

**Forney Independent School  
District  
School Bus Riders'  
Safety & Discipline Handbook 2022-2023**

**TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**

**811 S. BOIS D'ARC FORNEY, TEXAS 75126 (469) 762-4162**



Parents or Guardians:

Transporting students safely to and from school is the highest priority of the FISD Transportation Department.

The Forney Independent School District provides bus transportation as a courtesy service for students residing in the district. Please take the time to read and discuss with your child the rules outlined in this handbook. We ask for your cooperation with the bus drivers in helping create a reliable, healthy operation. We are the first faces that they see each school day, and we want to start each day on a positive note. We have established these transportation rules in order to provide our students with a safe, friendly, comfortable, and pleasant ride to and from school each day.

The school district is pleased to provide transportation for students and promotes proper behavior patterns for those students who ride the bus.

If you need information concerning bus routes or student conduct on the bus, call the Transportation Department at 469-762-4162.

Thank you,

Michelle Ramm  
Executive Director of Transportation  
Forney ISD



## General Rules

1. Students will be respectful to the driver and fellow students.
2. Seating assignments will be arranged by the driver and students are to remain in their assigned seat for the duration of the trip.
3. Students will board and leave the bus at their designated stop only.
4. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide transportation to school if their child misses the bus.
5. If students do not ride for five (5) consecutive days the stop will be taken off the route unless parents notify the transportation department.
6. Parents are forbidden to get on the bus. Only authorized school personnel may enter the bus. Questions concerning the bus or a bus driver's actions are to be directed to the Executive Director of Transportation or the Assistant Director. Bus or bus driver concerns will not be addressed at the bus stop. If a parent does get on the bus, the driver will notify dispatch, the Forney ISD Police Department, and the video will be pulled for a possible citation.
7. Do not ask to ride home on another bus with a friend without a signed note from home. Notes must be signed by the student's campus administrator and a bus pass will be given to the student. Parent notes will not be accepted by the driver.

## Procedures for waiting on the bus

1. Be at your stop *ten minutes* before the scheduled pickup time. The driver will not wait or honk.
2. Stand back from the road while waiting for the bus.
3. When the bus approaches, form a line and be prepared to load immediately.
4. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the parking brake has been engaged, and the red loading lights come on.
5. The driver will not pick up a student unless they are at their designated stop.
6. Do not run after the bus after it has pulled away from the stop.
7. If the bus is equipped with seat belts, students must wear them.

## Loading the Bus

1. Do not push or shove.
2. Use handrail and steps. Carry large bags and objects in front of you.
3. Go to your assigned seat immediately. The driver will not leave the stop until all passengers are seated.

## Getting Off the Bus

1. Stay seated until the bus is completely stopped and the park brake is applied.
2. Use the handrail when leaving the bus.
3. Wait for your turn to leave the bus; no pushing or shoving.
4. You must get off at your designated stop (AM & PM routes).
5. Stay clear of the bus when unloading. Do not chase or hang on to the bus at any time.
6. If any article drops or rolls near or under the bus do not go after it. Go to the door of the bus and ask the driver for help.

## Dropping Off Pre-Kindergarten – 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Students

Parents or a designee must be at the bus door to receive Pre-Kindergarten – 1<sup>st</sup> grade students. If the bus is on schedule and there is no one to receive the student, the driver will radio dispatch and will continue on the route. At the completion of the route the student will be returned to the campus. The parents will be responsible for picking up the student from that location. If this problem continues a phone call or conference between the parent, Executive Transportation Director and Assistant Director will be held and an agreement will be made. *If a parent or designated person fails to show up at the bus door more than 3 times, the child will no longer be able to ride the bus.*

Students in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and up will be dropped off at their designated stop without a parent or designee. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to make sure arrangements are made to receive your child at the stop.

## Crossing the Street or Highway

1. All students living on the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point of 15 feet in front of the right bumper and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross.
2. Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. Never cross the road behind the bus.
4. Watch out for cars that do not stop when the bus is loading and unloading students.
5. Cross all streets at intersections. Obey all traffic signals and signs on your way home.

