

Athens Independent School District Bus Rider's Safety Management Plan Handbook



**Transportation Office
1327 South Palestine Street
Athens, Texas 75751
(903) 677-6912**

Dear Parent:

The Athens ISD provides transportation to and from school as a courtesy for eligible students residing in the district. The State of Texas prescribes the conditions governing school bus operations and funds the service by allowing the District a given amount for eligible students transported.

Eligible students are defined by State statute as those residing in the District at least two miles from the school they should attend, as measured by the nearest practical route. The nearest practical route is the nearest traveled public road which may or may not be the road used by the school bus. However, in Athens ISD, we transport all students regardless of the distance that they may live from the school. Address eligibility is continually audited year round so that we may determine whether a student is riding the proper bus. Athens ISD does not run buses on private roads.

In order to meet the conditions outlined by the State and provide safe, prompt movement of students, the School district has adopted standard regulations and procedures and has provided restrictive measures for violations of the rules. For your information, these guidelines and regulations are outlined in this handbook.

The School District is pleased to provide transportation for its eligible students and solicits your assistance in helping create a safe and healthy operation. You may do so by reading this handbook and acknowledge receipt by completing a consent form provided by the bus driver and return this form within three days to the bus driver. We ask your cooperation with school personnel in developing proper behavior for those who ride buses.

If you should need information concerning bus routes, call the AISD Transportation Office at 903-677-6912.

Thank You

BUS RIDER'S SAFETY HANDBOOK

Parents and Bus Riders

The goal of this Bus Rider's Handbook is to help provide a safe and enjoyable experience for children and adults who ride school buses. Parents should take time to read and discuss the materials in this handbook with their children. Riding a school bus is a privilege provided by the district and should be treated as such.

General Safety Rules

1. Obey the instructions of the bus driver. At no time will a student act toward, or address comments to a bus driver in a disrespectful manner, or refuse to cooperate with the driver.
2. Board and leave the bus at designated stops only. Designated stops are established by the transportation department – bus routes do not go door-to-door.
3. Only students who are eligible to ride may be transported and must ride their assigned bus established by address on record at campus – the only exception is delivery to grandparents' house only if they live in the same attendance zone.
4. ***Do not ask to ride home on another bus with a friend.***
5. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to school if a child misses the bus.
6. Students will abide by the individual school's rules and regulations concerning bus students, including conduct and dress code.
7. Students who lose this privilege for disciplinary reasons are responsible for their own transportation.

Bus Schedule

Buses will run as close as possible to the bus schedule. However, the first several weeks of school are a period of adjustment. Routes will not run early, but may occasionally run late until revisions are made. Please keep this in mind when arranging personal schedules.

Parents should discuss with their children a plan of action if the morning bus is missed. Students should know if their parents expect them to return home, go to a neighbor, walk to school, etc. (When mechanical or other problems cause a bus to run late, the schools will be notified, and the bus will make every stop, regardless of how late it is.)

Procedures for Waiting for the Bus

1. Be at your bus stop ten minutes before the scheduled pick up time. Drivers will not wait or honk.
2. Stand on the sidewalk or back from the roadway while waiting for the bus.
3. When the bus approaches, form a line and be prepared to load immediately.

4. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the door is opened.
5. Students might be required to walk up to 1/2 mile to their assigned bus stop.

Loading the Bus

1. Do not push or shove.
2. Use the handrail and steps.
3. Walk to your seat. The bus will not move until all students are seated.
4. Students will be assigned seats as determined by the bus driver. The bus driver may change seat assignments at any time.
5. Once the bus door is closed in preparation for departure, no students will be allowed to board or leave the bus.
6. Backpacks must be worn with both straps on both arms. Backpacks must be put in lap while riding the bus.

Conduct on the Bus

1. Remain seated while the bus is moving.
2. Do not change seats.
3. A student shall not refuse to sit in an assigned seat or deny another student a place to sit.
4. Each student will be expected to remain seated for the duration of the trip, and remain seated until the bus door opens.
5. Loud noises may distract the driver and create an unsafe condition. Some conditions may constitute no talking at all. The bus driver will determine this.
6. Scuffling, fighting, and the use of obscene, vulgar, or profane language and gestures are forbidden.
7. Do not throw any object inside or out of the bus.
8. Do not mark, cut, or scratch any part of the bus. The person who is responsible will pay vandalism costs.
9. Pupils should use the emergency door and exit controls only during supervised drills or actual emergencies. ***Do not touch!***
10. Students shall never attempt to operate the passenger door or other driver controls except in cases of extreme emergency.
11. Students shall face forward with their backs against the back of the seat with their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the bus aisle for the duration of the trip.
12. Video recordings are made of student activity on the bus for disciplinary and training purposes.
13. Going to sleep and missing your bus stop will not be tolerated.

