

SCHOOL BUS



Bus Rider's Handbook





Dear Parents:

Our goal in the Transportation Department is to provide safe and efficient transportation to and from school for all students attending the Laredo Independent School District.

Please take the time to read this very important Bus Rider's Handbook. It explains regulations, gives procedures, and provides useful information designed to render the best transportation service possible to your children.

If you should have any questions or need assistance, please feel free to contact me or any other member in the Transportation Department at 956-273-1200.

Sincerely,
Alexis C. Solis
Transportation Director

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Hector J. Garcia

President

District 3

Hector J. Noyola

Vice-President

District 6

Monica Garcia

Secretary

District 7

Jose A. Valdez(+)

Trustee

District 1

Guadalupe Gomez

Trustee

District 2

Dr. Minita Ramirez

Parliamentarian

District 5

Ricardo Garza

Trustee

District 4

Administration

Dr. Sylvia G. Rios

Superintendent of Schools

Angel Velazquez

Assistant Superintendent

Plant Facilities & Support Services

Alexis C. Solis

Transportation Director

Gloria Gonzalez

Fleet Specialist

David Onfre

Route Supervisor

Harley Hourigan

Fleet Supervisor

**TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT
3302 SPRINGFIELD
LAREDO, TX. 78040
Phone: 956-273-1200
Fax: 956-273-1215**

**Hours of Operation:
Monday - Friday
6:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.**

You can also find us at our Site:

Go to: www.laredoisd.org

(Click on Departments Link)

(Click on Plant Facilities & Support Link)

(Click on Transportation Dept. Link)

*****COVID-19*****

SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Parents/Guardians, please assess your child before leaving your home.
- Refrain from sending your child to the bus stop or school with ill symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue.
- A Face Mask is highly recommended to board the bus.
- Bus Drivers are equipped with temperature readers and may take your child's temperature at the bus stop. If your child presents a reading over 100.4, it will be reported to the school nurse & you will be contacted and/or notified.
- If your child is positive for Covid-19, he/she may not board the bus until your child presents a negative Covid-19 test result as well as a Medical Release document issued by a board-certified U.S. Medical Professional and/or clearance from the school nurse. Clearance must be done through school/campus nurse.
- Hand Sanitizer is available to your child upon entering school bus.
- Bus seats, windows, and common bases, will be disinfected thoroughly after each route run.

Bus Rider's Handbook

Introduction

The "Bus Rider's Handbook" is designed to inform school bus riders and parents of regulations and procedures under which students are allowed to ride school buses.

The policy outlined in the handbook was approved by the Laredo Independent School District Board of Trustees. Any statement contained with-in the policy which is found to be in conflict with governing statues is automatically rescinded without effect upon other parts of the policy.

TO THE PARENTS:

The school bus is a key to a better education. It means that your children can go to school, despite the distance. Riding a bus trains them in safety, responsibility, independence and courtesy. Familiarize yourself with the bus number your child rides.

Please go over the "Bus Rider Handbook" with your child so that he/she will know that you, as well as LISD, expect them to follow the simple rules outlined here. Should problems arise, feel free to discuss them with your child's principal or with the district's transportation department.

BUS DRIVER AUTHORITY:

What is a school bus driver?

Bus drivers have the same authority a teacher has in the classroom. Riders are to respect this authority and to behave in such a way that the driver will not be distracted while operating a bus.

All LISD bus drivers have a valid driver's license from the Texas Department of Public Safety, a 20-hour School Bus Driver Certification course that concludes of First Aid, passenger loading and unloading, bus upkeep, and other important information that accords with LISD standards. Drivers are also required to take an 8-hour DPS refresher course, every three years.

BUS STOP PROCEDURES:

TRANSPORTATION FOR PRE-K3 & PRE-K4 IS NOT PROVIDED

For Kinder to 3rd grade students, parents/guardians are required to receive their child at the bus stop otherwise, Kinder to 3rd grade students will be returned to their school, unless the parent/guardian has made prior arrangements with the transportation department. Alternate Authorized Personnel must include somebody over the age of 17 yrs. of age to receive child.

- Leave home about five minutes before bus arrival. Arriving later may make you and other riders late to school.
- If there are no sidewalks on your route to the bus stop, walk on the left side of the street or road, facing traffic. Stay as far off the road as possible.
- If you are walking with others where there are no sidewalks, go single-file.
- Do not stand in the street to look or wait for the bus.
- When the bus approaches, stand back at a safe distance until the bus has come to a complete stop.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for receiving their children at their designated bus stops.

General Bus Safety:

School Bus Safety Rules On the way to the bus:

- Be alert; arrive at your bus stop at least five minutes early.
- Obey all traffic lights and signals.
- Plan to walk with schoolmates whenever possible, facing the traffic.
- Use crosswalks when crossing streets and intersections.
- Look both ways before crossing the street.

