

## **Student Safety and Rules of Conduct on Buses and Walking Procedures**

A comprehensive school trip safety program shall address school walk routes, bus safety and route plans, vehicle access to the school, circulation and parking at the school, pedestrian circulation on and around the school campus and safety education and enforcement.

### **1. Safety Advisory Committee**

The director of transportation shall establish a Safety Advisory Committee (SAC) to develop a school trip safety program and to review safety concerns. The superintendent shall develop specific responsibilities and reporting relationships of the committee, including how the SAC relates to individual school safety programs.

### **2. Bus Safety**

The superintendent shall develop written rules establishing the procedures for bus safety and emergency exit drills and for student conduct while riding on buses; see policies and procedures 6630-6633.

The bus driver is responsible for the safety of his/her passengers. The district will educate students on safety, particularly for those who cross a roadway after leaving the bus. In order to assure the safety of all, the bus driver may hold students accountable for their conduct during the course of transportation and may recommend progressive corrective action for a student; see policy and procedure 6606. Bus drivers are expressly prohibited from using corporal punishment.

### **3. Emergencies**

In the event of an accident or other emergency, the bus driver shall follow the emergency procedures in accordance with the *School Bus Driver Handbook* of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). To ensure the success of such emergency procedures, each bus driver shall conduct an emergency evacuation drill within the first six (6) weeks of each school semester as required by WAC 392-145-045. The district shall conduct such other drills and procedures as may be necessary; see policy 6634.

### **4. Student Rules of Conduct on Buses**

It is the policy of the Yakima School District to provide safe, courteous and regular transportation service over routes as established by the district, with designated stops set according to road and population conditions.

Any misconduct by a student, which in the opinion of the bus driver or bus supervisor, is detrimental to the safe operation of the bus or safety of other passengers shall be sufficient cause for the principal to suspend the transportation privilege.

Rules of conduct for students riding buses are:

- 4.1 Students shall be courteous and obey the driver and any aide assigned to the bus by the district. The driver is in full charge of the bus and passengers and shall be obeyed. If an aide is assigned to the bus by the district, he/she shall also be responsible for safe behavior on the bus. When transporting classes or teams, the teacher or coach shall be primarily responsible for the behavior of the students. Students shall obey both the driver and the teacher, coach or other staff member.
- 4.2 For safety reasons, no student shall be allowed to talk to the driver unless it is necessary. Students may not sit in the driver's seat nor sit to the left nor the right of the driver nor interfere with the driver in any manner. Students shall use seat belts on buses when available.
- 4.3 Students shall ride only on their assigned bus unless written permission to do otherwise has been received by school officials. Students shall not be permitted to leave the bus except at their regular stop unless written permission to do otherwise is received by school officials.
- 4.4 Students shall observe rules of classroom conduct and all district rules and regulations while riding on district buses. Noise shall be kept down to avoid distracting the driver. Students shall refrain from the use of obscene or demeaning language or gestures. Student misconduct on a bus will be sufficient reason to discontinue providing bus transportation to the students involved.
- 4.5 Students shall go directly to a seat once inside the bus and remain seated at all times unless the driver instructs otherwise. Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion and are not to stand up until the bus has come to a full stop. Students may be assigned seats in which they will be seated at all times, unless the driver provides permission to change.
- 4.6 Students shall see that books and personal belongings are kept out of the aisle and emergency exits. Students shall not have animals on buses, except to provide assistance to a disabled student.
- 4.7 Students shall not carry or have in their possession items that can cause injury to passengers on the bus. Such items include, but are not limited to, sticks; breakable containers; weapons, or firearms, or other instruments or weapons, straps or pins protruding from clothing; large, bulky items which cannot be held or placed between legs; or flammables; or other instruments or weapons which are intended or designed to cause bodily injury.
- 4.8 Students shall not eat on buses, except when specifically authorized and supervised by an accompanying teacher, coach, or other staff member. Students are to assist in keeping the bus clean by keeping waste paper off floors. They shall not throw objects or refuse out windows. Buses shall be kept clean.

- 4.9 Students shall not open a window on the bus without first getting permission from the bus driver. Students shall not at any time extend any part of their body out of the windows, whether the school bus is in motion or standing still. Students shall not tamper with emergency doors or equipment. Parents of students identified as causing damage to buses shall be charged with the cost of the incurred damage. Students causing the damage may be suspended from transportation.
- 4.10 In the event of an actual emergency, the established emergency exit procedures shall be implemented. Students shall follow emergency exit drill procedures as prescribed by the driver.
- 4.11 Students shall leave the bus in an orderly manner. They must not cross the roadway until given a signal by the driver. When boarding or leaving the bus, pupils shall be in view of the driver at all times. There shall be no pushing or shoving when boarding or leaving the bus.
- 4.12 Students going to and from their bus stops where there are no sidewalks shall walk on the left-hand side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic. Students shall go directly to their homes after leaving the bus.
- 4.13 Students shall never cross the roadway behind a school bus unless they use pedestrian crosswalks or traffic lights.
- 4.14 Students shall not stand or play in the roadway while waiting for the bus. Students should leave home early enough to arrive at the bus stop ten (10) minutes before the bus is due. Students must stand at least six (6) feet from road edge, or behind a yellow line, where provided.

## **5. Disciplinary Procedures**

The superintendent shall establish written rules of conduct for students riding school buses. Such rules shall include as a minimum the requirements of WAC 392-145-035 and shall be reviewed annually by the superintendent and revised if necessary. If the rules are substantially revised, they shall be submitted to the board for approval.

At the beginning of each school year, a copy of the rules of conduct for students riding buses shall be provided to each student who is scheduled to ride a school bus. The classroom teacher and/or bus driver shall review the rules with the students at or near the beginning of each school year. A copy of the rules shall be available upon request at the district office.

Principals, with the assistance of the director of transportation, are responsible for correcting students whose abusive behavior results in a bus-incident report or violates the rules above. The principal shall provide supervision during bus arrival and departure times.

The principal shall insure that students comply with the specified regulations. Principals must maintain open lines of communication among school officials, bus drivers and the transportation department.

When waiting for a bus, or going to and from a bus stop, students are responsible for conducting themselves according to the social and legal mores that apply to adults in public. That is, they must not abuse or cause damage to private or public property; they must not use obscene language or gestures; they must not engage in criminal activity. Failure to adhere to these standards may result in formal complaints by citizens which may be forwarded to principals for possible corrective action.

Students provided with transportation are responsible for complying with the district's rules of conduct for students riding buses. Failure to adhere to these rules, or abusive behavior towards the public, driver, fellow passengers or the vehicle constitutes justification for initiating progressive corrective action against a student; see policy 6606.

Drivers shall be advised to file assault and battery charges against students who physically assault them. Under no circumstances shall the driver retaliate in kind and physically assault the student as this conduct may subject him/her to legal action.

The student or parent of a student who has been suspended from receiving transportation entitlement may appeal the decision by submitting a written statement to the superintendent. The superintendent or designee shall render a decision after evaluating the issues and facts involved. If the decision is based on issues unrelated to those described in the district's rules of conduct for students riding buses, the decision shall require board concurrence.

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