

COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – SCHOOL BUS PASSENGER EXPECTATIONS

The safety of all students riding the bus to and from school is a responsibility we all share. It takes all of us working together to ensure safety: students, parents, bus drivers and school officials. The District has established the student conduct expectations to ensure all of our students are transported in the safest environment possible. Students who fail to observe these expectations will be subject to disciplinary action. Their failure to do so may affect the safety of others. Failure to follow bus expectations and regulations may result in suspension of bus riding privileges as well as school consequences depending on the severity of the violation.

If you should have any issues or concerns and need to talk with your child's driver, it is best to call the STA Office at (573) 214-3860 to schedule a time or email cpstransportation@cpsk12.org. If you need to approach the bus, please **do not** step into the bus or on the step. Signal to the driver you would like to talk and proceed to the driver's side window. For the safety of all bus riders, school bus drivers are instructed to close the entrance door when approached and direct you to their side window. Keep in mind the bus has other stops and a schedule to keep meaning the driver has limited time at individual stops. Under Missouri Law unauthorized entrance on a school bus is trespassing. For the safety of the students we transport, Columbia Public Schools supports this law and has posted warnings on all buses an violators will be prosecuted.

In accordance with Board policy JG-R1:

“Any offense committed by a student on transportation provided by or through the district shall be disciplined in the same manner as if the offense had been committed at the student's assigned school. In addition, transportation privileges may be suspended or revoked.”

Riding the School bus is a Privilege that can be lost

1. Follow the bus driver's directions
2. Be at the bus stop 5 minutes before and stay at Least 5 minutes after your stop time
3. Line up in a single line at the side of the road
4. Sit on your assigned seat, not on knees or backpack
5. Speak quietly to each other
6. Keep hands, feet and other items to yourself on the bus.
7. No food/drinks/gum/candy on the bus
8. Ensure your student knows the danger zone outside the bus
9. The safest stop is the stop with an adult present

- Students are expected to help keep the bus clean and not purposely or carelessly destroy transportation equipment.
- Damage resulting from misbehavior shall be paid for by the student/parent. Suspension from the bus will occur and continue until all damage is paid for.
- Students will show consideration for other students and the bus driver by being courteous and well mannered.
- No profanity or other abusive language.

Any action that would create an environment contrary to the District's, Schools and Transportation Department's missions will not be acceptable. If the action creates an environment in which learning, safety and caring for others are not the primary focus, disciplinary action will result, including possible loss of bus service. Students are expected to follow safe riding expectations listed above.

Mobile Electronic Devices

At the discretion of the **school bus driver** and Building Principal district provided electronic devices may be permitted to be used on the school bus for educational purposes. If permitted, the user must follow the expectations outlined in Board Policy and School Handbook. Sound must be muted or earphones and/or similar device must be used.

No other mobile electronic use is permitted

Consequences

Students failing to follow expectations will be issued “Bus Conduct Reports”. Drivers will turn these into building administration. Building administration follow the progressive discipline matrix and dependent on the severity and frequency of occurrence consequences may be issued.

- For minor infractions such as not staying seated, excessive noise and other level 1 & 2 infractions: 1st = Parent notification, 2nd = Second parent notification, 3rd = 3-day bus suspension, 4th = 5-day bus suspension each consecutive conduct report goes up by 5 days until the 7th instance when revocation of bus privileges may occur
- Level 3,4 and 5 infractions may be issued school consequences and bus consequences including revocation of bus privileges
- Acts of violence and/or other criminal behavior may be reported to the police

Parent Expectation for School Bus Safety

The safety of all students riding the bus to and from school is a responsibility we all share. Parents/guardians are responsible for the supervision of their children to, from, and while at school bus stops. Students should always use their assigned bus stop. Parents hold a key, vital role in ensuring School Bus Safety. The information contained on this page is provided to give you the tools to help teach your child to be safe on the walk to and from the stop, at the stop and on the bus.

Getting Ready for School

- Support your driver - Remind your child of the importance of following the drivers' instructions and directives
- Remind your child how to ride safely by staying in their seat, keeping hands to self and talking quietly
- Remind your child not to be a distraction to the driver so the driver can watch the road
- Have your children put everything they carry in a backpack or school bag so that they won't drop things along the way.
- Encourage your child to wear bright, contrasting colors so they will be more easily seen by drivers.
- Ensure loose drawstrings, chains or other dangling objects are removed from clothing, coats, and bags.
- Make sure they leave home on time so they can walk to the bus stop and arrive before the bus is due, typically at least 5 minutes before. Running to a moving bus is very dangerous and should never be done.

Walking to the Bus Stop

- Walking your child to the bus stop is best or have children walk in groups. There is safety in numbers; groups are easier for drivers to see.
- Practice good pedestrian behavior: walk on the sidewalk, and if there is no sidewalk, stay out of the street.
- If you must walk in the street, walk single file, face traffic and stay as close to the edge of the road as you can.
- Stop and look left, right and then left again if you must cross the street. Do the same thing at driveways and alleys. Exaggerate your head turns and narrate your actions so your child knows you are looking left, right and left.

At the Bus Stop

- Wait in a location where the driver can see you as they drive down the street. Never wait in a house or car
- Do not play in the street.
- Playing with balls or other toys that could roll into the street is dangerous.
- Arrive at the stop 5 minutes prior to the scheduled bus arrival.

Getting On and Off the Bus

- Warn children that if they drop something, they should never pick it up. Instead, they should tell the driver and follow the driver's instructions. If they bend over to pick up a dropped object, they might not be seen by the driver and could be hurt if the driver pulls away from the stop.
- Remind children to look to the right before they step off the bus.
- Teach your children to secure loose drawstrings and other objects that may get caught in the handrail or door of the bus as they are exiting.
- If you would like your child to get off at a stop other than the one assigned, please be aware that the driver isn't allowed to let a child off at another stop without written permission from the school.
- If you meet your child at the bus stop after school, wait on the side where the child will be dropped off, not across the street. Children can be so excited at seeing you after school that they dash across the street and forget the safety rules.
- Have a backup plan in case you are not home
 - How to get home in case you are not at the stop.
 - Teach your children what neighbor to go to if this happens.

Riding the Bus

- Failure to follow safe riding expectations may endanger themselves and others
- Failure to follow safe riding expectations may result in school consequences and loss of school bus riding privileges for example:
 - 1st bus ticket = warning
 - 2nd bus ticket = 3-day bus suspension
 - 3rd bus ticket = 5-day bus suspension
 - Each ticket after 3 adds an additional 5-day bus suspension

Actual consequences will be based on severity of violation

Columbia Public Schools School Transportation Program

To: Parents of all CPS students

From: Dr. Brian Yearwood, Superintendent of Schools

An important objective of the Columbia Public Schools and our contracted transportation provider, is to offer a safe, effective, and efficient transportation program. In order to achieve this objective, it is necessary to establish rules and regulations for the conduct of students riding school buses. The regulations are intended to serve the best interests of all students.

The guidelines established for the conduct of Columbia school bus riders are attached. Please review this information with your student and complete the following:

I have read the attached guidelines for the student conduct and safety pertaining to school bus transportation, and I have discussed them with my student.

Date

Student's Name (please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature