

2020-21 YPA Bus Policy

York Preparatory Academy (YPA), is authorized by the state of South Carolina to provide bus transportation for students enrolled at YPA. As a charter school, YPA does **not** receive traditional funding for a bus program. YPA is **not** required to provide any transportation for students, but does provide limited transportation for students in grades K-8. Bus transportation is not available for high school students. Should more students apply for busing than we have seats available, your child(ren) will be placed on a waiting list.

To ensure safe and efficient transportation, parents/legal guardians and students should read the **Safety Rules** and familiarize themselves with all school policies, state laws, and regulations so they will know their responsibilities. These regulations were established for the protection of students, school officials, school property and the motoring public. All students and parents/legal guardian will be required to complete a *Policy Acknowledgement* form prior to being eligible to ride the bus. Students who fail to follow established rules will lose the privilege to ride any YPA bus. When, in the judgment of school appointed officials, any student's bus behavior endangers the lives of another, that student will be immediately removed from the bus. Bus privileges will remain suspended until the student and their parent/legal guardian has had a conference with the school administrator.

Bus Schedules and Routes

All bus scheduling and routing will be designed and implemented in compliance with state laws and regulations. Factors which may affect routes and pick up times, include student population changes, road closings, and mechanical problems. All routes will be run in their entirety, and every effort will be made to ensure each student arrives at school or the bus stop on time. However, safety is our main concern, and we will not sacrifice safety for arrival times or convenience. Because of changes in the student population, stops may not be in the same location from year to year, and may change during the school year. Stops will be established at the safest possible locations. Routes may be added or changed accordingly throughout the year.

General Information

Buses may be equipped with video and audio recording devices, which can be used to monitor passenger and bus activity. Student behavior on the bus and driver's management of the behavior are key elements for a safe bus ride. The school may use video and audio recording devices on buses used for transportation to and from school, field trips, curricular and extracurricular events. The contents of the recordings may be used as evidence in a student disciplinary proceeding. The following notice will also be placed on all buses equipped with video and audio recording devices. **"This bus is equipped with a video/audio monitoring system."**

- The video/audio recorder on a bus is an aid to monitor discipline. Any video/audio recording will supplement the driver's written disciplinary reports, not take the place of the reports.
- All students are subject to transportation laws, rules and regulations from the time they board a school bus until they arrive at their normal destination or school, however, the bus driver may stop the bus and call law enforcement to remove a student from the bus. Bus drivers cannot suspend a student from riding the bus; only school administrators or transportation representative can make that decision.
- Students are asked not to damage property while waiting for the bus, including leaving trash on the premises. Parent/legal guardians will be responsible for all property damage of their child while waiting on the bus.

In Case of Emergency

- All parents will complete an emergency contact information card before the student is allowed to ride the bus.
- Should an emergency occur, parents or the designated emergency contact will be notified by the Bus Manager or school representative.
- The bus driver will follow YPA emergency procedures.

Concerns About School Bus Driver

If you have a concern with the bus driver, please contact a York Preparatory Academy school administrator. Do not approach the bus driver or stop the bus or interfere with the operation of the school bus in any way. South Carolina state law states that "no person shall willfully and wrongfully interfere with the operation of a school bus, either public or private, by boarding, restricting movement or using threats, either physical or verbal, to the driver or any passenger while the bus is engaged in the transportation of pupils to and from school or any lawful school activity or while passengers are entering or leaving the bus nor shall any person willfully fail or refuse to obey a lawful order of a school bus driver relating to the occupancy of a school bus".

Safety Rules

In order to ensure each student has a safe school bus ride, the YPA Student Behavior Policy applies to all students while at the bus stop, on the school bus or on any YPA vehicle. Inappropriate behavior will be treated with the same level of scrutiny as inappropriate behavior in the classroom and will lead to appropriate school consequences in accordance with the Student Behavior Policy and includes suspension from bus riding.

In addition to the Student Behavior Policy, students must also follow the Safety Rules listed below.

