Walk distance to each stop is up to 1/2 mile from the bus stop to your residence
- We will no longer provide transportation by shuttling students from school to school
- The disciplinary steps and procedures have been revised

Application for Student Rider(s)

Each student must be registered as a bus route rider before they can ride a school bus. Proof of residency is required, see the "Parent's Backpack" on the website for more information. IF residency is not verified student may lose rider privileges.

The GPS Transportation Department has several ways to submit a student's application.

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 paper application that can be printed off and brought to the transportation office or faxed to (405) 282-5948 (www.guthrieeps.net **click on Departments and drop down to Transportation**).

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

Parents must complete this application process and submit and/or return it to the transportation office at least 5 days before the student wishes to start riding the bus.

Once the student's application has been **approved and entered** in our routing program; you will be notified of the route number, approximate morning pickup time, and stop location via email and/or text message. **IF** the application is **denied** you will be notified via email and/or text with a brief reason as to why.

Because you requested transportation, you and your student(s) are agreeing to follow the Bus Rider **Safety & Disciplinary** Handbook approved by 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.

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.

Driver will wait two (2) minutes at residential stops & one (1) minute for group stops before pulling away from stop. There will be no going back. However, the bus can be met at the next approved stop location.

Please wait at least ten (10) minutes after the regular pick up time before calling transportation about the bus being late.

RIDING A DIFFERENT BUS

Notes to the driver or monitor 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.**

Rider Waiver: In special unforeseen circumstances (i.e. medical emergency), it **MAY** be possible for a student to obtain permission to ride another bus or get off at another stop. However, the waiver will be subject to space available, and on a case by case basis. These waivers are for **ONE RIDE ONLY**. Then other arrangements need to be made.

BUS SAFETY & 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 student's conduct and behavior.

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

BUSTER SAYS

**SEAT TO SEAT – BACK TO
BACK – FEET ON THE
FLOOR – STAY SEATED--
ARMS AROUND BACKPACK!**

The student is responsible for his/her 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 **Safety** Violation 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 **safety** 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 **safely**.

It is the responsibility of the administrator to take appropriate measures when **safety** violations, disciplinary action, and 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 safety and disciplinary violation process are cumulative throughout the school year. Students are held responsible to be good bus citizens over the entire course of the school year.

Students are expected to:

- a. Behave **safely** while on the bus
- b. Board and exit the bus quietly and orderly
- c. take their assigned seats if applicable
- d. remain seated correctly
- e. converse quietly with their nearest neighbor.
- f. Behave similar to the classroom

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. The bus driver may or can assign seats by name and/or grade.

Any disrespect, defiant conduct, obscene language and/or gestures, verbal and/or physical assault, or any other serious infraction directed toward a driver, monitor, or other transportation representative by a student, his or her parent/guardian, or other representative will result in IMMEDIATE termination of riding privileges for a minimum of 5 school days up to the rest of the school year.

The SAFETY & Disciplinary Rules

These rules are in place to provide the **safest** ride to and from school and/or school activities. Violation of safety procedures endangers everyone on the bus.

Any infraction of the following rules will place the student into the bus **safety/disciplinary** process.

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. Students are to leave one ear uncovered; should the driver or monitor need to give instruction.

NO Cameras and any other device that may disturb or distract the driver or other students are not to be used on the bus.

Taking pictures and/or selfies with others, videos, or making voice recordings of another person on the bus is prohibited. This is a violation of the FERPA Law (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and the device may be confiscated.

2. Disrespect, defiant conduct, vulgar or obscene language, or gestures directed toward other students either inside or outside the bus may 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 and/or monitor'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.
5. When requested by, a transportation official, students must immediately and correctly identify themselves. Failure to do so will result in an automatic 3-day suspension from ALL buses.
6. Students must enter and leave the bus in a **safe** an orderly manner in view of the driver. Using the handrails is necessary for the **safety** of your student. 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.
7. 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. Feet belong on the floor at all times.
8. 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.
9. Students will reimburse the school district for damage to district fleet resulting from student misconduct and may be subject to loss of riding privileges and suspension or expulsion from school.
10. Students will refrain from excessive noise, shouting, boisterous behavior.
11. Fighting, horseplay, or other physical altercations will not be tolerated. Students must keep all body parts to themselves. *Fighting is considered severe and may result in a 10-day suspension.
12. No racial or sexual harassment, sexual misconduct of any nature according to district policy and bullying – either physical, verbal, or cyber.
13. 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, fighting gear, etc. toy or facsimile