At the bus stop:

- Stand behind the curb and off the street.
- Do not push or shove when entering or exiting the bus.
- Use handrail when stepping on or off the bus.
- Always obey the bus driver and wait for the driver's signal before crossing.
- Always cross at least 10 feet in front of the school bus.
- Never, crawl under the bus.

When riding the bus:

- Take your seat quietly and quickly, remain seated when the bus is moving.
- Keep your feet on the floor and never extend your hands, arms, head or any object out the window of a bus.
- Talk in a quiet voice, be courteous to the driver and schoolmates, and try not to distract the driver through misbehavior.

ALL ABOARD

- Line up with younger children first and board in a safe and orderly manner.
- Use the handrail as you go up the steps, one at a time.
- Take your assigned seat and remain in it until the bus has come to a complete stop at your school or home.
- Do not open or lean against windows. Some are designed to pop out under pressure in case of an emergency.
- Do not ask to leave the bus at any point other than at your school or home bus stop.
- Report any damage, such as a loose seat or window latch, to the driver as you leave.
- Do not stop or block loading zone.
- Students are responsible for personal belongings they bring into the bus. The Transportation Department nor Driver will be responsible for any lost items.

FOR SAFETY'S SAKE

- Do not talk with the driver, except in an emergency, while the bus is in motion and especially when the bus approaches a railroad crossing or a bus intersection.
- Under no circumstances shall a student ride on the outside of the bus or extend their heads, hands, arms, or any part of the body through the bus windows or doors.
- Do not throw any objects inside or outside of the bus.
- Do not occupy the driver's seat or tamper with bus controls or switches.
- Students must be approximately 15 feet in front of the driver's view when crossing the street & after checking that the road is clear to cross. Never cross behind the bus.
- Urban areas are exempt due to available pedestrian light or crosswalks

IN AN EMERGENCY

- Do not panic and remain seated until further instruction by the driver.
- Do not touch emergency exits or safety equipment for safety reasons until further instruction by the driver.
- Let those closest to the doors exit first.
- Leave belongings behind and cautiously exit the bus to safety.

BUS EVACUATION PROCEDURE

- Stay Calm & Alert
- Listen & Follow Bus Driver's instructions
- Do not push or shove
- When exiting the bus, **JUMP OUT, NOT UP!**
- Stay together & find a safe site

RULES FOR RIDERS

Riding the bus is a privilege and not a right. The privilege of being transported to and from school and on school trips depends on the rider's behavior and cooperation. This privilege may be revoked if the rider:

- Fails to follow safety rules.
- Disregards the authority of the bus driver or other adults in-charge
- Behaves in a disorderly, distasteful (such as minor sexual acts, kissing and/or necking) or unsafe manner.
- Creates excessive noise, such as loud talking, screaming or whistling, or by playing radios, MP3 players or similar equipment.
- Abuses, defaces, or destroys property, equipment, or the bus. (Fines will be assessed)
- Fails to attend classes after riding the bus to school.

- Fights on the bus or at the bus stop.
- Handles the emergency equipment inside the bus (emergency doors, fire extinguisher, etc.)
- Throws articles within the bus, out the windows of the bus, or at any other vehicle.
- Behaves in such a manner that he/she jeopardizes the safe operation of the bus.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

The Following items are NOT allowed on school buses:

- Tobacco of any form, alcoholic beverages, drugs, or any controlled substance including under the influence of such things.
- Firearms, clubs, knives, fireworks, and other dangerous objects.
- Large or heavy objects which would obstruct the aisles or otherwise create a hazard, unless permission is received in advance from the principal and approved by the Transportation Department.
- Animals/Pets of any kind are not allowed on the LISD bus at any time.
- Prescription drugs are not allowed on school bus. Any prescription drugs must be taken to school nurse/teacher by parent or guardian. Unless authorized as self-care by your school Principal.

BUS BEHAVIOR EXPECTATION

The purpose of this handbook is to establish a communication link between classrooms, the bus rider and the household in case of any behavioral challenges your child might present it can be monitored and effectively resolved with student safety in mind. Riding the bus is considered a “district privilege” The campus principal has the authority and responsibility to discipline a student for any inappropriate conduct that occurs on the school bus.

Disciplinary consequences shall be administered according to the level of the offense committed. For more information about disciplinary consequences, see other sections of the Student Code of Conduct pertaining to Level I – Minor Offenses, Level II – Serious Offenses, Level III – AEP Offenses, and level IV-Expulsions.

PLEASE NOTE: Riding the bus is a privilege, which may be temporarily suspended or permanently revoked, at the discretion of the campus principal, if the conduct in question jeopardizes the safety of any individual or generally interferes with the safe operation of the bus. Prior to a suspension or revocation of bus riding privileges for any student, the campus principal shall consult with and receive input from the Transportation Department regarding the proposed length of suspension or revocation.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The term “Special Education” means specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a physically challenged child. Careful planning is necessary to meet each student’s special needs and to make a variety of adjustments to accommodate each student without compromising the safety of other passengers. Mutual respect, communication, and cooperation of school officials, parents or guardians, school bus driver, bus assistants and paraprofessionals will help ensure safe, reliable and comfortable transportation.

