

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We must have your understanding and cooperation in order to maximize the safety of all students while passengers in school buses. Important procedures and regulations exist which promote and help ensure the safety of each occupant of the school bus. Please discuss the following important information with your student(s). Then, complete the form at the bottom of this page and return it to your student's bus driver. If you have more than one student, it will be necessary to fill out a separate form for each student who rides in Aztec Municipal School District's (AMSD) buses.

Riding the School Bus is a Privilege not a Right

Students who persist in violating these rules and regulations risk the loss of their riding privileges. In the event of short or long term suspension of riding privileges, it will become the parent's or guardian's responsibility to transport their student. (AMSD School Board Policy E-1950)

School Bus Driver Authority

Bus drivers have the same authority on the bus as a classroom teacher has in the classroom. Students who ride the bus are under the direct supervision of the driver. When the bus driver reports a bus infraction, the procedures listed below will be followed. Campus administrators retain the right to use discretion interpreting policy. Consequences may vary depending on the severity of the infraction. When a Campus Administrator receives a school bus incident report, the administrator may use the following disciplinary plan:

- 1st Offense:** A warning to the student with an issued report to the parent/guardian. It is expected the parent/guardian will work with the student to help prevent a recurrence.
- 2nd Offense:** Disciplinary action will be taken at the discretion of the principal, depending on the seriousness of the infraction. A verbal or written report to the parent/guardian will be made.
- 3rd Offense:** Suspension of riding privileges will result. The length of suspension will depend on the seriousness of the infraction. A report to the parent/guardian will be made.

Please note a different sequence in handling an incident may be selected by the school or transportation department.

Kindergarten and Pre K Students

For safety, kindergarten students must be met at the bus stop by a parent/guardian, unless an older sibling rides the same bus and accompanies them home. Kindergarten students will not be left alone. They will be returned to the school or the transportation department and it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pick up the child.

Unauthorized Riders, Stops, or Boarders

Any student not getting off at their designated stop will be required to have a parent contact the transportation office or have a note from their parent/guardian, signed and dated by a principal or office staff and then given to the driver. This should be used on a short term/temporary basis only (not to exceed two days). Please contact the transportation department for a longer term arrangement.

Bus drivers will not accept unsigned notes, phone calls, or text messages authorizing them to drop off students at a point other than the student's regular stop. If there is an emergency or a late transportation change, arrangements need to be made through the Transportation Office.

Students will be picked up and dropped off only at their assigned stops.

The safety of all our riders and staff must be maintained at all times. If any member of the general public, parent/guardian, or any un-assigned student enters the bus without driver permission, it will be considered a trespass of AMSD property and law enforcement and or legal consequences may be pursued. (AMSD School Board Policy K-1700 - Public Conduct on School Property)

For any questions concerning a student's transportation needs, please contact the Aztec Schools' Transportation Office located at 1118 W. Aztec Blvd., Aztec NM, 87410 or call 505-599-4303. For further information, you may view the AMSD school board policies at www.aztecschools.com Parents or Guardians please read and review the information printed on both sides of this letter with your student(s). After reviewing this information with your student(s), please fully complete the form below including both you and your student's signature. Please detach and return the completed section to your student's bus driver. Keep the upper portion for your and your student's reference.

2023-24 School Year Student / Contact information listed below to be returned to the driver within 3-5 days of receipt or transportation privileges will cease. (Please print neatly)

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ Bus Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Phone: _____

Morning Pickup Address: _____

Afternoon Drop off Address: _____

Other Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Any allergies/medical condition you want us to be aware of: _____

Please initial or check the following:

_____ **I understand** that failure to comply with bus safety procedures and rules may include, but not be limited to, loss of student transportation privileges.

_____ **I understand** that severe infractions (Ex; possession of weapons, arson, assault/battery, bullying, harassment, vandalism) will include, but not be limited to, short or long term suspension or termination of student transportation privileges.

_____ **I understand** that, for the safety of all occupants of the bus, **no person (adult or non-student) may board the bus without the driver's permission.** That person will face consequences which may include, but not be limited to, law enforcement involvement, legal consequence and / or trespassing charges.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Seating Assignments

The school bus driver will assign seats to students. The driver has the authority to reassign seats at will if he or she deems it necessary. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the driver of issues that may need to be addressed by adjusting the current seating arrangement. All students must cooperate with the driver's requests.