14. No smoking, vaping, chewing, or spitting of tobacco or use of any type of flame or sparking devices.
15. Illegal substances or alcoholic materials or their paraphernalia are not allowed on school buses. Violation of this rule will result in an automatic 10-day suspension from the bus.
16. Eating or drinking other than bottled water on a school bus is not permissible: no gum, no candy, no pop, no pastries, no other types of food or confectionaries. 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 anything out of the windows.
17. Aisles must be kept clear for emergency and safety visual checks. Personal belongings, books, instruments, projects, etc. must be held on a student's lap.
18. Large items which cannot be held in the student's lap **will not** be transported on the school bus without prior approval from the transportation department. This includes large Band instruments, Sports equipment, Fundraisers, Food Backpacks, etc.
19. No hats, no hoodies or other garments that makes it difficult to identify the student is allowed to be worn on the bus.
20. No wearing gang colors, displaying gang tags, or making gang symbols. Per district policy.
21. No personal hygiene items such as body spray, cologne, perfume, flowers, or items that may affect allergies.
22. No animals, reptiles, fish, or fowl are permitted on the bus.
23. Improperly clothed - changing or removing clothes. Classroom dress code must be observed at all times and on all buses.
24. No Balloons for **safety** reasons, they can block the view of the driver out windows and make a loud POP noise causing a distraction.
25. If student leaves school property for any reason other than for a verified school related activity, they will not be allowed to ride the bus to their residence

Safety Violation & Disciplinary Steps & Procedures

For any offense, the driver or monitor may choose to re-assign the student to a specific seat, confer with the student, or call the parent. If several verbal warnings fail to improve

the student's behavior, the offense will be documented, following the steps and procedures outlined.

Any of the above steps or procedures may be skipped dependent upon the severity of the offense. Punishments may be designed to coordinate with the districts school building policies. Some incidents have an automatic suspension from bus and/or school.

ALL SUSPENSIONS ARE SUBJECT TO SCHOOL DAYS

1st through 3rd Bus Citations

A copy of each **Bus Citation** will be sent to the parent or guardian by the Transportation Department via email and/or U.S. Postal Service.

Bus Safety & Discipline Citation – Parent Notification	Date _____	Bus # _____
Student Name _____	Citation # _____	
Your student has been given this citation for not following the safety guidelines rules of the bus. Should your student be given 3 of these in a short period of time, a Bus Incident Report will be given to the transportation office for further official action.		
___ not seated properly	___ horseplay	___ throwing objects
___ disturbing others	___ unacceptable language	
___ loud noises/voices		
___ distracting driver	___ disrespectful to driver	___ not obeying driver
Other _____		

If three citations (3) are acquired in a short period of time, the next measure is a Bus Incident Report.

1st Bus Incident Report – Up to 5-day Suspension, unless deemed severe

2nd Bus Incident Report – Up to 10-day Suspension, unless deemed severe

4th Bus Incident Report – Up to the remainder of the 9 weeks, semester, school year, or possibly extend into the next school year.

Each Bus Incident Report will be reviewed by transportation, then forwarded to a site administrator.

A conference with the student by the school principal, assistant principal, or their designee.

An administrator will call the parent or guardian notifying them of the mandatory suspension length and dates.

A copy of the incident report will be sent to the parent or guardian by the school office via email and/or the U.S. Postal Service.

A copy or notification will also be returned to the transportation office and attached to student's EZRouting record.

The school office will also be attaching the incident report to the student's official school record under discipline.

Examples of Improper Conduct

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

2. Yelling, or screaming once on the bus
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. Any instance of 'horseplay'
13. Arguing with or showing disrespect to the driver
14. Not sitting in their assigned seat
15. Failure to immediately correctly identify themselves, to the driver.
16. Smoking, chewing, or possession of drugs or tobacco products
17. Vandalizing or damaging bus property is prohibited and students who do so may be responsible for payment to cover the cost of damages.
18. Tampering with bus emergency or safety equipment, video cameras or DVRs.
19. Physical assault of another person.
20. Inappropriate displays of affection.
21. Improperly clothed. NO sports bras, spaghetti straps, short athletic shorts, men's tank-tops, shirtless etc.
22. Picking on other students
23. Getting on or off the bus at an incorrect location.
24. 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).
25. Sexual misconduct as defined by district policy

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 Department, School Administration, and/or School Resource Officer.