

# USD 493 Columbus Parent-Student Transportation Handbook

Adopted: July 11, 2016



## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to provide parents and students with the Rules and Regulations of the State of Kansas and USD 493 Policies and Procedures concerning student transportation. Our goal and obligation is to provide **safe** student transportation. Please read this booklet carefully and discuss it with your children. Keep it handy for future reference. The direct help of parents in promoting obedience to school bus rules greatly assists the drivers in maintaining proper discipline.

Our drivers meet all state and district certification requirements. These include: (1) maintaining a current CDL B driver license, (2) passing a biennial physical examination, (3) completing a First Aid/CPR Course and a Defensive Driving Course, (4) passing the district's driver training program which includes behind-the-wheel training prior to transporting students. In addition, a periodic check is made of each driver's driving record and drivers are subject to federally mandated drug and alcohol testing.

Our drivers also receive ongoing training in accident prevention and safety. We work continuously to maintain proper student discipline on the bus. Our district has a good safety record; please, for everyone's sake, do your part to help us keep it that way. With the pupils' cooperation and your support, we believe the Columbus School District can maintain a safe and efficient transportation program.

The USD 493 school bus service is owned by the district and operated and maintained by district personnel. All route buses are equipped with two-way radios. Each bus must pass a Kansas State Highway Patrol safety inspection. In addition, the district has a preventative maintenance program to keep the buses in excellent condition.

Our basic philosophy is based on three areas: SAFETY, efficiency, and service, in that order. We provide a group service unlike taxi service, which serves individuals. We strive to provide adequate service at a reasonable cost to our patrons. We cannot stop at every house, wait for students, or adjust our pick up schedule to meet the schedule of individual families.

## **SAFETY CONCERNS AND PROCEDURES**

The following safety concerns and procedures apply anytime the pupil is riding a school bus (regular routes, activity or field trips). In addition, on activity or field trips, pupils shall follow directions of a teacher or a chaperone appointed by the school.

By state law, the driver is in charge of all passengers while they are riding, loading on or unloading from the bus.

**Any act, which may endanger the safety of others, may be cause for temporary or permanent suspension of bus riding privileges.**

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

USD 493 Columbus prohibits bullying in any form either by any student, staff member, or parent towards a student or by a student, staff member, or parent towards a staff member on or while using school property, in a school vehicle or at a school sponsored activity or event. For the purpose of this policy, the term “bullying” shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Kansas law.

Students who have bullied others in violation of this policy may be subject at the discretion of the administration and Board of Education, to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and expulsion. If appropriate, any student who violates the bullying policy shall be reported by the administration to local law enforcement.

“Bullying” is defined as any intentional gesture or any intentional written, verbal, electronic (cyber bullying), or physical act or threat that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student or staff member that a reasonable person, under the circumstances, knows or should know will have the effect of:

- Harming a student or staff member; whether physically or mentally;
- Damaging a student’s or staff member’s property;
- Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of harm to the student or staff member; or
- Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of damage to the student’s or staff member’s property.

“Cyber bullying” means bullying by use of any electronic communication device through means including, but not limited to e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, mobile phones, pagers, online games and websites.

Bullying is an intentional, aggressive and repeated behavior that involves an imbalance of power or strength. The various forms include: physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, racial, Cyber and hazing.

Bullying is not a one-time incident with hurt feelings, students not getting along, a disagreement with a peer, or mutual escalation.

In the student handbook administrators are given various options to address bullying behavior and harassment in our schools. Not every situation can be defined. Administrators will work to keep the environment safe for all students. Please refer to the USD 493 student handbooks for details on these policies for each building

### **LOADING PROCEDURE**

Pupils must be on time! Be outside 5 minutes prior to stop time. In extreme weather, pupils may wait inside, but must be on the way to the bus as it approaches. The bus cannot wait beyond its regular schedule for those who are tardy. If the student rider is not visible to the driver, the bus will leave.

