

## **Gold Star Bus Rider Handbook**

School buses are operated by Gold Star Bus and their office number is 972-563-3939. Surveillance cameras are used on selected Gold Star buses to ensure student and driver safety.

*The Bus Driver has the same authority over the child as a classroom teacher.*

The bus driver is charged with the responsibility of maintaining discipline. He shall report violations to the school principal. Parents should encourage their children to behave and sit down at all times while riding the bus.

### **General Bus Rules**

1. Obey the instructions of the bus driver. At no time will a student act toward or address comments to the bus driver in a disrespectful manner or refuse to cooperate with the driver.
2. Board and leave the bus at designated stops only.
3. Only students who are eligible to ride may be transported. Students must ride their assigned bus.
4. Do not ask to ride home on another bus with a friend without a note from home.
5. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide transportation to school if a child misses the bus.
6. If you do not ride for three days, you must call the transportation office, 972-563-3939, or the bus may not come by again until contacted.

### **Procedures for Waiting for the Bus**

1. Be at your bus stop five minutes before scheduled pickup time. The driver will not wait or honk.
2. Stand on the sidewalk or back from the roadway 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 until red loading lights come on.
5. Parents should instruct their children on what procedures to follow if the bus is missed.
6. Students will abide by the individual schools rules and regulations concerning bus students, including conduct and dress code.

### **Loading the Bus**

1. Do not push or shove.
2. Use the handrail and steps. Carry large bags and objects in front of you.
3. Go to your assigned seat. The bus will not move until all students are seated.
4. Students will sit in their assigned seats at all times.

### **Conduct on the Bus**

1. Remain seated while the bus is moving. Each student will be expected to remain seated for the duration of the trip, and remain seated until the bus door opens.

2. Do not change seats. The driver is required to assign seats.
3. A student shall not refuse to sit in an assigned seat or deny another a place to sit.
4. Normal conversation is permitted; any loud noises may distract the driver and create an unsafe condition.
5. Scuffling, fighting, and the use of obscene, or vulgar or profane language and gestures are forbidden.
6. Do not throw objects inside or out of the bus. Vandalism costs will be paid by the person who is responsible.
7. The emergency door and exit controls should be used by pupils only during supervised drills or actual emergencies.
8. Students will never attempt to sit in the drivers seat or operate the passenger door or other driver controls except in cases of extreme emergency.
9. Students shall 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.

### **Getting Off the Bus**

1. Stay seated until the bus is completely stopped.
2. Use the handrail and take one step at a time when leaving the bus.
3. Wait for your turn to leave the bus; pushing and crowding will only slow exiting and may cause an accident.
4. You must use your assigned stop at all times (A.M. and P.M. 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.

### **Crossing the Highway or Street**

1. All students living on the left side of the roadway shall exit the bus and move to a point 10 to 15 feet in front of the right bumper and wait for the driver to signal you that it is safe to cross.
2. Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
3. Never cross behind the bus.
4. CAUTION! Be alert for the vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading or unloading students.
5. Cross all streets at intersections. Obey all traffic signals and signs on your way home.

### **Accidents or Emergencies**

1. Follow the drivers instructions.
2. If you must leave the bus, stay in a group.
  - a. The student nearest the door will open the door and hold it open.
  - b. Leave the bus in a single file line as quietly as possible.
  - c. Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the door.
  - d. Once outside the bus, follow the drivers instructions completely.

### **Extracurricular Trips**

1. Bus rider rules apply to all school-sponsored events.
2. Discipline will be the responsibility of the building principal and the trip sponsor.
3. The bus must return clean when returning from the trip.

### **Prohibited Items**

1. Tobacco, alcohol, and glass containers. The eating of food and candy is prohibited on the bus. (The chewing of gum is also prohibited.)
2. Live animals or insects.
3. Weapons, explosive devices, matches or cigarette lighters, harmful drugs or chemicals.
4. Any object (musical instrument, shop project) too large to be carried by the student. All other items must be kept on the students lap at all times.
5. Radios and tape players, skateboards and beepers.

### **Discipline**

The school bus is an extension of the classroom, and discipline will be administered by the principal with assistance from the bus driver. All school board policies that apply to student conduct and other school related activities apply also to the school bus.

It's really not a complicated system. In simple terms: 3 minor infractions (written) equal a major infraction. In the case of a major infraction, the students riding privileges may be suspended for a period of time.

The following is an outline of the Bus Discipline Procedure:

Step 1: The driver will inform the student of the program. The student will be given verbal warnings for misconduct. Every effort will be made to solve the problems prior to reporting the student to the principal.

Step 2: The uniform disciplinary action will be:

a. First Minor Infraction - Driver will attempt to contact parent in an effort to correct the situation. (This is the first time a student is written up - He/She has had previous verbal warnings.)

b. Second Minor Infraction - School administrators will follow the normal student discipline management plan.

c. Third Minor Infraction - First Major Infraction - The student may be suspended from riding the bus for three days or the principal's discretion of an alternative discipline.

d. Second Major Infraction - The student may be suspended from riding the bus for a period of time (three more minor infractions will equal another major infractions).

e. Third Major Infraction - The student may be suspended for the remainder of the semester. (If this occurs during the last six weeks of a semester, it may be extended to the end of the following semester.)

The building administrator has the authority to skip steps for serious violations, or to repeat them if the misconduct is not a serious safety violation.

### **Minor Infractions**

Included, but not limited to:

1. Talking loudly or yelling.
2. Throwing objects (paper, items that distract - non harmful).
3. Leaving paper or other debris on the bus.
4. Using profanity or making offensive remarks or gestures.
5. Not meeting the bus promptly.
6. Bothering (poking, pushing, etc.) other bus riders.
7. Not following the bus drivers directions.
8. Putting arms, hand or heads outside the windows.
9. Not obeying the rules at the loading area.

### **Major Infractions**

1. Accumulating three minor infractions.
2. Using or possessing alcohol, tobacco, drugs or paraphernalia.
3. Deliberately disregarding safety of passengers and others.
4. Vandalizing the bus.
5. Possessing firearms or other dangerous objects.
6. Throwing harmful objects (rocks, books, etc.).
7. Fighting.