

**Safety First**  
**For all Passengers**



**Bellevue Community Schools**

**Transportation Student Handbook**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

At Bellevue Community Schools, safety is our paramount concern from the time your children leave home until they are safely delivered back to your door at the end of the day.

Our bus drivers and I take pride in our safety record. To help us keep order on the buses and to ensure safe transportation, we need and appreciate your cooperation in helping your children understand the behavior that is expected of them as well as the consequences of violating district transportation policies.

Bellevue Community Schools provides bus transportation as a convenience and as a service to our district families. Riding a school bus can be revoked if a student engages in improper behavior that endangers the bus and its passengers. If your student loses their riding privilege, the parent is responsible to transport the student to and from school.

Bellevue Community Schools Board of Education reviews and approves this handbook annually.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (269) 763-9368 from 6:00 – 8:30 am and 2:00 – 4:30 pm.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation. Working together, we can ensure a continued record of safety and success!

Sincerely,

***Geoffrey Boden,***  
***Transportation Supervisor***

## **FACE MASKS**

All students and staff must wear face masks while on school buses. This is a Federal Mask Mandate that must be followed.

## **SCHOOLS OF CHOICE STUDENTS**

### **Section 105 and 105C, Michigan Department of Education**

Under Section 105 and 105C of the State School Code, the Bellevue Community Schools are not required to provide transportation to out-of-district schools-of-choice students.

However, in an effort to cooperate and accommodate our schools-of-choice students, arrangements can be made with the Transportation Office to transport such students from an existing bus stop within the district.

Families who have chosen Bellevue Community Schools as their school-of-choice and who desire district transportation should contact your child's school for the necessary forms.

Children must already be enrolled in the district and all transportation forms must be completed before students can be permitted to ride a district bus.

## **VIDEO CAMERA POLICY**

Transportation staff may use a monitor camera mounted on the interior of the school buses as a teaching tool for the bus drivers to learn and improve safety, possible bus conduct reports, and behavior management techniques.

Videos are confidential and remain the property of Bellevue Community Schools under authorization of the Transportation Supervisor. The videos are **NOT** for public use and not to be viewed by parents.

Security and viewing of the tapes is the responsibility of the Transportation Supervisor.

## **GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNING BUS STOPS**

While it is the goal of Bellevue Community Schools Transportation department to transport each and every eligible student as close to their pick-up and drop-off location as possible, it is simply not legally possible nor efficient in operations or in practice to do so.

Designated bus stops are established and evaluated each year. These stops are based upon state law (P.A. 187 - governs the safest pick up and drop-off locations), the known eligible registrations, and our attempt to limit a student's walking distance to their designated stop. These selected bus stop locations are the safest for

your child. A bus might not be able to go down some roads/turnarounds and may not be the most convenient, but they are intended to be the safest. The transportation department is legally bound to create and establish the safest bus stops. We intentionally do so for your child's benefit.

## **SCHOOL BUS SAFETY RULES & STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY**

Improper student behavior on a bus or at a bus stop can cause a driver to be distracted and endanger the bus and all its passengers. Proper behavior is required at all times. The following guidelines and procedures have been established to assist bus drivers in maintaining discipline and ensuring safe travel. The list is only a sampling and is not intended to cover every incidence or example of improper behavior.