## Accidents or Emergencies

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. If you must leave the bus, stay in a group.
  - The student nearest to the door will open and hold it open
  - Leave the bus in a single file line as quietly as possible.
  - Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door.
  - Once outside the bus, follow the drivers instructions completely
  - Students are not allowed to leave an accident with parent or guardian until released by FISD Officials and or Emergency Personnel

## Prohibited Items

1. Tobacco, alcohol, vapes, glass containers, and balloons
2. Weapons, explosive devices, matches or lighters, harmful drugs, prescription drugs or chemicals.
3. Live animals or insects.
4. Any object (musical instruments, shop projects, sports equipment, sport balls or baggage) too large to fit under a bus seat or on the student's lap without imposing on the other students sharing the seat. All other items must be kept on the student's lap at all times. Parents/Guardians must arrange for other transportation when large, bulky items must be taken to and from school.

## Conduct on the Bus

School buses are considered an extension of the classroom, and students are expected to conduct themselves accordingly. Students being transported in school-owned vehicles shall comply with the Student Code of Conduct. Adults other than drivers, coaches, and sponsors of a field trip are not allowed to board or ride any bus without prior approval from the transportation director or campus principal. (Parents must provide written notice to the school if a student is to ride a different bus on any given day or if the student is to get off the bus at a stop different from his/her regular stop.) If a student is to ride a different bus on any given day or if the student is to get off the bus at a different stop from his/her regular stop, parents are required to provide notice to the school in advance.

1. Remain seated at all times. Each student is to remain seated for the duration of the trip, and remain seated until the park brake is applied and the bus door opens.
2. Do not change seats. Students are required to sit in their assigned seat. They cannot refuse to sit in their assigned seat and cannot deny another student a place to sit.
3. Fighting, horseplay, and the use of obscene or vulgar language and/or gestures is forbidden and may result in immediate denial of bus privileges.
4. Do not throw or spit objects inside or outside the bus.
5. Do not mark, cut or scratch any part of the bus.
6. The emergency door and exit controls should be used by students only during supervised drills or actual emergencies.
7. Students shall remain quiet when approaching railroad crossings.
8. Students will not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus. *Water only* is permitted on hot days.
9. Students will face forward for the duration of the trip, and shall keep their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the bus aisle. Keep all body parts inside the bus and to yourself.

**NOTE: Students that engage in conduct considered dangerous to the health and safety of themselves or to others will be subject to immediate emergency removal from the school bus.**

## **Use of Cell Phones & Electronic Devices on Buses**

**The transportation department will enforce the following bus rules pertaining to cell phones and electronic devices on buses. The use of these items can be detrimental to the safety and well-being of other students and the bus driver.**

### **Cell Phones:**

1. Students who allow their cell phones to become a distraction or disruption on the school bus will be asked to put the phone away. Failure to do so may result in the cell phone being confiscated. Parents will then be required to pick up the cell phone at Transportation during normal hours of operation.
2. Parents / Guardians are asked not to request to speak to the driver on the student's cell phone. The parents should contact the Transportation Department at (469-762-4162).
3. Students are encouraged to contact their parent / guardian when the bus has been delayed (after 15-20 minutes) and they are getting home late. We strive to keep our buses on schedule; however, some delays are beyond our control. When doing so, do not allow the phone use to become a distraction to the driver.
4. Taking pictures or capturing video of other students is prohibited. The driver is not responsible for un-authorized pictures or captured video.

### **Electronic Devices:**

1. Students who allow their electronic devices to become a distraction or disruption on the school bus will be asked to put the item away. Failure to do so may result in the item being confiscated. Parents will then be required to pick up the item at Transportation during normal hours of operation.
2. All electronic devices must have headphones or be placed on mute when in use. External noise from any device is not allowed on the school bus.
3. The use of any electronic device is a privilege. Students may lose this privilege if they fail to follow safety instructions from the driver.

# Discipline

The school bus is an extension of the classroom and the Assistant Principal of Transportation will administer discipline with the assistance from the Executive Director of Transportation. All school board policies that apply to student conduct and other student-related activities apply also to the school bus.

**Cameras will run at all times to record students' behavior for bus safety.**

## DESCRIPTION OF INFRACTIONS

### Category I

#### Minor Infractions

Include, but are not limited to the following:

- Not following the bus driver's directions.
- Screaming, yelling, or making loud and distracting noises
- Throwing objects (items that distract, non-harmful)
- Not keeping hands and feet to self.
- Eating or drinking on bus.
- Not meeting the bus promptly.
- Not boarding or exiting the bus at student's designated stop
- Putting head, arms, hands, or any object out the window
- Chasing after the bus
- Horse playing/pushing/shoving
- Using profanity or making offensive remarks or gestures (automatic discipline referral).

### Category II

#### Major Infractions

Include, but not limited to the following:

- Accumulating (3) three minor infractions.
- Not staying in seat while bus is in motion (State Law).
- Bullying
- Being defiant or disrespectful to the bus driver.
- Instigating a fight
- Fighting
- Throwing harmful objects inside or outside of the bus.
- Vandalism or destruction of the school bus.
- Abusing or stealing another student's property
- Use of tobacco, lighters, drugs or alcohol.
- Any unauthorized use of emergency exits.

## **The following is an outline of the Bus Discipline Procedure:**

Step 1: The driver will inform the student of the problem behavior. The student will be given a verbal warning for misconduct. Every effort will be made to solve the problem prior to reporting the student to the Assistant Director.

Step 2: The uniform disciplinary action for Forney ISD will be:

- A. First Minor Infraction - Driver will submit a conduct form in their Smart Tablet write up to the Team Lead in an effort to correct the situation. (This is the first time a student is written up-He/She has had previous verbal warnings documented by the driver.)
- B. Second Minor Infraction – Assistant Director will administer appropriate discipline.
- C. The Director or Assistant Director has the authority to skip steps for serious violations, or to repeat them if the misconduct is not a serious safety violation.

### **Bus Rider Discipline Policy**

#### ***Discipline Consequences for PK – 5th Grade***

1. First Offense            Verbal warning by Administrator and Parent notified.
2. Second Offense        Verbal warning by Administrator and Parent notified.
3. Third Offense          Three-day suspension of bus riding privileges.
4. Fourth Offense        Five-day suspension of bus riding privileges.
5. Fifth Offense          Six-week suspension of bus privileges.
6. Sixth Offense          Suspension of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year.

#### ***Discipline Consequences for 6th – 12th Grade***

1. First Offense: Verbal warning by Administrator and Parent notified.
2. Second Offense: Verbal warning by Administrator and Parent notified.
3. Third Offense: Five-day suspension of bus riding privileges.
4. Fourth Offense: Six-week suspension of bus riding privileges.
5. Fifth Offense: Suspension of bus privileges for remainder of the school year.

#### **Examples of behavior which constitute discipline violations are listed below.**

Based on the severity of the discipline violation, immediate loss of bus privileges may result at the discretion of the administrator.

- Vandalism (Student will not be allowed back on the bus until compensation for the damage has been made. \$65.00 for graffiti removal, \$100.00 for cover replacement).
- Throwing objects out of the bus (Students will be responsible for paying for any damage done from objects thrown from a bus).
- Assault/Fighting.
- Sexual Harassment or lewd conduct
- Possession of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol, knife, gun, or object discerned as a weapon
- Injury to another student.
- Verbal or physical abuse to the bus driver.
- Possession of hazardous materials on bus (lighters, matches, dangerous liquids or gases).



## **SMART Tag - Registering for Bus Access**

Forney ISD uses the Secured Mobility Authorized Ridership Technology (SMART) tag system for all students who ride the bus to and from school. Students who are successfully enrolled for transportation services will be provided with an initial SMART tag ID badge at no charge. However, a charge will be assessed for lost SMART tag badges. Please note, a SMART tag ID badge is required each time your child enters and exits the bus. A consequence can and will be imposed on student's who regularly do not have their SMART tag ID. Information on how to obtain a replacement badge is detailed in the Replacing the SMART Tag link on our district's website.

## **School-Sponsored Trips**

Students who participate in school-sponsored trips are required to use school-provided transportation to and from the event. However, in accordance with campus procedures, a parent may provide written consent for their child to ride with or be released after the event to the parent or another adult designated by the parent. Please refer to School-Sponsored Field Trips in our Student Handbook for more information.

## **Buses and Other School Vehicles**

The district makes school bus transportation available to all students living two or more miles from school and to any students who are experiencing homelessness. This service is provided at no cost to students.

Bus routes and stops will be designated annually. Any subsequent changes will be posted at the school and on the district's website. For the safety of the driver and all passengers, students must board district vehicles only at authorized stops and drivers must unload passengers only at authorized stops.

A parent may designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for their child. The designated location must be an approved stop on an approved route. For information on bus routes and stops or to designate an alternate pickup or drop-off location, contact the transportation department at 469-762-4162.