

RSD Transportation Patron & Student Handbook

Introduction

The Russellville School District Transportation Department provides safe transportation for students to and from school every day. Our staff is committed to providing students with a safe enjoyable environment while they ride to school and back home. RSD has 70+ buses in our fleet that our trained drivers utilize each day and our shop personnel keep clean and in top working condition. Our district covers 99 square miles that we serve by running 45 routes simultaneously each morning and afternoon. We also run trips and shuttles throughout the day to total over 250 runs per week, focused on keeping your students safe.

Safety

Safety is our number one priority. Our staff trains every year to ensure they are prepared to provide the safest environment possible while transporting students. Outside of physically driving the bus the number one variable in bus safety is student behavior. Bus rules and expectations are in place to help ensure the safety of all students.

Buses are designed using compartmentalization. This means that sitting down in the seat and facing forward is equivalent to wearing a seatbelt in a car. A quiet bus ensures that the driver can hear what is going on around them and they are not distracted by the noise. Every second a driver or staff member spends having to monitor students not following expectations is a second that their eyes are not focused on the road and driving.

We appreciate your partnership with us to ensure bus rules are followed to provide the safest most enjoyable transportation possible.

Some items that create a safety concern are not allowed on the bus.

- Band instruments too big to be held in lap - absolutely no tubas or baritones.
- Glass containers
- Flowers
- Open food and drink containers
- Balloons
- Any item that can not be secured in the students lap
- Speakers
- All items must remain in the backpack

Security

Every bus is equipped with eight high definition cameras that record both audio and video to help us ensure the safety of our students. The system allows us to accurately diagnose issues that arise on the bus and allows us to address those responsible to make better choices while riding to help increase student safety.

Expectations

Russellville School District considers the bus as an extension of the school and classroom. The same expectations are in place on the bus as in the classroom. When students do not follow the rules and meet the expectation outlined then they create an unsafe environment that can have an impact on other students.

A driver's first responsibility is to drive the bus safely. Please consider they are driving a heavy commercial vehicle safely while supervising 60-80 students through a rear view mirror to ensure a safe environment for your student. There are very few places to safely pull over a bus to address student misbehavior that does not put the bus in a greater risk of an accident. That is why your support and students meeting the expectations are so important in ensuring the safety of all students.

School bus transportation is a service RSD takes pride in offering its students but please keep in mind that transportation is a privilege not a requirement and riding privileges can be revoked by district administration.

Bus Stop Creation

In addition to student safety the 2nd most important task of the Transportation Department is to develop routes to service students safely and efficiently. Routes are developed to provide the safest most economical operation of our fleet. Every attempt is made to limit the distance students must travel to their designated bus stop location.

NOTE: Transportation will not drop any student at any address unless the address is in the Student information System, eSchool, unless they have a [Permission to Ride to Alternate Address](#) form signed by their building principal. Contact the school when these occasions arise and they will assist you.

Below is a list of a few considerations used in developing bus stops per our stop procedures;

- Student Safety.
- The Walk Zone will be 2 blocks from any school. Exemptions are at the Transportation Director's discretion.
- K-2 grade students must be met by a guardian or arrangements must have been made with the guardian that an authorized sibling is responsible for the student at the stop. This is called an eye-to-eye transfer and can be requested for students 3rd grade and above. Situations where this procedure is not followed the student will be returned to the building or the transportation office for pick-up. Multiple violations will result in loss of riding privileges.
- An adult must receive students at motels/hotels.
- We will not create stops at businesses or organizations.
- Students will only be dropped off with individuals listed in eSchool.

- Students will only be dropped at the address listed in Russellville School District Student Information System, eSchool.

Special needs routes - students with transportation on IEP - including above list plus;

- These student stops will be located at the residence.
- Must have a parent present at stop.
- Make wheelchair considerations.

ALE and SLC - students in these placements - including above list plus;

- These students are provided with specific transportation and are not allowed to board regular routes or shuttles.

