



*“Every Student, Every Day”*



**STEPHENVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**SCHOOL BUS STUDENT RIDER HANDBOOK**



*Available in English and Spanish*



**Stephenville I.S.D.**  
**Transportation Department**  
2680 W. Overhill Dr.  
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Phone: (254) 968-3759  
Fax: (254) 968-2509



Dear Parent/Guardian:

Stephenville Independent School District is pleased to provide transportation to and from school, as a courtesy service, for students who meet the requirements set forth by the Texas Education Agency. **School buses are allowed to deliver students from the child's registered home address within the district's boundaries to school. School buses are allowed to deliver students from school to the child's registered home address within the district's boundaries, state licensed registered daycare center within the district's boundaries, and or grandparent's physical home address within the school's boundaries.**

In order to provide safe and prompt movement of students meeting conditions outlined by the Texas Education Agency, the District has set out standard guidelines and procedures relating to student behavior in regards to the outlined procedures. Included in the guidelines are measures for discipline related noncompliance.

We consider you a team member of the transportation department and the district in assisting us to create a safe and healthy environment for "every student, every day." Both the student and guardian are requested to acknowledge understanding by signing the enclosed acknowledgment form and returning it to the appropriate route driver or monitor.

If you should need additional information or have questions concerning the safety of your child, the bus routes or other matters regarding transportation, please contact the Transportation Office.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

David Woods

David Woods  
Director of Transportation

Eligible students are invited to ride buses for increased safety and convenience. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) and Stephenville I.S.D. provide transportation for a student that lives more than two miles from their assigned school or resides in an adopted hazardous route, as measured by the shortest route that may be traveled on public roads from the student's home to school.

Stops will be made where the public access road intersects with private roads, unpaved roads, non-county adopted roads, and private properties. SISD Transportation will not travel on the other roads as the safety of all our student bus riders is our first priority. Please note that students may have longer than a half-mile distance to the bus stop on these roads. Requests to change or add stops will be considered if the change will make the route shorter or safer as determined by the SISD Transportation Department.

To make any changes to a student's afternoon transportation, the campus must be notified no later than 1:00 p.m. The campus will contact transportation to get final approval of this change. If approval is not provided, the campus will contact the guardian immediately.

### **Student Safety Seats**

For the safety of our student riders, all Pre-K students will be required to sit in safety harness seats. All students riding a bus with seat belts must be buckled. A student refusing to buckle in to their safety seat, or stay buckled in to their safety seat, will have his/her bus riding privileges suspended.

### **Parents of Students in grades PRE-K - 2nd GRADE (Central and Chamberlin Students):**

To ensure the safety of our youngest bus riders, parents or designated adults are required to be present at the bus stop in the mornings and to meet the bus in the afternoons to receive *all Central and Chamberlin students*. If NO adult is present at the bus stop to receive the student, the student will not be allowed to exit the bus and will be returned to the transportation department. Parents will be notified to pick up their child at the transportation office no later than 5:00 p.m.

### **SMART TAG Bus Rider Cards**

Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, ALL students will be assigned a SMART Tag to be utilized for a variety of reasons. This smart tag will have the eligible bus riding student information pre-loaded. This card will be required to be scanned as a student enters and exits the bus. The student must have this SMART TAG bus card in their possession and ready to use every morning and afternoon. In the event that a student misplaces their SMART TAG card, they must get a replacement card from their campus as soon as possible. Replacement cards are \$3.00 for Central and Chamberlin, \$4.00 for Hook and Gilbert, and \$5.00 for Henderson and the High School. The student will have five days to obtain a replacement card. If they do not get a replacement card within the five days, bus riding privileges will be suspended.

## **BUS LOADING AND UNLOADING SAFETY RULES**

### ***LOADING THE BUS***

When a school bus approaches a stop, students need to form a single line at least 10 feet away from the curb or loading area. The line will need to form away from the street.

1. Students need to wait to approach the bus until the bus has come to a complete stop, the door is opened and the driver or monitor instructs the student to come aboard.
2. Students will need to be prepared to load the bus as soon as instructed by the driver or monitor.
3. If a student misses the bus, **THEY ARE NOT TO CHASE OR ATTEMPT TO TOUCH THE BUS**. They should return home immediately and contact their parents.
4. Families should instruct their students on the steps to be taken if the student does miss the bus.
5. If students have to cross the road to get onto the school bus:
  - They should stay on the side of the road, away from traffic, until the bus stops and the driver/monitor signals to cross.
  - When the driver/monitor signals that it is safe to cross, students should first check for traffic. \*Stephenville I.S.D. will attempt to secure a safe loading and unloading designated stop.
  - As students cross in front of the school bus, they should watch the driver/monitor to guarantee that both the driver/monitor and student have made eye contact.
  - Students should never attempt cross behind the bus.
  - Students should still remember to look in both directions before proceeding and then walk directly to the other side of the road and away from the traffic flow.
  - CAUTION: Students should be alert for oncoming traffic. The District cannot control drivers who do not follow the law.
  - Crossing should be made at intersections and students should obey all traffic signals, signs and safety rules on their way home.
6. Students are required to maintain appropriate behavior during this loading process. No pushing or shoving as this could create a safety hazard and lead to an accident.
7. The handrails and steps are safety devices and students should use them. Bus steps should be used one step at a time.
8. Movement to their assigned seats should be done quickly and safely.
9. The bus will not move forward until all the students are seated.
10. If a student drops something while loading, he or she should tell the bus driver or monitor and **NEVER** try to go underneath the bus.

11. Students are required to sit in their assigned seats. Assigned seats makes loading faster and in the case of an accident, the driver or monitor is able to account for the students on the bus.

### ***UNLOADING THE BUS AT A CAMPUS***

1. Students should stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
2. Students should not push or play on the way off the bus.
3. Students should use the handrails to avoid falls. They should also ensure that straps, drawstrings and clothing do not get caught in the handrail or door. Students should move 10 feet away from the bus.

### ***UNLOADING THE BUS AT THEIR DESIGNATED STOP***

1. Students should remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
2. Students should not push or play on the way off the bus.
3. Students should use the handrails to avoid falls.
  - a. They should watch that straps, drawstrings and clothing do not get caught in the handrail or door.
  - b. Students should glance back toward the rear of the bus before they step off the bus to make sure NO OTHER vehicle is passing on the right.
  - c. Students should move 10 feet away from the bus and clear the area once they have unloaded. Hanging on or attempt to chase a bus is a safety hazard.

*If a student misses his/her appropriate stop, they need to remain on the bus until they arrive at the transportation office. The transportation office will call parents to pick up their child at SISD Transportation office before 5:00 pm.*

## **SCHOOL BUS RIDER SAFETY RULES**

The following are SISD Bus Riding Safety rules. Failure to follow these rules may result in the loss of bus riding privileges.

1. Follow the directions of the Bus Driver or Monitor.
2. Stay in Your assigned Seat, NO standing or Moving.
3. Keep Hands, Feet, and other objects to YOURSELF.
4. Keep All Parts of Your Body and any objects inside the bus.
5. No Pushing, Shoving or Running.
6. No LOUD Talking, CURSING, or Fighting.
7. NO Eating, Drinking or Chewing Gum.
8. NO Smoking or Use of Tobacco.
9. No use of Electronic Devices to record or photograph other riders on board.
10. Keep ALL personal and School supplies in your backpacks, purses, bags.
11. Students must use headphones to listen to music/videos on electronic devices.
12. Bus Driver or Monitor has the authority to assign seats.

The following are items PROHIBITED to be on the bus. Failure to follow these rules will result in the loss of bus riding privileges.

1. TOBACCO, E-Cigarettes, Vape Pens
2. Live animals or insects
3. Food, Drinks, and gum
4. Alcoholic Beverages
5. Weapons, explosive devices, harmful drugs or chemicals
6. Any item that blocks the aisle or an emergency exit
7. Matches or cigarette lighters
8. Any material that would be considered illegal including items considered to be pornographic.

### **CONDUCT ON THE BUS**

1. The SISD Student Code of Conduct details the primary rules regarding student behavior and is applicable in all transportation activities given that the school bus is an extension of the classroom.
2. The bus driver and/or monitor is the authority on the bus and may assign seats as needed and necessary.
3. Refusing to sit in an assigned seat or denying any student a place to sit is not allowed.
4. Students are required to remain in their assigned seat for the entire trip. Only when the bus has completely stopped at their designated stop may the student stand.
5. They are expected to be positioned in their seat correctly at all times. They need to face the front, keeping hands and feet directly in front of them and to themselves.
6. For safety, all students should use their normal voice during the bus ride. Yelling, screaming, or any loud noise is prohibited for safety. Loud noise could distract the driver's attention and create an unsafe condition.
7. Windows are for ventilation, if necessary. Throwing objects out the window is not allowed. Students are not to yell out the window to bystanders or other motorists is prohibited.
8. As with any school district function or activity, the possession of alcohol, controlled substances, dangerous drugs, or a "look alike" (something represented to be a prohibited substance) or a weapon is illegal and are prohibited.
9. Students under the influence of any illegal substance will be treated in the manner as stated in the District Student Code of Conduct.
10. Food, drinks and gum of any kind are not allowed on the bus. Lunch boxes or Lunch sacks are to be kept closed at all times.
11. Pens, pencils, markers, scissors, etc. should remain inside backpacks at all times. Objects with points create safety hazards.
12. Based on the Student Code of Conduct, scuffling, fighting, use of disrespectful, obscene, vulgar, or profane language, displaying inappropriate pictures or videos or gestures are prohibited.

13. The inside of a bus is NOT a playground. Objects should not be thrown inside the bus.
14. A bus is school district property. Marking, cutting or scratching on any part of the bus is considered vandalism. Vandalism is punishable by law and the district will seek restitution for all damages.
15. Taking pictures or videos while on the bus is prohibited. This action would be a violation of HIPAA/FERPA laws of which is the district must maintain compliance.
16. If the student chooses to play music, work on assignments and or watch videos from an electronic device, he/she must use earbuds or headphones.
17. If seat belts are available on the bus, state law requires the students to be buckled in their seats.

### **MECHANICAL BUS FAILURE**

1. If in route there is a mechanical failure on a bus prior to picking up your child, your child may be instructed to board another bus. A substitute bus will meet students at the arranged location and drivers and monitors will escort appropriate students to the substitute bus to complete the route.
2. If the mechanical failure happens after your child has boarded the bus and the bus is on route, every effort will be made to deliver a substitute bus to the site of the mechanical failure as soon as possible. When the substitute bus arrives on site, students will be assisted in boarding the substitute and the route will continue.

### **ACCIDENTS OR EMERGENCIES**

1. During an emergency, students are required to quickly and quietly follow the driver and/or monitor's instructions.
2. If instructed to leave the bus, students should remain in a group and not leave the area.
3. For bus evacuation, the driver and/or monitor will select a student or other adult person to open the door and assist in the evacuation.
4. Evacuation will start with the seat nearest the door and alternate across the aisle to the front of the bus.
5. Students will leave the bus in a single file as quickly and quietly as possible.
6. Once all students, driver, and/or monitor are outside the bus, students are required to specifically follow the instructions of the driver and/or monitor immediately and completely.
7. Students will also participate in emergency evacuation drills during the school year.

### **VIDEO MONITORING SYSTEM**

SISD buses are equipped with video monitoring systems. Our goal is for these cameras to provide an added measure of safety and security for your child as he/she is transported to and from school.

Stephenville I.S.D. has the exclusive rights to use the video as deemed necessary. Only authorized school personnel will be allowed to load or unload video equipment and review video footage. All recording equipment devices will be kept in a secured location at the transportation department.

### **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

The school bus is an extension of the classroom and discipline will be administered by the Director of Transportation. The District's Student Code of Conduct and all other School Board policies that apply to student conduct and other student related activities apply to the school bus and student transportation.

Steps and Consequences for inappropriate behavior or conduct on the bus include the following:

- **FIRST OFFENSE:** The student will be given a warning and a parent or guardian will be contacted. *Depending on the severity of the incident and at the Director's discretion and judgement, additional action may be taken.*
- **SECOND OFFENSE:** The student will be suspended from the bus for not less than 5 school days.
- **THIRD OFFENSE:** The student will be suspended from the bus for not less than 10 days.
- **FOURTH OFFENSE:** The student will be suspended from the bus for the remainder of the school year.

Major offenses including, but not limited to fighting, obscenity, cursing, confrontation with the driver or monitor, vandalism, etc. will be handled according to the severity of the offense. The Director of Transportation has the authority to skip steps according to the category and number of violations. For example, state law requires seat belts to be worn by all students in buses with seat belts. If there is a refusal to wear a seat belt, state law requires 3 days suspension on the first offense, 5 days suspension on the second offense, and the remainder of the year for the school year.



**SISD SCHOOL BUS STUDENT RIDER HANDBOOK  
2019-2020**



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT INFORMATION FORM**

My child and I have received a copy of the School Bus Student Rider Handbook.

**We are fully responsible for reviewing the handbook and abiding by the expectations in order to be a safe student bus rider.**

**STUDENT'S GRADE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STUDENT'S CAMPUS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINT STUDENT'S NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT'S BUS ROUTE A.M. #** \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT'S BUS ROUTE P.M. #** \_\_\_\_\_

Please list three (3) emergency contacts:

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINT NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guardian Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_ **Alternate Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_