Placement in a special education program does not automatically assure being provided special transportation services.

The department has Mr. David Onofre, overseeing all Special Education Transportation Services. Please feel free to contact Mr. Onofre at (956) 273-1210 or via e-mail at donofre@laredoisd.org. You may also contact our Route Specialist, Ms. Nidia Benavides at (956) 273-1205 or via e-mail at nlbenavides@laredoisd.org if you have any questions or concerns about our services.

Special education students who are placed with-in their home school boundaries, and qualify for bus services will be required to follow behavior criteria as outlined by the Laredo Independent School District Student Code of Conduct or through a Behavior Plan, if present in the students ARD.

Special Education transportation is defined as “transportation to and from school on other than a regular school bus”. Special transportation is available for students when an Individual Education Plan (IEP) committee has so recommended. Special transportation will be available to

the home school for those students who are unable to use a regular school bus.

Parents or guardians of the students eligible for special transportation have the option of making other transportation arrangement, if they so choose. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents, guardians or group home staff are required to complete the emergency information form provided for the student by the Transportation Department. All information must be complete, with special attention given to phone numbers and/or addresses of responsible persons to be contacted in case of emergency. A sample of the Emergency Information Form appears in the end of this handbook.

Encourage your child to obey the Laredo ISD Safety Rules and Regulations, and encourage proper bus behavior (remain seated at all times; keep seat belts on; do as the driver asks; etc.)

Have your child ready to board the bus five (5) minutes before his/her scheduled pick-up time. The driver will not be required to wait more than THREE (3) minutes and is instructed not to “HONK” the horn or to “KNOCK” on your door. With your cooperation, the bus can run as scheduled.

In the event that your child will not attend school on any given day, please notify the Transportation Department at (956)-273-1200 at least thirty (30) minutes in advance so that the driver may be informed.

FAILURE OF THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN to have a responsible person meet the bus will be handled in the following manner:

The driver will return the student to school or keep the student on the bus, finish the route, and notify the LISD Transportation Department to receive further instructions. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached within a reasonable time, the student will be released to the local law enforcement agency. Alternate Authorized Personnel must include somebody over the age of 17 yrs. of age to receive child.

However, the LISD Transportation Department will make every possible effort to contact the parent, guardian, or a responsible person whom the parents or guardians have designated on the Emergency Information Form before a local enforcement agency is called. It is essential that you provide the Transportation Department with current emergency phone numbers & addresses in the event of parents or guardians unavailability to be at the bus stop.

NON-AMBULATORY STUDENTS must have their wheelchair equipped with a buckle type-belt and/or body harness, all in good condition. Headrest, wedges and any¹⁵ other adaptive device prescribed for support purposes, must be in good condition and in place. Drivers are instructed to report to the Transportation Department Supervisor when equipment is unclean, missing, or in need of repair. If your child displays a disruptive or difficult behavior, the driver may fill out a bus conduct report and deliver it to you. One copy of the report will be given to the classroom teacher and another filed with the Transportation Department.

During winter months, parents or guardians are requested to provide safe access from house to the bus, free and clear of snow, rain, and ice with particular attention given to the actual loading area at the curb.

Drivers are required, by the Child Protection Act of 1975, to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to any Transportation Department Administrator, as well as follow Texas Family Code: Section 261.106.

Parents or Guardians are requested to wash wheelchairs on a regular basis, keeping them clean of spilled foods, body waste and other bacteria promoting substances.

Dirty or soiled clothing will not be allowed on the bus unless it has been thoroughly washed.

Laredo ISD Transportation Department shall not be responsible for delivering diapers, food, clothing or equipment when the student is not precisely being transported in the school bus at the time.

To aid in controlling bacterial diseases or viral infections, parents or guardians are requested to contact the Transportation Department if their child acquires any such diseases or infection so the driver and/or bus monitor may be informed.

Give two full days' notice if there are any changes in pick-up and/or drop-off addresses. Any changes **MUST** be routed through the Transportation Department. Please do not ask the Driver to violate this policy. Until such change can be directed through the Transportation Department, the parent or guardian will be responsible for transporting the child.

Know where your child is to be picked up each morning and delivered in the afternoon, and communicate that information to the Transportation Department.

Have all necessary supplies in a pouch or packet labeled with your child's name. In consideration of student safety, any medication must be taken by the parent/guardian to your child's campus nurse unless authorized by the school Principal or stated in your child's ARD. Live animals, toys, items in glass containers, dangerous objects, or large articles which block the aisles, emergency door or service door of a school bus, will NOT be transported.

All notices or instructions that are required to be communicated to the campus, teacher, administrator, are asked to be put in writing in a note or letter secured to pass this message to them. The bus personnel will not verbally communicate any information to a third party.