Transportation is not provided for the following students;

- Out of zone elementary students: If your student attends an elementary school other than where they are zoned then it is the guardian's responsibility to transport the student to school.
- Out of district school choice: we are glad you have chosen RSD but it is your responsibility to get them to the building they are attending. If you have special circumstances please contact the transportation office.

The Transportation Director is the only person who can alter or establish stops and routes. Administration reserves the right to change any aspect of the routes when deemed necessary.

Bus Stop Procedures

NOTE: Transportation will not drop any student at any address unless the address is in the Student information System, eSchool, unless they have a Permission to Ride to Alternate Address form signed by their building principal. Contact the school when these occasions arise and they will assist you.

The following stop procedures are vital in ensuring students safety.

NOTE: Do not ask the driver to let you off the bus at any place other than your regular stop. He is not authorized to do this.

Boarding, students should...

- be at the stop 10 mins before the scheduled time.
- be accompanied by a guardian or approved older sibling at all times if they are kindergarten through second grade or if requested by the parent to be eye-to-eye transfer.
- remain in a safe place and stand at least 10 ft from the road or as far as possible.
- remain calm and do not approach the bus until they have opened the door and signaled you to approach.
- not horseplay at the bus stop.
- load the bus orderly and quickly while following the driver's instructions.

Exiting, students should...

- have a guardian or approved older sibling at the stop waiting if they are kindergarten through second grade or if requested by the parent to be eye-to-eye transfer.
- have a guardian at the stop 10 mins before the scheduled time if they are an eye-to-eye transfer.
- remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop and the brake is set.
- unload the bus orderly and quickly while following the driver's instructions.
- not enter the driver area until the driver has opened the door and students are instructed to exit the bus.
- exit the bus and move immediately 5 ft away so the driver can see students clearly.
- stop if crossing the street in front of the bus until the driver has signaled them it is safe to cross.
- not horseplay at the bus stop.
- not check the mail after exiting the bus until it has left.

Bus Laws

Below are a few laws that many people do not know:

- School bus transportation is a service RSD takes pride in offering its students but please keep in mind that transportation is a privilege not a requirement and riding privileges can be revoked by district administration.
- Individuals must not obstruct or delay any school bus.
- Individuals must not board any bus unless they are assigned to that bus.
- Adults are not allowed to board any bus for any reason.
- Individuals must not check mailboxes until the bus has left the area.
- Individuals must be seated properly at all times while the bus is in motion.
- A school choice or out of zone guardian is responsible for the students transportation to school.

Student Bus Rules

Student Handbook rules apply as the bus is an extension of the classroom and part of a students school day. Below is the statement from the [Student Handbook](#): See handbook for more information

The District's Student Code of conduct applies to students while traveling to and from school or to and from a school activity to the same extent as if the student were on school grounds. Appropriate disciplinary actions may be taken against commuting students who violate the District's Student Code of Conduct. The preceding paragraph also applies to student conduct on school buses. Students shall be instructed in safe riding practices. The driver of a school bus shall not operate the school bus until every passenger is seated. In addition to other disciplinary measures provided for violation of the District's Student Code of Conduct, the student's bus transportation privileges may be suspended or terminated for violations of the Student Code of Conduct related to bus behavior. Students are eligible to receive district bus transportation if they meet the District's requirements for riding a bus. The transportation to and from school of students who have lost their bus transportation privileges is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian...

The list below is for clarification on bus-specific situations that may vary from the school handbook's expectations.

1. Anything that distracts the driver will not be tolerated and is a safety issue.
2. Only items needed for academics at school are allowed on the bus. Note: baritones or tubas are not allowed on the bus, no exceptions.
3. No food and drinks shall be consumed on the bus. An excessive mess will result in a \$50.00 restitution and a suspension. Riding privileges are revoked until restitution is paid after the mandatory suspension.
4. There is to be no profanity or vulgar language on the bus.
5. Ride calmly, quietly, and correctly. Anything else is a safety concern, including blocking the aisle.
6. Any act of vandalism will result in a \$100.00 restitution fine for each item vandalized including messing with safety equipment. Riding privileges are revoked until restitution is paid after the mandatory suspension. Three acts of vandalism in two years will result in permanently being removed from RSD transportation.
7. Bullying, physical contact, or verbal abuse will not be tolerated in any form on Russellville School District buses.