Bullying and Harassment

Any method of bullying or other types of harassment will not be tolerated on our school buses and will be dealt with immediate consequences. Students are responsible for communicating with the driver, or other school personnel, if this type of behavior is happening on the bus.

Vandalism

Vandalism such, as but not limited to, tearing or cutting seats, breaking windows, dismantling seats, writing on a bus surface, etc., will be reported to the school administrator and a "Criminal Damage to Property" report will be filed with the Aztec Police Department. Students are encouraged to report any damage to seats or to other parts of the bus to the driver. Identified students(s) will be charged for the repairs and face short or long term bus suspension.

School Bus Rules

1. Follow the driver's directions promptly and respectfully.
2. Food, candy, gum, sunflower seeds, drinks and litter will not be allowed on the bus.
3. Large items will not be allowed on the bus. Items must fit under the seat or in the student's lap.
4. Glass objects, skateboards or balloons are not allowed on the bus.
5. Students must remember that being careless not only endangers their own safety, but also endangers the safety of others.
6. Eligible bus students are only to ride the bus that serves their designated bus stop.
7. On roads with multiple lanes, students are to load and unload on the side of the road on which they live. No student is to cross the roadway to another loading zone.
8. Students should never stand or play in the road while they are waiting for the bus. Students shall use the sidewalks to walk to the bus stop.
9. For safety consideration, students must be at their assigned bus stop five (5) minutes before the scheduled stop time.
10. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the doors are opened before approaching the bus.
11. Use the handrail. Be careful that no clothing or belongings get caught on the handrail.
12. Sit in assigned seats, facing forward, feet on the floor, and speak in a normal tone of voice.
13. Students are not to carry on unnecessary conversations with the driver while the bus is in motion.
14. Tobacco or any illegal products are not permitted on the bus. This includes matches and lighters.
15. Students must remain seated at all times unless getting on or off the bus. Students must keep the aisle clear at all times.
16. Students must occupy the seat assigned to them by a school official or the bus driver.
17. Students should not place any body part out of bus windows.
18. Students will not be permitted to throw any item on the bus or out of any window.
19. Students will not be allowed to bring any type of animal, insect or reptile on the bus.
20. Students who must cross the road shall pass **in front** of the bus and not behind the bus. Students shall cross the road only when the driver signals that all is clear.
21. Students must refrain from handling emergency exits except when an emergency exists.
22. Students must remain a safe distance from buses in loading zones when buses are entering or leaving the loading area. Pushing and crowding toward buses as they enter or leave loading zones will not be tolerated. For safety reasons, once the bus leaves the loading zone, the bus will not stop for students.
23. Unacceptable language will not be tolerated on the bus.
24. Horseplay, pushing, tripping and fighting will not be tolerated.
25. Once the student has boarded the bus at the school, he/she will not be allowed off the bus until it arrives at the student's designated bus stop, unless approved by the school principal or teacher.
26. Firearms, knives, explosives or any other dangerous objects are not allowed on the bus.
27. Any student not getting off at their designated stop will be required to have a parent contact the transportation office or have a note from their parent/guardian, signed and dated by a principal or office staff and then given to the driver. This should be used on a short term/temporary basis only (not to exceed two days). Please contact the transportation department for a longer term arrangement.
28. All school buses are AMSD property and all applicable student behavior rules and appropriate consequences outlined in the AMSD Student Behavior Handbook will apply. (*AMSD Student Behavior Handbook Section 2.1.B or 5.8.1, AMSD School Board Policy E-2450 and J-2450*)
29. All students are required to use their student ID scan card to scan on and off the bus every time they ride the bus.

Student ID Scan Cards

This year students will be given ID scan cards early in the school year. Students will be required to scan on and off the bus every day they ride. This is to assist with student tracking and accountability. Again, the use of the scan cards is **required** if a student wants to ride the bus. If a student continues to not have their swipe card, parent/guardian will be notified and a suspension of riding privileges may result. In the event student loses the ID card, the ID card will be replaced at no cost for the first two occurrences. For each additional ID card after that, the student will be charged a \$2 fee.

