

SCHOOL BUS INFORMATION GUIDE 2007 - 2008

**ISSUED BY
BISMARCK PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
DR. PAUL JOHNSON, SUPERINTENDENT**

The information contained herein serves as a general overview for all parents and students to acquaint themselves with school policies concerning transportation of students.

The Bismarck School District believes that riding the school van/bus is a privilege. Therefore, every bus rider shall abide by the rules, as set by policy, or be deprived of the privilege of riding on the school buses.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE LIST

Any information regarding the van/bus services should be directed to:

Director, Facilities and Transportation

- a. Accidents
 - b. Weather
- Darin Scherr 323-4501

Manager, Harlow Bus Service

- a. Accidents
 - b. Weather
- Neal Prichard 224-1767

Inquiries regarding rural busing sign up and discipline; special needs students, and reservations for transportation for student activities should be directed to:

Transportation Coordinator
Cal Collins, 323-4502

Bismarck Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The parents of all students being transported by the Bismarck Public Schools Student Transportation Department should:
 - a. Make certain their child is ready and at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled bus arrival time.
 - b. Take responsibility for the conduct of their child and work with the Transportation Department to solve any problems.
 - c. Call Harlow's Bus Service (224-1767) or Bismarck Public Schools Transportation Department (323-4502) if a student will not be going to school. The call may be placed anytime after 6:30 A.M. In case a student is absent from school for 3 consecutive days, the parent is to contact the Harlow's Office to resume service.
2. The bus cannot wait more than 1 minute at each stop for students.
3. Drivers cannot accept instructions for permanent changes from children or parents. Parents must work through the Transportation Office (323-4502). Drivers may act on parents' instructions on an immediate or temporary basis if the situation requires.
4. Students are not to eat, drink, or smoke on buses.
5. Drivers not to enter a student's home.
6. Parents must notify the Transportation Office at least 5 days before any change of address in order to assure continuous service.
7. Additional requirements apply for parents of Special Education students:
 - a. An adult must be present at the point of pick-up and drop-off each day, unless written permission to the contrary has been given by the parent.
 - b. If the child needs assistance boarding or leaving the bus, the parent should assist the van/bus driver or aide.
 - c. Parents or guardians are responsible for getting their handicapped child to the drive or curbside and for meeting the vehicle at the end of the school day at the drop-off point

REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. It is the driver's responsibility to enforce transportation regulations concerning students, and to maintain discipline for the safety of all aboard. Drivers know that the following rules have been issued for all students:

A. General

Bus riders will:

1. Ride on assigned buses.
2. Board and disembark from assigned bus at the selected destination unless written permission is granted to be left off at other than the regular stop.

B. Prior to loading the bus riders will:

1. Be at the designated bus stop on time.
2. Stay off the road while waiting for the bus.
3. Conduct themselves in a safe manner while waiting for the bus.
4. Stay back at least six feet from the bus and wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and proceed only after the door is opened.
5. Line up in an orderly, single file manner.
6. Not rush to get on the bus.
7. Be courteous.
8. Not take advantage of younger students in order to get a seat.
9. Walk to the side of the road facing traffic to get to the bus stop if there is no sidewalk or path.
10. Use the handrail and watch their step when boarding the bus.

C. While on the bus, riders will:

1. Every bus rider shall abide by these rules or be deprived of the right to ride the school bus.
2. Students are forbidden from throwing anything in, at, or from the vehicle.
3. All bus riders shall remain seated in their assigned seats at all times. Leaving the seat or standing without permission will result in a conduct report being filed.
4. All bus riders shall keep their head, hands, and arms inside the bus and must keep their feet on the floor.
5. Scuffling, fighting, or obscene language is not permitted in or around the school bus.
6. Throwing objects on or at the bus is not permitted.

7. School bus riders shall not litter the bus with food or other debris. The eating of peanuts or sunflower seeds is prohibited on the bus.
8. Spitting on or at the bus is not permitted.
9. School bus riders shall not tamper with the bus or any of its equipment. Damage to seats, etc., shall be for paid by the offender.
10. The school bus rider shall not leave books, lunches, or other articles on the bus.
11. The bus rider shall keep all books, packages, coats, and other objects out of the aisle.
12. Articles such as bean shooters, water pistols, and cap guns will be taken away by the bus driver and destroyed.
13. A school bus rider shall bring no animals, firearms, explosives, or anything of a dangerous or objectionable nature on the bus.
14. Conversation shall be carried on quietly while on the bus except when approaching a railroad crossing when quiet must be maintained.
15. School bus riders are expected to be courteous to bus drivers, driver's assistants, chaperones, and fellow students.
16. Use or possession of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, striking matches, or lighting cigarette lighters is prohibited.
17. Any form of harassment directed toward other students or the driver is forbidden.
18. Unauthorized entering or leaving a bus through the emergency exit is forbidden.
19. Possession of laser pens or pointers is forbidden and shall result in a 5 day suspension and confiscation of the pen or pointer.
20. Cell phone use by students on the school bus is discouraged.
21. Riding or attempting to ride the bus during a suspension is prohibited.

D. After Leaving the Bus:

Bus riders will:

1. Walk not run away from the bus.
 2. Cross the road at least 10 feet in front of the bus, but only after checking to be sure no traffic is approaching and/or receiving a signal from the driver.
 3. Help look after the safety and comfort of small children.
 4. Be alert for the prearranged danger signal from the driver.
2. In view of the fact that a bus is an extension of the classroom, the School District shall require children to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards of classroom behavior.

DISCIPLINE

1. School bus drivers are a vital link in the education system. They are responsible for securing maximum transportation safety for all student riders. In order to do this they must have your support.
2. The bus drivers are in complete charge of the bus and students are expected to comply with their requests at all times.
3. The school bus is an extension of the school, and all school rules and regulations that pertain to student conduct in the schools are applicable to student conduct on a school bus.

If a student creates a safety hazard or causes a discipline problem, the following steps will be taken:

1st Offense-----Parents will be notified in writing that student's behavior is not appropriate.

2nd Offense-----Student rider will be suspended from bus service for three days. A conference will be held with the parents, student, administration, and Transportation Coordinator if the parents so desire or the school officials deem a conference necessary.

3rd Offense---- Student rider will be suspended from bus service for the remainder of the year.

Subsequent Offenses:

Any student may be suspended or expelled for behavior exhibited in any school building, school grounds, in any vehicle (which applies to school buses either belonging to the school or on contract) or affecting any school activity. Examples of conduct that might subject students to immediate suspension or expulsion for up to five days include; but are not limited to:

1. Causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person;
2. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property or stealing or attempting to steal school property of value.
3. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property or stealing or attempting to steal private property;
4. Possessing, handling, carrying or transmitting any weapons as defined in Policy JGDAG;
5. Possessing, using, transmitting or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind;
6. Continued disobedience or persistent defiance of proper authority.

SEVERE WEATHER

1. To obtain the best available weather information, the Bismarck Public School System will work closely with the National Weather Services and the local law enforcement agencies. When a condition arises where impending weather conditions may affect the safety of school children, the Transportation Department will contact the above agencies to secure all information available concerning the weather conditions and may make personal spot checks on rural roads and city streets. After receipt of this information, the Superintendent will make the decision as to whether school should be called off. If school is called off, the local radio stations are notified of this fact as early in the morning as possible.

2. Parents are expected to use their own judgment if the weather is suitable for their own children to make the journey to school on any particular day. If school is in session, and it is the judgment of the parent that their children should remain at home, that judgment will be respected by the school. However, an admit slip signed by the parent stating the reason for absence must be submitted in order for the student to make up his work. If, in the considered opinion of the Superintendent, the majority of children in the Bismarck School District can safely travel to school, the school will remain open. Again, we want to stress the importance of parental judgment in this matter.

3. Should hazardous conditions arise during the school day, or exist at the time the school buses normally depart for their return trip in the afternoon, buses will be held in Bismarck and the trips canceled. Announcements will be made over the local radio stations in Bismarck. To prepare for this possibility, it is suggested that each child have a Bismarck storm home they can go to if busing proves impossible.

4. During the winter season, all parents are urged to see that their children are warmly dressed when they board the school bus. There is always the possibility that the bus could be stalled for a period of time. In this event, warm coats, caps, gloves, and overshoes could avert serious consequences.

5. Each day that the school buses leave for their return trip under unfavorable conditions, school officials and the Harlow's Bus Service will keep track of each vehicle by two-way radio. In this way, the approximate location of each bus can be established at any given time. Then, too, drivers have been directed to call the Rural Bus Supervisor's Office whenever necessary to notify us of any difficulties that would cause a change in the time schedule. Parents could help us in this matter by calling Harlow's Bus Service whenever their children have not arrived home within a reasonable period of time beyond the usual time of arrival.

6. On each school day morning, when the weather is threatening, school district personnel decide whether the school buses are to be sent out on their routes. The decision is made only after taking into consideration existing weather conditions, weather forecasts, consultations with bus drivers, and the local weather reports. In the event the bus operations are suspended, the general announcements will be made by the local Bismarck radio stations. The final decision is made with the knowledge that the weather conditions within the boundaries of our school district could be much more severe in one area than in another. For this reason, parents are urged to use their own discretion and to keep their children home whenever they consider the conditions too hazardous to place their children on the bus.

7. It is our policy not to send the buses home before the regular hour of departure.