

*ISSAQUAH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT  
2009-2010*



*SCHOOL BUS INFORMATION  
FOR  
PARENTS AND STUDENTS*

**WELCOME** to the Issaquah School District. This booklet was prepared by the Issaquah School District Transportation Department to provide useful information to parents and students. It includes information about student conduct, school bus rules, emergency evacuation procedures, bus passes, parent-driver communication and other important information. We enjoy working with the District's children, and we look forward to making their daily bus ride a safe and pleasant experience. You can reach the Transportation Department by calling 425-837-6333.

### **TRANSPORTATION STAFF**

Director of Transportation  
Secretary to the Director of Transportation  
Transportation Supervisor  
Payroll Secretary  
Transportation Secretary  
Operations Coordinator (dispatch)  
Operations Coordinator (routing)  
Routing Specialist  
Safety/Training Coordinator  
Shop Foreman

Jo Porter  
Nancy Cautard  
Connie McCoy  
Eleanor Sherrill  
Jenni Bingham  
Lucy Anderson  
Gayle Morgan  
Kathy Nilsen  
Laurie Mulvihill  
Jim Enfield

### **BUS CONDUCT**

The goal of Transportation Services is to provide safe and timely bus service for the District's students. To do this, drivers must be able to concentrate on operating vehicles in a variety of traffic conditions, always being alert and vigilant. Excessive noise or misconduct by bus passengers can distract a driver and endanger all students on the bus. Therefore, the support and cooperation of parents and students is needed to ensure acceptable behavior by all bus riders.

Students are expected to cooperate with their bus driver to promote bus safety. Each driver is given some latitude working with students to modify inappropriate behaviors. A bus citation may be written at anytime during this process. A driver may confer with a student, change bus seating, assign a specific seat, reinforce student's successes and establish consequence for inappropriate bus rider behavior. If violations of Bus Riding Rules continue, a written citation may be issued. For severe or hazardous conduct, a citation or bus suspension may follow.

Bus misconduct may be referred to the school principal for follow up which may include suspension and/or emergency removal and/or emergency expulsion from the bus.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT ON BUSES**

Any misconduct by a student, which in the opinion of the bus driver or the director or transportation/designee is detrimental to the safe operations of the bus, shall be sufficient cause for the director of transportation/designee to suspend the transportation privileges.

A. Rules of conduct for students riding buses are the following:

- ❖ The driver is in full charge of the bus and passengers and shall be obeyed. If an educational assistant is assigned to the bus by the district, she/he shall be responsible for student conduct under the direction of the driver. When transporting classes or teams, the teacher or coach shall be primarily responsible for the behavior of the students. Students shall cooperate and obey both the driver and the teacher, coach or other staff members.
- ❖ Students shall observe rules of classroom conduct while on buses and shall refrain from talking to the driver unless necessary.
- ❖ Noise shall be kept down to avoid distracting the driver. Students shall refrain from profanity, obscene gestures, or offensive acts.
- ❖ Spraying perfume including but not limited to any form of body spray is prohibited on the bus.
- ❖ Throwing tossing or shooting anything *within, from or at* the bus is prohibited.
- ❖ Fighting, pushing, tripping, spitting, abusive language and violent behavior are prohibited on the bus and will not be tolerated. Harassment of any kind is prohibited.
- ❖ Students shall not carry or have in their possession items that can cause injury to passengers on the bus. Such items include, but are not limited to sticks, breakable containers, aerosol containers, straps or pins protruding from clothing, large bulky items, or musical instruments which cannot be held or placed between legs, and laser lights etc. Books and personal belongings shall be kept out of aisles. Skateboards must be in a sports bag while on the bus.
- ❖ Students shall not smoke; possess tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or other illegal substances or paraphernalia of any kind.
- ❖ Flammable or flaming devices, pepper spray, bombs of any kind, knives, firearms, weapons or facsimiles are prohibited.
- ❖ Students shall not eat, chew gum, or drink anything except water while on the bus. Exceptions to this rule must be pre-authorized by the transportation department.
- ❖ Students shall not have animals on buses, except *Service Animals*.
- ❖ Students shall stand away from the roadway curb when any bus is approaching or leaving a stop. Students shall be at the bus stop five minutes before the scheduled bus time and wait in an orderly manner.
- ❖ Students going to and from the bus stops where there are no sidewalks shall walk on the left-hand side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic, when applicable. Students shall go directly to their homes after leaving the bus
- ❖ Students shall not sit in the driver's seat.

- ❖ Students shall go directly to their seat and sit facing forward once inside the bus and remain seated at all times unless the driver instructs otherwise.
- ❖ Students shall not open bus windows without the driver's permission. Students shall not extend any part of their body out of the window at any time.
- ❖ Students who have assigned seats shall use only that seat unless permission to change is authorized by the driver.
- ❖ Students shall use lap belts on buses when available.
- ❖ Students shall get on/off the bus in an orderly manner and shall obey the instructions of the driver or school staff on duty. There shall be no pushing and shoving when boarding or leaving the bus. Once off the bus, students shall adhere to rules for pedestrians.
- ❖ Students shall cross in front of the bus when the driver signals it is safe to do so. They shall never cross behind the bus.
- ❖ Student shall keep the bus clean by depositing all trash in the container at the front of the bus.
- ❖ Student's misconduct shall constitute sufficient reason for suspending transportation privileges.
- ❖ Students shall follow emergency exit drill procedures as prescribed by the driver. They shall not tamper with emergency doors or equipment.
- ❖ Students shall ride on assigned bus and leave the bus only at assigned stop. Bus passes are required to board or depart at a different authorized stop.
- ❖ Parents of students identified as causing damage to buses shall be charged with the cost of the incurred damage. Students causing the damage may be suspended from transportation.  
**\*\* *Students or parents must reimburse the school district for bus damage caused by the student's misconduct.***

## **Disciplinary Procedures**

The Director of Transportation/designee, in conjunction with the building principal, is responsible for correcting those students whose unacceptable behavior results in a bus incident report or violation the rules above. The principal shall provide supervision during bus arrival and departure times at his/her school. The principal shall aid in enforcing that students comply with the specified regulations. Open lines of communication among school officials, bus drivers, and the transportation department must be maintained.

When waiting for a bus, or going to and from a bus stop, students are responsible for conducting themselves according to the social and legal mores that apply to adults in public. That is, they must not abuse or cause damage to private or public property; they must not use obscene language or gestures; and they must not engage in criminal activity. Failure to adhere to these mores may result in formal complaints by citizens to the proper law enforcement agency.



## **EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS**

Every child who rides a school bus should know what to do should it ever become necessary to evacuate the bus quickly and safely. **Usually students remain on the bus during an emergency; however, two situations do require the bus to be evacuated:**

### **FIRE OR DANGER OF FIRE:**

A bus should be stopped and evacuated immediately if the engine or any portion of the bus is on fire. Passengers should move a distance of 100 feet or more from the bus and remain there until the driver of the bus has determined that no danger remains. Being near an existing fire and unable to move the bus away, or near the presence of gasoline or other combustible materials should be considered as “danger of fire,” and students should be evacuated.

### **UNSAFE POSITION:**

In the event a bus is stopped due to accident, mechanical failure, or road conditions, it must be determined, immediately, whether it is safe for passengers to remain in the bus or to evacuate. The bus must be evacuated if the final stopping point is in the path of any train or adjacent to any railroad tracks.

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILL**

In compliance with WAC392-145-040, an emergency evacuation drill will be completed within the first six weeks of each school semester for all students riding school buses except those excused by the regulation. Students excused from the drill will be orally instructed three times per year. Drills will be held at school bus loading zones only. A verbal review of the emergency exit procedures will be provided for all students two weeks after the initial drill. Students riding field trip buses will receive verbal reviews of emergency procedures at the beginning of each field trip.

The Emergency Evacuation Drill will proceed as follows. The driver will:

- ❖ Provide a short explanation of why it is necessary to conduct exit drills.
- ❖ Shut off the motor, set the emergency break, and place the bus in Park or Neutral depending on the bus type.
- ❖ Instruct reliable students about use of the 2-way radio.
- ❖ Put the microphone outside the window and turn key to accessory, if needed.
- ❖ Instruct students on getting emergency help.
- ❖ Instruct students on setting highway warning reflector devices.
- ❖ Instruct students on removing the first-aid kit.
- ❖ Instruct students on use of the fire extinguisher.
- ❖ Instruct and assign students to open Exit door (s).
- ❖ Explain which windows are “kick out” windows.
- ❖ Assist students in leaving via the exit door (s).

