

# Document C.

**To: Students, Parents and/or Guardians**  
**From: Jamie Teague, Business Administrator**  
**Subject: School Bus Transportation**  
**Date: August 2016**

We are sending home this document which outlines the responsibilities for riders of school buses in SAU 70, and also states the procedures for handling discipline issues on school buses. This document has been officially endorsed by the Dresden, Hanover, and Norwich School Boards.

While these rules have been in existence and a part of the contracts with our bus contractors for some time, they were updated recently and are being distributed annually to all students. Bussing issues in recent years prompted us to update, publish, and distribute these rules, with the hope that parents and guardians will discuss them with their child(ren).

We believe it is important for parents and the school district to work together in promoting a safe pupil transportation system in which high standards of safety and decorum are maintained. Please give us your support by taking the time to read and understand the outlined responsibilities with your child(ren). Please sign the form at the bottom of this page and return to your student's school to acknowledge that you and your child(ren) have talked about this subject and understand the outlined expectations.

In regard to discipline, the respective school principal may make a judgment, in accordance with the seriousness of the offense, as to the consequences, which might include, but are not limited to, assigning seats, temporary suspension from the bus, or permanent suspension from the bus.

An additional document, which outlines administrative guidelines and driver responsibilities, is also attached to this letter for your information.

Questions from parents that deal with day-to-day issues concerning discipline, behavior, and unusual daily circumstances (late or early bus, missed stop, etc.) should be referred to the appropriate school principal:

Bernice A. Ray School	Kevin Cotter	(603) 643-6655
Marion Cross School	Bill Hammond	(802) 649-1703
Frances C. Richmond School	Mike Lepene	(603) 643-6040
Hanover High School	Justin Campbell	(603) 643-3431

If a question deals with the bus contractor--equipment, driver qualifications or behavior, ongoing issues related to routes, schedules, or stops--it should be referred to Jamie Teague, Business Administrator, (603) 643-6050. In all cases, the superintendent, and then the school board, can be involved if the questions are not resolved.

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We have read the School Bus Rider Responsibilities and the School Bus Discipline Procedures, and we agree to abide by them.

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Student's Name (Please Print)

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Student's Signature

Date

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Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT #70**  
Dresden, Hanover, and Norwich School Districts

**BUS GUIDELINES**

**A. SCHOOL BUS RIDER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1) Riders and drivers will treat others with courtesy and respect at all times.
- 2) The use of profanity, vulgar, obscene, or abusive language will not be tolerated.
- 3) Fighting, shoving, or bullying others on the bus, or while waiting for the bus, will not be tolerated.
- 4) Throwing anything on the bus is prohibited.
- 5) Talking should be carried on in conversational tones.
- 6) Smoking, or other use of tobacco, is prohibited on the bus at all times.
- 7) Students must obey immediately any request or suggestion from the bus driver pertaining to safe pupil transportation.
- 8) Defacement of or destruction to the bus will not be tolerated. Any vandalism of the bus or bus seats will be billed to the person responsible for the damage.
- 9) Aisles are to be left free of books, lunch boxes, coats, and other objects at all times. Students should sit totally in their seats, and not put their arms, legs, etc., into the aisles, except when inadequate space makes this impossible.
- 10) Students must remain seated, with seat belts properly affixed, at all times when the bus is moving; arms and heads must be inside the bus at all times.
- 11) Students may be required to walk up to one and one half miles to a bus stop, or two miles to school.
- 12) Students must be ready to board the bus at least five minutes prior to its scheduled stop. Drivers are not to wait for pupils who are not ready. Pupils should not crowd onto the street or road when waiting for the bus; instead, they should line up and enter the bus in an orderly fashion when it arrives. Middle and high school students boarding buses in front of the Richmond School in the afternoon should stand behind the white line until the buses have come to a complete stop at the curb.
- 13) Students must board the bus in an orderly and courteous manner, go immediately to a seat, sit down, and fasten the seat belt. The driver may assign seats.
- 13a) For Norwich middle and high school students only -- when boarding the afternoon buses in front of the Richmond School, students should board the first bus in line until it is filled, then the second bus should be filled, and so on.
- 13b) For Norwich students only -- when the bus reaches the Marion Cross School in the afternoon, all middle and high school students will fill in the seats from the back of the bus forward, unless a seat has been assigned. The younger children will fill in from the front of the bus back.
- 14) Students loading and departing from the bus will do so from the front door of the bus. If the road must be crossed, students will cross at least 10 feet in FRONT of the bus, and use caution, even though the flashing lights are on.
- 15) All school rules are in effect on the school bus for transportation to and from school or any school event.

**B. SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

Discipline will be handled according to the following procedures:

- 1) For unacceptable behavior in the judgment of the driver, the driver will complete a Bus Conduct Report form, which notifies the principal of the problem.
- 2) The principal will speak to the student(s) and, if appropriate, speak to or send a letter home to the parents. The principal will advise the bus contractor of action taken on each conduct report submitted by drivers.
- 3) A serious offense, or behavior which creates a safety hazard, may result in a suspension of up to two weeks, at the discretion of the principal. The driver may insist on a suspension for a student whose behavior creates a safety hazard.

