

School Bus Rules

GENERAL

The Code of Virginia, Section 22.1-176, permits school boards to provide transportation for pupils, but does not require them to do so. For Prince William County Public Schools, daily bus service will be provided for all in-boundary students living in excess of one mile from school. Students eligible for transportation may be required to walk up to one mile to reach their regular bus stop. Transportation is not provided for students living within a school's established walking boundary.

Express bus service will be provided for students enrolled in all Specialty Programs. This service will be to and from express bus stops only.

Wireless communication devices may be used on school buses provided that the device does not distract the driver, compromise safety, or violate other school bus rules and regulations.

MEETING THE BUS

State law requires that buses operate on the same routes, as per their schedules, on a daily basis. Parent(s) or their designees are requested to accompany their young child(ren) to and from the bus stop.

Students should:

- Be on time;
- Arrive at their bus stop at least 5-10 minutes before the regular pickup time;
- Stand away from the road. Do Not stand on the traveled portion of the roadway while waiting for a bus;
- Maintain proper conduct;
- Respect the property of others;
- Wait until the bus has stopped; then walk to the front door. Do Not run alongside a moving bus;
- Board the bus in an orderly fashion; and
- Use the bus stop closest to their home. Walking to a friend's house to catch a bus often causes overcrowding at a given stop.

Students Riding the Bus should:

- Obey instructions of bus driver and/or bus attendant;
- Be seated immediately;
- Remain seated, facing forward;
- Share seats equally;
- Be courteous;
- Respect property.
- Keep all body parts inside bus;
- Keep aisles clear; and
- Maintain good conduct.

The following infractions are not permitted:

- Fire
- Fighting
- Smoking
- Profanity
- Horseplay
- Eating/Drinking
- Spitting
- Obscene gestures
- Vandalism
- Throwing objects from the bus
- Creating loud noises
- Having glass objects
- Transporting large objects
- Tampering with equipment
- Weapons
- Drug and Substance Abuse
- Littering
- Threats
- Endangering others
- Other Violations of the "Code of Behavior"

LEAVING THE BUS

Students must:

- **Remain seated until bus comes to a full stop;**
- Leave the bus in an orderly manner, students in the front seats first;
- Leave the bus stop area when safety permits as soon as discharged from the bus;
- Not loiter around the bus;
- Cross the street, if necessary to do so, at the front of the bus and at a distance of at least ten feet in front of the bus;
- Not cross until the driver has signaled that it is safe to do so. Crossing four or more traffic lanes or a divided roadway is prohibited.

If a disciplinary problem should occur in the afternoon, and the problem is such that, in the judgment of the driver, it is unsafe to proceed, the driver may return to the school to seek immediate disciplinary action and/or assistance. Bus drivers are instructed to report any infractions to the school principal/designee.

CHANGING BUSES

Students must have a written request from the parent to go to other than their regular scheduled stop on their regular scheduled bus. This written request is subject to approval of the school principal or designee. Bus drivers must receive notification by the school office when approval is given to a student to change to an alternate stop or bus.

No change will be made in the location of bus stops or bus routing without approval of the Office of Transportation Services.

No change in the bus assigned may be made without the permission of the school principal and the Office of Transportation Services.

TRESPASSING

Only authorized persons are permitted aboard a school bus (school property). "It shall be unlawful for any person, whether or not a student, to enter upon or remain upon any school property after having been directed to vacate the property by a person authorized to give such direction." (Code of Virginia 18.2-128)

RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS IS A PRIVILEGE*

Should a student be reported to the principal, the principal will be responsible for disciplinary action, which may include the loss of the privilege of bus transportation, until the parent, the bus driver, the principal, (and in some instances, an Office of Transportation Services representative) can arrive at an understanding which will correct the problem. The parent will be responsible for the transportation of students who have lost school bus transportation privileges.

Oral or written threats to harm others or PWCS property, which are planned or made on a school bus or which are intended to be carried out on a school bus, at a school bus stop, or while going to and coming from school, may result in the loss of transportation for a specific period of time or for the remainder of the school year in addition to other disciplinary action.

A School Bus Video Observation System records activities aboard some buses. Please feel free to contact the school principal or the Office of Transportation Services for help with problems related to the transportation of your child.

*Riding the school bus is a privilege, except as required by law for students with disabilities.