Bus riders shall conduct themselves in a safe manner while walking to the bus stop, waiting for the bus, and boarding the bus. Walk on the far left-hand side of the road facing traffic when going to the bus stop. Never stand in the roadway. Stand single file in an orderly manner while waiting for the bus. If crossing the road to board the bus, do so only after directed by the bus driver and after looking both ways before entering or crossing the road. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the red safety lights are flashing before attempting to cross the road. The bus will stop at least six feet away from the closest student.

All student riders in a family should be at the loading site together when boarding the bus.

### **LEAVING THE BUS**

Never cross behind the bus. When crossing the road after deboarding, walk along the side of the road in front of the bus until the driver's face is seen. Wait until the bus driver signals to cross. Then, walk checking traffic in both directions before crossing the other lane of traffic.

Remain off the roadway until the bus pulls away. If child checks the mailbox, wait in the drive until the bus pulls away before checking the box.

Never return to the bus for any reason after deboarding.

It is recommended that students have a book bag or sport bag in which to carry all papers, books, shoes and etc.- all loose items. This is especially important for younger riders who might forget the danger of chasing a paper or other dropped item under the bus.

Preschoolers who wait for brothers or sisters should stay well away from the road and never go near the bus at any time.

## **BUS RULES FOR RIDERS**

### A. Rules for Boarding & Exiting the Bus

- Students must be at the designated bus stop at the time the bus is scheduled to arrive.
- Students who must cross the road shall wait for the bus to arrive/stop and display the proper warning signs. Outside public address system and a hand signal from the driver may be used for instructing the student before crossing the road. The student should cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus after looking both ways. Make sure all traffic has stopped.
- All students must cross the road in front of the bus, never behind the bus.
- Students shall always stand a safe distance off the road and never in the road while waiting for the bus to arrive.
- While at the bus stop, students should: Conduct themselves in an orderly manner;
- Avoid littering; and respect nearby private property rights

### B. Rules for Riding the Bus

- Comply with driver's request.
- The bus driver may assign seats.
- Sack lunches may be carried on the bus; do not eat or drink on the bus without the driver's permission.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Remain seated, forward facing with your back to the seat at all times.
- Do not extend any part of the body or any article outside of the bus windows.
- For your own safety, do not distract driver through misbehavior or any distracting motion/sound.
- Be quiet at railroad crossings.
- Be aware of the dangers involved in and around loading and unloading zones, including loose clothing, clothing accessories, and backpacks.
- Students must get on the bus that he/she rides if that bus loads at his/her school. Students are prohibited from riding another bus to the high school and switching buses in Titan Alley. One verbal warning will be given. The second time the student will not be allowed to ride the bus home.
- Central students that walk to the high school will not be allowed to ride the bus home.
- After departing the bus, go directly to your home.
- All regular school rules apply while on the bus.
- If the student does not ride for three (3) consecutive days, the bus will not stop until the parents/guardians have called the bus barn to resume pick up.
- No glass containers or balloons are allowed on the bus.

### Misbehavior on Bus

Violation of the above rules may result in suspension from the bus for a period of 1 to 5 days.

When suspended from the bus, it will be the decision of the building administrator if the student is allowed to go on bus trips where additional adult supervision is provided by the school. For repeated and severe infractions, the student may be denied bus transportation for the remainder of the semester or school year.

### **KINDERGARTEN AND OTHER FIRST TIME RIDERS**

Young riders are special in several ways. The younger the child, the more responsibility and care adults in charge must provide. Parents, please be sure these first-time riders understand bus rules and the importance of following them. These young riders should understand that they could be hurt by the bus or by other traffic unless they are careful. The ideal situation is for the youngster to have a healthy respect for the "big yellow fellow" without being fearful of the bus.

Remember that young riders need to be reminded of the rules and praised for practicing safe ridership.