Getting off the Bus

1. Stay seated until the bus is completely stopped and the door is open.
2. Use the handrail and take one step at a time when leaving the bus
3. Wait for your turn to leave the bus: pushing and crowding will only slow exiting and may cause an accident.

4. You must have a note from your parents/guardian with a valid telephone number to confirm permission for getting off the bus. Your principal must sign this note.
5. Stay clear of the bus when the engine is started. Do not chase or hang onto the bus at any time.
6. If any article drops or rolls near or under the bus, do not go after it. Go to the door of the bus and ask the driver for help.

Crossing the Street or Highway

1. All students living on the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point 15 feet in front of the right bumper and wait for the driver to signal you that it is safe to cross.
2. Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. **NEVER** cross the road behind the bus.
4. **CAUTION!** Be alert for the vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading or unloading students.
5. Cross all the streets at intersections. Obey all traffic signals and signs on your way home.

Prohibited Items

1. Tobacco
2. Live animals or insects
3. Glass containers
4. Alcoholic beverages
5. Weapons, explosive devices, harmful drugs or chemicals
6. Objects that do not fit in the student's lap or on the floor between the knees without extending above chin level.
7. Matches or cigarette lighters
8. Food or drinks (eating or drinking on the bus is not permitted.)
9. All electronic equipment including cell phones must be turned off
10. Any balls not in backpacks (footballs, soccer, basketballs, tennis, etc.)
11. Backpacks with wheels and handles
12. Aerosol sprays of any kind
13. Cosmetics out on bus (perfume, lipstick, fingernail polish, etc.)

Accidents or Emergencies

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. If you must leave the bus, stay in a group.
3. The following procedures will be used for evacuation in an emergency situation:
 - a. The student nearest door will open the door and hold it open.
 - b. Leave the bus in a single file as quickly and quietly as possible.
 - c. Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door.
 - d. Once outside the bus, follow the driver's instructions completely.

Extra-Curricular Trips

1. Bus rider rules apply to all school-sponsored events.
2. Discipline will be the responsibility of the building principal and the trip sponsor.
3. The bus must be returned clean upon completion of a trip.
4. The sponsor will be responsible to see that the bus is clean after each trip.
5. The bus driver is in charge of the bus and safety of the students on the bus.
6. The bus driver is authorized to return to the school campus, should trip sponsor be unable to maintain control of the students' behavior.

STUDENTS WILL BE PICKED UP AND DELIVERED TO

PRIMARY RESIDENCE ONLY

***Students cannot be listed on two (2) bus rosters**

General bus changes must be in WRITING.

i.e. Student going home with another student needs a note from the sending parent AND the receiving parent and signed by principal.

School Bus Discipline Pre K through Twelfth Grade

The school bus is a continuation of the school day and all rules that apply to the regular school day still apply plus special rules that are set for school bus riders. These special rules cover instances not covered by general rules. All School Board policies that apply to student conduct and other student related activities apply to the school bus. The Assistant Principal will administer all discipline with assistance from the principal or his/her designee.

Disciplinary action will be handled as follows:

- A. Since students are under the authority of the school district, all violations will be reported to the assistant principal of the student's school with action taken accordingly to bus discipline and school policies.
- B. **First offense** – AISD Bus Conduct Report sent home for parent signature. Student **cannot** ride until signed report is returned to bus driver. Report of incident will be forwarded to assistant principal.

Second offense – Assistant principal conference. Student may not ride until parent contact and/or conference is held.

Third offense – Suspended from riding privileges for a maximum of ten (10) school days.

Fourth offense – May be suspended from riding privileges until the end of the semester or the end of the school year.
- C. Assistant principal will have sole authority to look at each occurrence individually and deal with each occurrence depending on the severity of offense.
- D. Campus assistant principal will follow the Student Code of Conduct in all areas not addressed above.

Please note - bus driver will give your child(ren) a Consent Form/Receipt of Handbook form that must be completed, signed and returned to the bus driver within 3 days