

Jim Thorpe Area School District Transportation Discipline Plan

*Every time a student violates a bus rule raises the chance the driver is distracted.
Every time the driver is distracted raises the chance of an accident happening.
Therefore, every time a student violates a bus rule, he or she directly raises the chance
of the bus being in an accident!*

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES ON THE BUS

The Jim Thorpe Area School District employs a fair and consistent plan for addressing misconduct on school buses. Bus transportation is provided by the District but is not a mandate and thus can be denied. Appropriate behavior on the buses that provide transportation for students is important for two reasons. This bus discipline code has been developed with these two purposes in mind:

1. Inappropriate behavior can result in safety hazards not only for the individual student, but also for other students on the bus.
2. *Socially unacceptable behavior can infringe on the rights of other individuals.* Since the bus and its safe operation are the responsibility of the driver, he/she is also fully responsible for its riders, over which he/she has the same authority as a classroom teacher.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN:

Students who choose to misbehave will be issued a bus discipline referral by the driver. The specific infraction will be listed. The report will then be turned over to the building principal or designee for disciplinary action. The discipline steps listed below are the ones normally followed to correct inappropriate behavior.

Note: If a student is suspended from the bus, his/her parents are required to provide his/her transportation to and from school during the entire period of suspension. Bus suspensions will build toward the student's suspension sequence. Students who are absent from school as a result of the bus suspension will be considered illegally absent.

Minor Disruptive Behavior

For minor disruptive behavior such as legs in aisle, sitting incorrectly in the seat, eating or drinking on the bus, noise distractions, or other inappropriate and distracting behavior, the following actions will be taken:

First Offense

Verbal warning by the driver.

Second Offense

The driver will fill out and give a bus misconduct referral to the principal or designee. The driver may place the student in an assigned seat for a minimum of three (3) days up to the remainder of the year. Bus drivers have the authority to assign seats to any and all students for any length of time for any reason. The principal or designee, notifying the parent of the driver's action and student behavior problems, will make parent contact. Disciplinary actions may include a one (1) to three (3) day bus suspension.

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Third Offense

The driver will fill out and give a bus misconduct referral to the principal or designee.

The principal or designee will notify the parent and conference with the student at school. Disciplinary actions may include bus suspension for three (3) to five (5) days or other appropriate disciplinary actions. Parents will be notified of all bus suspensions.

Fourth Offense

The driver will fill out and give a bus misconduct referral to the principal or designee. The above procedures will be followed with disciplinary actions that may include a five (5) day to ten (10) bus suspension. Parents will be notified of all bus suspensions.

Fifth Offense

A recommendation for the termination of bus-riding privileges may be made to the parent and school. Parents will be notified of all bus suspensions.

Major Behavior Problems

Fighting, bullying, vandalism, throwing objects in the bus or out bus windows, profanity or obscene gestures, disrespect toward the driver or other students, and any other distractions or disruptions to a driver may result in bus suspension or termination.

LEVEL I

These offenses include, but are **not limited to the following**:

1. Littering on the bus. Spitting.
2. Moving from seat to seat or standing while the bus is in motion.
3. Failure to comply with the reasonable request of the driver.
4. Abusive language/gestures to others.
5. Tussling/physical contact.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

First offense

The driver will fill out and give a bus misconduct referral to the principal or designee. Parents are notified, student conferenced, and a possible one (1) to three (3) day bus suspension.

Second offense

The driver will fill out and give a bus misconduct referral to the principal or designee. Notification/parent conference or phone call, bus privileges suspended for three (3) to five (5) days.

Third offense

The driver will fill out and give a bus misconduct referral to the principal or designee. Notification/parent conference or phone call, bus privileges suspended for ten (10) days.

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Fourth offense

A fourth offense may result in bus privilege being suspended for extended periods of time, possibly for the remainder of the year. A student's privileges may be suspended with the first/second offense if the Principal feels that the incident justifies such action.

*****Note:**

If a student is suspended from the bus, his/her parents are required to provide his/her transportation to and from school during the entire period of suspension. Bus suspensions will count toward the student's suspension sequence. Students who are absent from school as a result of the bus suspension will be considered illegally absent.

LEVEL II

These offenses put the safety on the bus and its passengers in immediate danger. They include, but are **not limited to the following**:

Definitions:

1. Vandalism.
2. Insubordination defined as blatant/overt act of disrespect to the driver and/or continued non-compliance to driver requests.
3. Fighting.
4. Smoking (possession or use of tobacco, smoke or smokeless).
5. Entering or leaving the bus via the emergency exit without permission.
6. Putting the head or other parts of the body outside of the bus.
7. Throwing things on the bus or out of the bus
8. Interfering with the bus (example: failure to properly exit the bus; putting things under the wheels; hitting the side of the bus; tampering with equipment).
9. Harassing, aggravating, or hazing other students or the bus driver.
10. Behavior in a manner that distracts the driver such as yelling, shouting, screaming, pounding on the walls, floors, or ceiling of the bus.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

First offense

Notification/parent conference; bus privileges suspended for five (5) to ten (10) days. In the case of smoking, disorderly conduct, or harassment, charges will be filed with the District Magistrate.

Second offense

Notification/parent conference; bus privileges suspended for ten (10) days. Subsequent offenses may result in bus privilege being suspended for extended periods of time, possibly for the remainder of the year.

LEVEL III

These offenses are of extreme danger and include, but **are not limited to**:

1. Possession, consumption, sale, distribution, transfer, or being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol according to District policy.

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2. Physical attack on the bus driver.
3. Hitting the driver with a thrown object.
4. Tampering with or operating the emergency door except in cases of emergency.
5. Leaving or entering the bus via the emergency exit while the bus is in motion.
6. Tampering with the bus controls.
7. Endangering health, safety, and welfare of students and/or the bus driver.
8. Possession of weapons as per district weapons policy.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Notification/parent conference. Level III violations will be a ten (10) day to one year suspension from school district transportation plus suspension or expulsion.

The above policy does not in any way abrogate the right of the school district, the bus company, and/or the bus driver to charge for the cost of repairs, or to file civil or criminal charges before the appropriate legal authorities.