1. Students being transported are under the authority of the bus driver.
2. Students are not to engage in fighting, wrestling, or other boisterous activities while on the bus.
3. Students will use emergency exits only when there is an emergency or when directed to do so by the bus driver.
4. Students waiting for the bus at their designed stop are to remain off the traveled portion of the road.
5. Students must wait until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver signals it is safe before boarding or leaving the bus.
6. Students are not to bring animals, weapons, or other potentially dangerous materials on the bus.
7. Students should not bring any item that is too large to safely be transported while held in the student's lap or placed under the seat.
8. Students are to remain seated at all times. This means sitting erect with both feet on the floor. Standing on the bus while in motion is NOT permitted.
9. Drivers are authorized to assign seats and students must comply with this arrangement.
10. Students will not extend their hands, arms, head, or other parts of their body out of the windows.
11. Students are not permitted to throw anything inside or outside the bus.
12. **Elementary students (PreK-3) need to have an adult at the stop seen by the driver before they can get off the bus. Driver retains discretion. No exceptions.**
13. There is no eating or drinking permitted on the bus, with the exception of water bottles. If a student has a special health need, contact the transportation office.
14. The use and possession of tobacco in any form, alcohol, lighters/matches, and any controlled substances are not permitted on the bus.
15. Students are to help keep the bus clean and are not to damage school property. Any vandalism needs to be reported to the bus driver and the Transportation Office. Students responsible for vandalizing the bus will be subject to disciplinary action and financial restitution to the district for the damages.
16. Students are to be courteous to the bus driver and fellow students. There will be no swearing, teasing or bullying.
17. School dress codes apply on the school bus.
18. Students must maintain an acceptable noise level while riding on the bus.
19. Students must have a note from the school office when not riding the regularly assigned bus.
20. Students are not permitted to go to the mailbox, when the bus is at its designated stop.
21. These rules are not intended to be complete. They only serve as a guide.
22. Only enrolled Bellevue Community Schools students are allowed to be transported.
23. All PM route students must use a "jump seat" to aid drivers in the correct student drop point location.

## **CELL PHONES**

Cell phones and other lighted electronic devices are extremely distracting, especially when it is dark. **They are not allowed to be on during hours of darkness.** If students choose to use their cell phone as a listening device, they must use earbuds. Students are prohibited from using their cell phones as a video device, face timing, taking photos of other students or viewing inappropriate material. Any violation of this policy may result in time off the bus/and or student's phone being confiscated by the driver, and will need to be picked up by a parent at the Transportation office.

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENTS**

1. Students are expected to be at the bus stop at **least 5 minutes** prior to their designated pick up time.
2. If your child misses the bus, DO NOT chase the bus or flash your automobile headlights at the bus. Bus drivers are not authorized to stop. Take your child to school or go to another designated bus stop where the bus has not yet arrived.
3. Accept joint responsibility for proper conduct of your children on the bus or at the bus stop.
4. Inform the Transportation Office when your child will be absent from school for an extended period of time.
5. Provide transportation to and from school when your child's bus riding privileges have been suspended.
6. In the morning, have students at the place designated, ready to board the bus. The driver is responsible for the maintenance of a schedule and **CANNOT** wait for tardy pupils. (ie...student is waiting for the bus, NOT the bus waiting for student).
7. If your child/children are the only students at a bus stop and are not riding the bus, the Transportation Office must be notified prior to the designated stop time.

## **FIELD AND SPORT TRIP POLICIES**

- All of our bus rules and consequences apply.
- Coaches, teachers, and chaperones are jointly responsible with the bus driver for the student's behavior on the bus. Failure to comply or in extreme circumstances, could result in early termination of trip for all.
- Eating and/or drinking may be permitted at the discretion of the bus driver.

## **BUS TRANSPORTATION DISCIPLINE CODE**

This code lists five disciplinary classifications, which directly relate to the overall smooth operation of and safety of all passengers on our school busses.

Conduct detrimental to the normal transportation operation affects the well being of every person on the bus. The classifications listed include the most frequent offenses. Any behavioral situations not included in the code will be resolved accordingly.

### **FIVE DISCIPLINARY CLASSIFICATIONS**

#### **CLASSIFICATION I** **DISORDERLY** **CONDUCT**

Hair pulling, name calling, loudness,  
rowdiness, littering, necking, hands  
on other people, spitting, or biting  
No eating or drinking.  
No gum chewing, giving  
food to others.

#### **FIRST OFFENSE**

Notification of parents  
and building principal.

Warning issued.

Up to 2 days suspension.

#### **SECOND OFFENSE**

Notification of parents  
and building principal.

Up to 5 days suspension

#### **CLASSIFICATION II** **IMPROPER RIDING** **PROCEDURES**

Any part of body out of windows,  
failure to remain in seats, sitting  
backward or sideways on seats, in aisle ways,  
kneeling on seats, standing on bus  
climbing over seats, late getting to bus,  
not using a jump seat.