- 4) Unusually serious offenses may result in permanent suspension from the bus. If this action becomes necessary, the principal will notify the parents and the Superintendent in writing. The actual suspension will be made by the Superintendent, with the right of appeal to the School Board.
- 5) If a student is suspended from the bus as a consequence of a bus conduct report, or of reported poor behavior on the bus, the punishment will take effect the following morning. However, if at the discretion of the school administration the safety of other children is in question, the student may be suspended from the bus immediately. In that case, an attempt will be made to contact parents to make other transportation arrangements for the suspended student. If the parents cannot be contacted, the school will arrange for the student to be transported home only on the day suspension occurs. Thereafter, it is the responsibility of the parents to arrange for their students' transportation to and from school.

**C. SCHOOL BUS ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES**

- 1) Transportation will be provided to eligible students from a designated stop near their home to school, and from school to that stop. Tuition students will be allowed to ride only if there is room on the bus, and if those students meet the bus at one of its regular stops. Students will be picked up and/or dropped off at other than their designated stop (i.e. at a babysitter's, etc.) if it is at a regular stop, and if no student is deprived of a ride to his or her designated stop because of the special drop off.
  - 2) Bus stops in rural areas will be at least 500 feet apart.
  - 3) Inspected school vehicles driven by certified school bus drivers will be used for all regular pupil transportation routes. Where possible, inspected vehicles and certified drivers will also be used on field and athletic trips, and for special education requirements. In some cases, however, it may be necessary or prudent to use personal or rented vehicles on such trips; in such cases, the drivers of private or rented vehicles must present evidence of insurance.
  - 4) Elementary school students will only be discharged at school, at their designated stop, or at another designated stop if they present evidence of permission to do so. They will never be discharged at an unauthorized stop.
  - 5) A kindergarten student will not be discharged from the mid-day bus or van unless the child's parent, guardian, or other adult designated by the parent or guardian, is present to take charge of the child. Exceptions to this policy will be made only upon the written authorization of the parent or guardian.
  - 6) The majority of students should be on the bus as little as possible; routes should be designed so that the bulk of the students are picked up last in the morning, and discharged first in the afternoon.
  - 7) Only authorized students are to be transported on school buses. Parents, friends, teachers, etc, are not to ride the bus on regular routes. However, teachers, coaches, or other authorized chaperones may accompany field and athletic trips.
  - 8) In determining the location of bus stops, primary consideration will be given to safety. Secondary considerations will include fairness, convenience, and availability of budget funds. No stop will be established which, in the opinion of the school administration, will unreasonably compromise the safety of students who are expected to use that stop. In cases where the safety of a stop is questioned, the local police chief will be consulted.
  - 9) Small musical instruments which students can either hold in their laps, or can put under their seats on the bus, will be allowed. Larger musical instruments, or other large items which require the use of another seat on the bus, may not be allowed, depending on how crowded the bus is. **Items which require the use of the center aisle on the bus will not be allowed.**
  - 10) Questions from parents about school bus matters should normally be directed to the appropriate school principal. If the question deals with day-to-day issues concerning discipline, behavior, and unusual daily circumstances (late or early bus, missed stop, etc), it should be referred to the appropriate school principal. If the question deals with the bus contractor (equipment, driver qualifications & behavior, etc), or ongoing issues related to routes, schedules, stops, etc., it should be referred to the Business Administrator. In all cases, the Superintendent, and then the School Board, can be involved if the questions are not resolved.
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#### **D. SCHOOL BUS DRIVER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1) Drivers are expected to exhibit the same levels of respect and decorum, which are expected of the riders.
  - 2) Buses will not be backed up while students are still outside the bus.
  - 3) Where possible, students will be picked up and discharged on the proper side of the road, so they are not required to cross a road.
  - 4) It is permissible to require three students to sit in one seat on a school bus; where possible, however, the driver should make allowances for larger students.
  - 5) If a child is on the wrong bus, he or she will be returned to the school at the end of the route. If, for any reason at any time, there is no one at the school who is able to assume temporary responsibility for that student, the driver must make sure that the student is assigned to someone who can assume that responsibility. If parents, guardians, or other previously agreed-upon caretakers are not available, as a last resort the driver should leave the student with the local police.
  - 6) In case of a breakdown, the driver will notify the bus contractor, who will dispatch a substitute bus as soon as possible. Before the substitute bus arrives, the driver will not release any children to anyone other than a parent, guardian, or school official, or to someone authorized by the parent to make decisions on behalf of the child.
  - 7) When determining which students will be allowed to ride on a crowded bus in the afternoon, priority will be given to elementary students, then middle school students, then to high school students.
  - 8) In case a bus cannot complete its afternoon route (because of road conditions, disruptive behavior, etc), students will be taken back to the school. They will not be discharged at another place, unless prior arrangements have been made with parents.
  - 9) Unusually bulky objects (eg. hockey or lacrosse sticks, skis, etc.) may not be allowed on a bus during its regular route. The bus driver will determine which objects are acceptable and which are not.
  - 10) Drivers should keep to their approved time schedule as closely as possible, and should never be more than five minutes early. If a driver discovers that the bus is approaching that five minute limit, the driver will wait at appropriate predetermined places on the route until the bus is back on schedule.
  - 11) Drivers will maintain a log, or diary, on their bus, which will contain documentation of verbal warnings issued to students for disciplinary purposes. The log will also be used to record other noteworthy items, such as the license plate numbers of motorists passing the bus illegally. While drivers are expected to note any significant events, this log is not to be considered an all-inclusive record of bus incidents.
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