Even at a young age, students should be taught to assume responsibility for their safety. No matter how careful and conscientious a bus driver is, there are times when the child is outside of the bus that the driver simply cannot protect the child from harm. Students should practice the habit of checking traffic for themselves after getting the signal to cross from the driver.

***If your child is new to the district or for some reason has not ridden our buses before, be sure you take time to go over the rules of safety with the child before his/her first ride on the bus. Contact the Transportation Department at 429-1456 for more information.***

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Transportation is provided to all students who live 2.5 miles from the attendance centers.

Students with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) will be transported by regular education transportation service unless their IEP specifically states another type of transportation service. Students with an IEP whose program is **outside the district** (Interlocal Program) will be transported, to their attendance centers, from either their legal residence or a day care provider whose day care service is located within USD 493.

### **DESIGNATED PERMANENT PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF ADDRESSES**

**Each student must have one designated pick-up address and one designated drop-off address that is consistent daily. The pick-up and drop-off addresses may be different from each other, but each must remain constant. These addresses shall be declared during enrollment.**

**A permanent change may be made in a student's designated pick-up or drop-off address (es) by contacting the transportation office at least **three (3) days in advance of the****

**change.** Changes will be accommodated as long as there is space available.

Change of pick up/drop off location on the route may be allowed **with a note for each occurrence** signed by the school administrator. In an emergency, the administrator may sign a note to allow a student to ride on a different bus route if space is available.

If a student is to be picked up at the school or has permission to walk, direct the student not to get on the bus. Once a student gets on the bus (s) he will be released only upon approval of the school administrator (or his or her designee).

**Never attempt to "flag down the bus" when it is moving.** Students cannot be released along the route. This is a hazardous practice for the student, the bus, and other traffic. Similarly, do not attempt to "catch the bus" at another stop if your student missed the bus in the morning. Either take the child to school, or take the student to another stop farther ahead on the route and have him/her board with others at that stop. It is extremely unsafe for a student to approach the bus from the back or side of the bus.

### **BUS CONDUCT NOTICE**

In the event a student does not adhere to the bus regulations, a "Bus Conduct Notice" may be given to the student. Behavior that endangers the safety of other riders or excessive misconduct may be grounds for the student to be placed on the school's discipline plan.

Time on the bus is a part of the school day, and the rules of conduct, which apply to the classroom also, apply to the school bus. For this reason, the Transportation Director and building principal has the responsibility of working with the parent, student and bus driver in matters pertaining to student behavior on the bus.

Please give your full cooperation and support toward the safe operation of the student transportation program.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

If there is enough snow or adverse weather that you question whether or not school will be in session, please monitor your television or radio. The Superintendent will determine if school is to be cancelled after checking road and weather conditions and consulting with other school officials. The Superintendent will notify the local media only when school will be called off.

**An automated School Messenger phone call will be sent to each enrolled students phone number in USD 493. Information on weather related cancellations can be found on the USD 493 web page under the district office tab: [www.usd493.com](http://www.usd493.com).**

Every day that school is in session, we will attempt to pick up all students. However, we cannot guarantee the bus will be able to come by every house. Drifts preventing the bus from passing may block some roads.

If USD 493 is closed, no transportation is provided to any out-of-district.

These radio stations will air weather related cancellations: KIX 102.5 FM, Kissin' 92.5 FM Classic Hits 93.9 FM, Big Dog 97.9 FM, 102.9 FM, KKOW 860 AM, News Talk KZRG 1310 AM, and The Talker 1230 AM. Television Stations that air weather related information: KSN-TV Channel 16 (NBC), KODE-TV Channel 12 (ABC), KOAM-TV Channel 7 (CBS), FOX-TV Channel 14 (FOX).