- All parents/legal guardians are expected to remain with their student at the bus stop until the bus arrives. Due to tight scheduling be at the bus stop **10 minutes** prior to scheduled drop off and pick-up times.
- While waiting for the bus, students should remain in their vehicle and out of the roadway.
- Once bus arrives students should wait in an orderly manner, remain in a line at least four feet from the bus parking place, and load the bus only when signaled from the driver.
- Students must always obey the directions of the driver.
- Students must sit in their assigned seats. They can be held responsible for any vandalism to their seat or in the general area of their seat.
- Do not exhibit behavior that disturbs the students or driver.
- No spitting, eating or drinking on the bus.
- No profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, teasing, obscene or sexual gestures.
- No play fighting or horse playing.
- Talk quietly and avoid loud, boisterous behavior, including singing, clapping, stomping or yelling.
- No standing while the bus is in motion.
- No hanging any part(s) of your anatomy out a window or passing items through the window.
- No throwing or shooting any type of objects.
- Do not vandalize the bus or ignite any flammable object.
- Do not hold onto the bus from the outside.
- Keep your feet, body and bags out of the aisle.
- No glass containers, skateboards, or oversize items are allowed on the bus.
- Do not block the aisle with band instruments or book bags.
- Students must not sit on their book bags or legs because a serious injury could occur if the child rises above the height of the seat.
- No spraying of cologne, deodorant, body spray or any other type chemicals or aerosols, pump spray or lotion while on the bus.
- No usage of cell phone or other electronic device that causes a disruption on the bus or distraction to the driver.
- No use or possession of tobacco products
- Never tamper with the emergency exits or any other part of the bus including lights, horn, fire extinguishers and first aid equipment unless there are reasonable grounds to believe that an actual emergency situation exists.
- Do not ride any bus that you are not assigned to.
- Do not ride any bus during a suspension of bus privileges.
- Students may only board and exit the bus at their designated stop or school, unless otherwise approved.
- Students must be quiet when the bus approaches and crosses railroad tracks.
- Objects that the driver deems dangerous to other riders will not be allowed on the bus.
- To ensure adequate, safe seating conditions for all passengers, the school will not be able to allow guest riders on school buses at any time.
- Students should remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop and then exit in an orderly fashion.
- Students should not go back toward the bus once the driver has broken visual sight of them. Following these instructions saves lives.
- After exiting the bus, students should go directly to their vehicle.
- If parents are not at the bus stop when the bus arrives, the driver will return the student to YPA. Should the bus have more than one stop, the driver will continue the route before returning the student to YPA. The child will be placed with the building administrator. It is the parent's responsibility to pick up the student at the school or child services will be contacted. **If students are not picked up from the bus more than 5 times in a school year, they will be suspended from the bus.**

Disciplinary Action

Bus riders must abide by policies listed herein, in the student behavior policy and in the student handbook. When handling cases of misconduct on buses, school administrators and other representatives will observe the following:

- First offense: Warning to student and letter to parents advising them of misconduct, unless the offense is of a serious nature which in the judgment of school administrators warrants a suspension or termination from riding the school bus.
- Second offense: Suspension from riding the bus for a period of one (1) week.
- Third offense: If student persists in misconduct while riding the bus, his/her bus privileges will be revoked.

School officials will take whatever action necessary to ensure the safe and efficient transportation of our students. An open line of communication and the cooperation of all concerned will help us achieve that goal.

Custody Issues

Some YPA students who are bus riders may be subject to court orders giving one parent/guardian legal or physical custody in preference to another parent/guardian. YPA disclaims any responsibility to oversee, enforce or resolve custody issues that may be applicable students who are bus riders. Custodial parents/guardians should meet their children at the bus stop and take all other steps necessary to ensure that applicable child custody orders are fully respected.

By enrolling a child in YPA's bus program, parents/guardians release YPA and its employees and agents from all claims or demands arising from or related to any child custody order applicable to that child.