**Students should also be taught to remember that most accidents are preventable, regardless of who may be at fault, and that proper behavior and good conduct on the bus is the best way to assist the driver in the safe performance of his/her duties.**

## **STUDENT BUS PASSES**

Bus passes are required for students who wish to depart the bus at a different authorized stop or to ride a different bus to or from school. Passes for riding a bus other than a student's regular bus are issued on a space available basis only. Therefore, there is no guarantee that a pass will be approved. Schools issue bus passes. The procedure to obtain a bus pass requires a parent note. The school's office processes the request and issues either a Permanent or Temporary Bus Pass. No bus passes are issued the first two weeks of school or the last two weeks of school, except in emergencies.

## **PRE-SCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN**

The Standard Issaquah School District Transportation procedure is that Pre-School/Kindergarten students being transported by bus have a responsible person to receive them at their bus stop. If the parents/guardian believe the child is capable of attending to his/her own needs and may be dropped off without a responsible person attendance, the District then requires that information to be in writing from the parents/guardian. Via a form provided by Transportation.

## **PARENTS RIDING BUSES**

Only students and staff of the Issaquah School District are allowed to ride the school bus. However, parents of Issaquah District students may occasionally be given permission to ride the bus to/from school if they are assisting in a classroom. Permission must be **pre-approved** through Transportation or the school office. The school will then issue a bus pass to the parent. To ride a school bus for any other reason, approval must come from Transportation Management.

## **PARENT COMMUNICATION WITH THE BUS DRIVER**

Due to safety reasons and time challenges, boarding a school bus to talk to the bus driver or a student is prohibited. It is best to contact the bus driver through the Transportation Department. This will ensure that the driver has adequate time to discuss your needs and concerns. Clarification of the rules and procedures should be directed to the Transportation Supervisor.

## **VIDEO CAMERAS**

The district and bus driver's goal is to increase safety while transporting students to and from school. Video cameras on the bus are one tool to help improve student conduct.

## **MECHANICALLY SAFE BUSES**

Issaquah school buses are inspected by the Washington State Patrol twice per year. All district buses meet or exceed Federal and State specifications.

## **BUS DRIVER TRAINING PROGRAM**

To ensure a safe bus ride for your students, each bus driver is an authorized Washington State School Bus Driver who has completed an extensive training program consisting of classroom and on the road training. Each driver has completed a drug screen and has undergone an extensive background check, including State and Federal fingerprinting clearance.

## FACTS TO LEARN AND SHARE

- The National Academy of Sciences, the U.S. Department of Transportation and other authorities agree that **school buses are the safest form of transportation** for getting children to and from school.
- Some **4800,000 school buses carry 26 million children** – more than half of America’s schoolchildren – each day, rarely with any serious accident.
- **Safety features** including the color and size of the school buses, height, reinforced sides, flashing red lights, cross view mirrors, and crossing and stop sign arms **ensure children are protected and secure on and off the bus.**
- **School bus drivers** are **highly trained professionals** who have your child’s safety in mind. They receive **specialized training** in student behavior management, loading and unloading, security and emergency medical procedures.
- **Drivers participate in** pre-employment and random **drug/alcohol testing**, as well as frequent **driving record checks**, and submit to **background checks** and periodic **medical exams** to keep their Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) with a School Bus Endorsement.
- The **school bus industry operates** by a set of **safety, security, health and driver qualification guidelines** that meet, and in some cases exceed, federal and state laws, and ensure that school buses are the safest mode of transportation for our nation’s schoolchildren.

### School Bus Safety Tips

#### *For students*

- Be alert to traffic. Check both ways for cars before stepping off the bus.
- Make eye contact with the bus driver, and wait for the bus driver’s signal before crossing the street.
- Walk in front of the bus; never walk behind the bus to cross the street.
- While waiting for the bus, stay in a safe place away from the street.
- Before leaving the sidewalk, look for the flashing red lights.
- Never go near or under the bus to retrieve something you’ve dropped.

#### *For Parents*

- Have your child ride the school bus to and from school instead of driving or riding with teenage passengers.
- Review the safety tips with your child regularly.
- Get to know the parents of other riders. You will learn about the other children who are riding along with your child.
- Team with other parents to get involved and monitor bus stops and bus routes. Voice concerns immediately to your school district.
- Attend “back to school” nights and tour your child’s school bus.
- Get to know your school’s transportation coordinator and your child’s bus driver. He or she is a trained professional who sees your child every day.
- Keep phone numbers handy in case the bus is delayed or in the event of an emergency.