#### **FIRST OFFENSE**

Notification of parents  
and building principal.

Warning issued.

Up to 2 days suspension

#### **SECOND OFFENSE**

Notification of parents  
and building principal.

Up to 5 days suspension.

CLASSIFICATION III  
MISCONDUCT  
RELATED TO PUBLIC  
& PRIVATE PROPERTY:  
PERSONAL SAFETY

Theft, bullying, fighting around  
or on busses. Smoking, vaping, lighter, alcohol  
beverages, drugs, (in possession or use).  
Either authorized or unauthorized public  
urination. (bio waste hazard).  
Indecent exposure.

FIRST OFFENSE

Notification of parents  
and building principal.

Suspension up to 10 days  
and possible expulsion.  
Police may be notified  
Parent conference required.

SECOND OFFENSE

Notification of parents  
and building principal.

Suspension up to 10 days  
from the bus. Length of the  
Suspension determined by  
the Transportation Supervisor  
and building principal.  
Parent conference required.

CLASSIFICATION IV  
DISRESPECT AND  
DEFIANCE OF  
AUTHORITY

Profanity or vulgar language to drivers or students  
throwing or shooting objects, extortion. Not  
taking action directed by driver

FIRST OFFENSE

Notification of parents  
and building principal.

Suspension up to 5 days  
Parent conference required.

SECOND OFFENSE

Notification of parents and  
building principal.

Suspension of up to 10 days.  
Length of the suspension deter-  
mined by the building principal  
and Transportation Director.  
Parent conference required.

CLASSIFICATION V  
DESTRUCTION AND  
VANDALISM OF  
SCHOOL OWNED  
PROPERTY AND THE  
FOLLOWING:

FIRST OFFENSE

Notification of parents  
and building principal.

Restitution shall be made and  
up to 10 days suspension and

SECOND OFFENSE

Notification of parents,  
building principal and  
police.

Restitution shall be made and  
up to 10 days suspension and

Weapons (possession or use),  
seat destruction, markers/ink, aggressive  
physical action towards school personnel.  
Cracking/breaking windows.

possible expulsion.  
Police may be notified.  
Parent conference required

Possible expulsion.  
Police may be notified.  
Parent conference required.

- Additional penalties for offenses beyond the second occurrence and serious nature of any offense will be determined by the driver, Transportation Supervisor and the school administrators.
- Violations as listed above may affect a student's transportation to and from extra-curricular activities and sporting events.
- **DISCIPLINARY** actions occurred on the bus may result in action by building administrators.

## **NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS**

Parents are provided with a bus conduct slip in writing. One copy is for the parents, and one for the transportation office. The student is given the report who in turn gives it to his/her parents. The student will not be permitted to ride the bus until the signed report is returned to the driver. The signature of a parent or legal guardian is required to insure the driver that the parent is aware of the problem. Phone calls or personal conferences are another means of parent confirmation.

## **SUPERVISION**

Bus drivers shall assume responsibility for supervision of students on the bus and in the immediate area. If they feel unable to resolve the situation, they are to secure the name of the pupils involved, date, time and place of action, and nature of incident. This information may be used for investigation by the driver, building principal, and Transportation Supervisor.

## **EXCLUSION FROM THE BUS**

A student denied transportation for disciplinary reasons is not automatically excluded from school. Continued attendance at school is expected. Serious bus discipline incidents may result in transportation and school suspension. Situations which involve students attending school in another school district will be reviewed by the bus driver, Transportation Supervisor, building principal and superintendent.



### **EXTENDED ABSENCE**

**Certain stops on a bus route may be eliminated if no student rides for three (3) consecutive days. Parents need to notify the Transportation Supervisor in order to resume bus service.**

### **QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS**

A parent may call the Transportation department for information concerning a transportation matter. The number is (269) 763-9368 from 6:00 am – 8:30 am and 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm.

***Thank you for your support and cooperation to maintain the safest transportation to and from school!***