### **DRESSING FOR SAFETY**

Students should wear appropriate clothing to be protected in all weather conditions. This includes rain gear (head covering, coats, boots) for wet weather and warm winter clothing for cold weather (caps, winter boots, winter coats and gloves). While students do not have to be out in the weather for very long very often, they should be prepared to wait at the bus stop in all weather conditions and to be prepared for emergencies. Even though we maintain our buses through a program of preventive maintenance, a breakdown could occur causing students to have to wait longer for the bus or wait on the bus until help arrives. Buses do occasionally become stuck in the snow. Students should always have adequate protective clothing to be safe in these circumstances.

### **PASSENGERS OTHER THAN SCHOOL PUPILS**

No one other than the students assigned to a bus route will be permitted to ride the school bus to or from school without administrative approval.

### **EVACUATION DRILLS**

Two evacuation drills are held each year, at each school, at the direction of the bus driver and under the supervision of the building administrator or designee. The purpose is to prepare the students to recognize conditions that warrant evacuation, to know correct procedures for each type of evacuation, and to teach students to initiate and complete an evacuation without driver supervision, if required. Drivers appoint leaders and helpers and instruct all students in overall procedures. A leader takes the evacuated students away from the bus; helpers remain at the doors assisting other students from the bus until all are evacuated.

The most important thing for students to remember in an emergency is to stay clam. Students should never run (this creates panic). Other actions to remember in an emergency are to leave loose items (lunch boxes, books, etc.) in the bus, to assist smaller children, and listen to and obey the driver or appointed leader.

### **ROUTES AND DESIGNATED STOPS**

The district taking into consideration various factors including safety, distance and efficiency among others establishes designated bus stops. Students will need to plan to walk to the district assigned bus stops. Generally, no student will have to walk farther than one-fourth mile from the street end of the driveway to the bus stop.

If your family will not have anyone riding in the morning, please call the Transportation Department with this information after 6:00 a.m. The phone number is 429-1456. Give your child's name, address, bus driver's name and the school your student attends to the person who answers the phone. Please try to call as early as possible.

### **STOP ARM LAW**

Please see that all the drivers in your household know how to be safe and legal around school buses. It can be frustrating to get "caught" behind a bus making stops along its route. Some people let their impatience lead to risky actions that endanger students, themselves and other traffic. Some drivers do not know what the law requires of them. Please obey the law and please be patient for the sake of our kids. When you see yellow flashing lights on a bus, this means that the bus will soon be stopping to pick up children. These children could be on either side of the road. When you see red flashing lights on a bus, this means that children are in the process of getting on or off the bus right then. These children may also be crossing the road.

For your own protection, when you see the yellow flashing lights on the bus, **Please Stop. GIVE US A BRAKE!**

**USD 493 COLUMBUS  
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION FORM**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Pick Up Bus Stop \_\_\_\_\_

Drop Off Bus Stop \_\_\_\_\_

Health Concerns \_\_\_\_\_

Special Items \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Request from Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**USD 493 COLUMBUS  
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION FORM  
PERMANENT CHANGE  
PICK UP/DROP OFF**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Change in Pick Up Bus Stop \_\_\_\_\_

Change in Drop Off Bus Stop \_\_\_\_\_

New Address Pick Up \_\_\_\_\_

New Address Drop Off \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Request from Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**USD 493 COLUMBUS  
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION FORM  
EMERGENCY CHANGE ON ROUTE  
BUILDING PRINCIPAL APPROVAL  
PICK UP/DROP OFF**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Change in Pick Up Bus Stop \_\_\_\_\_

Change in Drop Off Bus Stop \_\_\_\_\_

New Address Pick Up \_\_\_\_\_

New Address Drop Off \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Request from Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**USD 493 COLUMBUS  
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION FORM  
EMERGENCY CHANGE  
BUILDING PRINCIPAL APPROVAL  
PICK UP/DROP OFF**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Change in Pick Up Bus Stop \_\_\_\_\_

Change in Drop Off Bus Stop \_\_\_\_\_

New Address Pick Up \_\_\_\_\_

New Address Drop Off \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Request from Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Signature \_\_\_\_\_