Discipline

Every student is treated fairly and equitably when receiving consequences for discipline. Our procedure is to follow a firm but progressive approach to discipline. The Transportation Director can revoke riding privileges beyond a 10 day suspension based on the severity of the incident(s).

Discipline Expectations;

Process:

1. A report must be filled out to launch an investigation. Incidences are handled in order of severity.
 - a. Who fills out the report?
 - i. Building Administrators - based on student report or patron.
 - ii. Drivers
 - iii. Transportation Office - based on student report or patron.
2. Transportation will investigate and collect evidence of the incident.
3. Transportation will decide the course of action for consequences to be implemented.
4. Transportation will contact the parent and explain the incident and consequences.
5. Transportation will send a report to the building administrator to be given to the student to notify them of their consequence.

Transportation will track incidences and follow procedures consistently and equitably for all students.

Consequences:

At any time the Transportation Director can determine any step can be skipped based on the severity of the incident.

Grades - K-4

1. Bus driver intervention (redirections, warnings, or assigned seating), verbal warning from Transportation Director, and/or a parent contact.
2. Written warning from Transportation Director and parent contact.
3. First suspension is 3 days and parent contact.
4. Second suspension is 5 days and parent contact.
5. Third suspension is 10 days and parent contact.
6. Fourth suspension is for the remainder of the year.

Grades - 5-12

1. Bus driver intervention (redirections, warnings, or assigned seating), verbal warning from Transportation Director, and/or a parent contact.
2. Written warning from Transportation Director and parent contact.
3. First suspension is 5 days and parent contact.
4. Second suspension is 10 days and parent contact.
5. Third suspension is for the remainder of the year.

Severity Clause: A student who distracts a bus driver from his/her responsibility of safely driving the bus or who engages in conduct endangering other students such as but not limited to fighting, smoking, or disrespect toward the bus driver will receive an immediate suspension from riding if a severe infraction occurs. Suspension time for a severe infraction could result in the denial of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the year. Suspension includes all activities, trips, or other events.

Specific Acts Details:

Vaping

An automatic 10 day suspension and it counts as a step on the scale above. Two vaping incidents is a removal from the bus for the remainder of the year.

Vandalism

Grades K-4 Vandalism

\$100.00 per item vandalized, mandatory 5 day bus suspension, and suspension extends until restitution is paid. A second offense will result in restitution and suspension for the year and the student cannot ride the next year until restitution is paid. Suspension includes all activities and trips. Three acts of vandalism in a 24 month period will result in loss of riding privileges permanently.

Grades 5-12 Vandalism

\$100.00 per item vandalized, mandatory 10 day bus suspension, and suspension extends until restitution is paid. A second offense will result in restitution and suspension for the year and the student cannot ride the next year until

restitution is paid. Suspension includes all activities and trips. Three acts of vandalism in a 24 month period will result in loss of riding privileges permanently.

Excessive Food Mess

Grades K-12 Excessive Food Mess

\$50.00 cleaning restitution, mandatory 5 day bus suspension, and suspension extends until restitution is paid. A second offense will result in restitution and suspension for the year and the student cannot ride the next year until restitution is paid. Suspension includes all activities and trips. Three acts of Excessive Food Mess in a 24 month period will result in loss of riding privileges permanently.

Concerns

Students will always be treated equitably and with respect. If a student has a concern with something happening on the bus or stop they need to report it to the driver immediately. If the student is not comfortable reporting it to the driver they should report it to their building administrator immediately. RSD can not help unless we are aware of the situation. When reporting please consider providing the following information to help us investigate accurately and with efficacy:

- The reporter's name and contact information.
- The names of all individuals involved or descriptions if names are not known.
- Which bus or stop, shuttle bus, or route bus.
- Where on the bus, front-middle-back-driver side-passenger side
- Approximate time or section of route.

If the guardian has any concerns please report to the driver, building principal, or Transportation Office as soon as possible so we can work together to resolve the situation.