

**FORT DODGE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT  
SCHOOL BUS HANDBOOK & RULES**



**“Student Safety Is Our Number One Goal”**

**Director of Transportation – Brad Niemeyer  
515-576-6151**



Please read and review the following with your child(ren). Our goal is to provide each student with a safe ride on activity trips, as well as to and from school. All provisions of the School Discipline Policy and the School Bus Rules will apply to all students transported in a school owned vehicle.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

- Review and discuss the bus rules with your child
- Understand bus stop times are approximate and subject to change without notice. Ensure riders are at their stop 5 minutes before scheduled arrival time
- Supervise bus stop before and after school
- Advise child to follow directions 1st time given
- Understand family's obligation to pay for vandalism caused by child
- Transport large projects/instruments to/from school
- Ensure child understands food and beverage privileges and disposes of trash properly
- Discipline referrals are cumulative for the entire year. They do not begin over each quarter or semester, with the exception that the last 10 days of school referrals will carry over to the next year
- Riders not feeling well should not ride the bus
- Friends of bus riders may not ride the bus if they are not eligible for transportation. Bus eligible friends may ride with signed note from parent/guardian and building principal to be presented to the driver

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS/RIDERS**

- Must get on and off the bus only at their scheduled stop
- Riders must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before standing
- Students who must cross a road to get on/off the bus are required to wait for the driver's hand signal before crossing
- Understand that misbehaving/horseplay can distract the driver
- Remain in seats at all times, facing forward and having feet directly in front of them keeping the center aisle clear at all times
- Only open the emergency exits, doors or windows in an emergency
- Use appropriate language and talk at a classroom level
- No skateboards, rip sticks, snow sleds, trading cards, etc.
- Phones, electronic games or players may be used. Headphones must be used with electronic devices. The school assumes no responsibility if items are damaged or misplaced

**WEAPONS:** Weapons, dangerous objects, "look-a-likes" and other items used as weapons are not allowed in school, on school grounds, at school events or in school vehicles. (Reference Board Policy 500.16)

## **BUS RIDER RULES**

Students will ...

- Obey the driver/associate's directions the first time they are given
- Face the front of the bus and remain seated at all times
- Keep hands, feet and other objects to themselves and out of the aisle
- Use appropriate language and talk at a classroom level
- Demonstrate respect to other students, adults and for property
- Keep the interior of the bus undamaged, clean and free of litter
- Walk when loading at transfer points, schools and bus stops
- Get on and off the bus at their scheduled stop
- Demonstrate appropriate classroom behavior; all classroom rules apply
- Follow all bus rules
- Only drink beverages when the bus is stopped
- Ask before borrowing items from other drivers
- Treat all riders with kindness - no harassing, harming or bullying, teasing, rough-housing, spitting or fighting
- Only consume finger type, convenience or snack foods and/or drinks that belong to them – no sharing

Important things to keep in mind ...

- No sunflower seeds may be eaten on buses
- Beverage containers are required to be made of plastic or a soft-sided material (no glass) and must have a reseal-able cap or lid
- Beverages may only be open when the bus is parked, waiting at a school location or at the transfer point. For safety reasons all containers must be sealed and kept away from the student's face when the bus is in motion
- Food/beverage privileges can be revoked if students are not responsible with these items

The following student behavior guidelines are posted on each bus

- Video Cameras – The Iowa school bus law and Fort Dodge School Board expectations make it necessary that all bus riders follow safety rules. To assist with that, a video camera with audio capability may be used to monitor behavior
- Harassment Policy – The District will not tolerate harassment by any student. Students shall conduct themselves, at all times while in school and related activities, in a manner that provides an atmosphere free from harassment or conduct of a demeaning intent with regard to gender, age, race, creed, color, national origin, religion or disability. Harassment includes both sexual and racial. (Reference Board Policy 500.3)

If misbehavior occurs, the driver/associate will try to stop the behavior with positive management, a verbal warning or by changing the rider's seat. If those strategies do not correct the behavior, the driver could stop the bus and wait for the inappropriate behavior to stop or ask for the rider to be removed mid-route. When a student is removed, a Student Discipline Referral will be written. The driver is required, when possible, to inform the student of the referral and reason for it before the student exits the bus.

#### **Consequences for Student Discipline Referrals \***

- Referral 1: verbal warning, building consequences & parent/guardian notified by director of transportation
- Referral 2: verbal warning, building consequences and parent/guardian notified. A meeting may be held with student, parent/guardian, transportation director and building principal
- Referral 3: 1 week off of bus, building consequences & parent/guardian notified
- Referral 4: 3 weeks off of bus, building consequences & parent/guardian notified
- Referral 5: Removed from the bus for the remainder of the school year & parent/guardian notified

\* If at any time a rider endangers other students or him/herself, or makes it impossible for the driver to complete a safe trip, consequences may be advanced to coincide with the seriousness of the offense.

It is the policy of the FDCSD not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, physical or mental disability, religion, age or marital status in its programs, services and employment practices. If you have questions or grievances related to this policy, please contact Steph Anderson/Kirsten Doebel, Central Administration Office, 104 S 17<sup>th</sup> St., Fort Dodge, IA 50501, or contact the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Midwestern Division, 10220 North Executive Hills Boulevard, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Kansas City, MO 64153-1367.

The District's Compliance Coordinator for Affirmative Action is Robert L. Hughes, Assistant Superintendent. He can be reached at the Central Administration Office, 104 S 17<sup>th</sup> St., Fort Dodge, IA 50501.

The District's designated Investigator of Physical/Sexual Abuse of Students by school employees is Steph Anderson/Kirsten Doebel. They can be reached at Central Administration Office, 104 S 17<sup>th</sup> St., Fort Dodge, IA 50501. The alternate is Corey Moody. He can be reached at Fort Dodge Senior High at 819 N 25<sup>th</sup> St., Fort Dodge, IA 50501.

The District's officer for harassment complaints and allegations is Steph Anderson/Kirsten Doebel. They can be reached at Central Administration Office, 104 S 17<sup>th</sup> St., Fort Dodge, IA 50501.