



Red Oak Independent School District

# Student Transportation Handbook

### **Eligibility of Transportation**

The Texas Education Agency, along with our local Board of Trustees, provides the opportunity for bus transportation for eligible students. The guidelines from the State are very rigid and must be followed. Rider eligibility is determined by the State as follows: "Home-to-School/School-to-Home actually is served at an established stop located near the student's residence, child-care facility, or grandparent's home. Transportation is only for those students who reside two or more miles from their assigned campus of regular attendance, measured by the shortest traveled route used by the public (not the way the bus may travel), and who is not classified as a student eligible for special education services." The two-mile marker may fall between two neighbors located on the same street. Walking into the eligible area to catch the bus is strictly prohibited. This prohibition will be enforced.

The ROISD Transportation Department is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of each student. Riding in a district transportation vehicle is a privilege offered to eligible students who reside within the district. The primary purpose of the transportation department is to provide transportation for those eligible pupils from the vicinity of their homes to allow them to access the School District's Educational Programs in their campus zone.

Red Oak ISD Transportation Department is responsible for the provisions of safe and efficient transportation service to students who are eligible for School District Provided Transportation Service. The safety is a shared responsibility with the active participations of parents, school staff, students and school bus drivers.

The School District's responsibility for the supervision of students that are eligible for transportation service begins when the student enters the school bus and ends when the student exits the bus at the designated drop-off location at the end of the school day. Procedures and safety rules help to ensure the safety and protection of each student. Failure to meet these standards or follow these safety rules and procedures may result in student conflicts or injuries and also cause delays in transporting or distractions to the driver which may be categorized as a Class C Misdemeanor.

(TEC 37.126-Disruption of Transportation) Any student failing to follow the rules and procedures will receive a Transportation Conduct Referral Form turned in by the bus driver to the Disciplinary Administrator. The Disciplinary Administrator will determine the appropriate disciplinary measure which can include temporary or permanent removal of transportation privileges. Parents of students who damage ROI SD property (including bus seats) are responsible for restitution to the Red Oak ISO Transportation Department before the student is allowed to be transported.

Bus routes shall be planned to achieve maximum safety of operations with reasonable economy.

\*\*\*To ensure that all students that are being transported are eligible riders, an updated Transportation Request Care form must be filled out by a Parent/Guardian and returned to the Transportation Department before they are eligible every year. If a Transportation Request Care form is not returned to the Transportation Department, suspension of transportation will exist until a completed form is presented\*\*\*

### **Walking Distance**

The Transportation Department considers the environment and age of the students when placing bus stops. Elementary grade levels have been calculated as 0.2 tenths of a mile. Middle and High School grade levels have been calculated as 0.5 tenths of a mile.

In establishing routes in new or existing residential subdivisions, each bus will be scheduled to use perimeter routes and/or thoroughfares. Students will be required to walk to their designated bus stop. Other factors where students may walk more than the allowed amount are neighborhoods that have one entrance/exit, tight or no turning radius, and walkways.

**\*\*Emergency transportation services may be provided in the event of extreme flooding conditions or if street or road construction interferes with normal walking routes; otherwise, stops will not be changed due to inclement weather\*\***

Congregated stops may be relocated during the school year as deemed appropriate. When administration becomes aware of places to relocate a pickup point, parents will be provided notification three (3) days in advance of the effective date.

### **Student Pickup**

All students are expected to be at their assigned school bus pickup location (which is the closest stop to their residence) at least five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled pickup time. A driver on a regular school route that arrives within the 5-minute window prior to or after their scheduled pickup time is not expected to wait for late students. A delay at even one school bus stop can impact the smooth operation of an entire route sequence serving several campuses and hundreds of students.

Once the school bus has left the pickup location, the driver will not stop the bus and open the door en route to the next stop or school. At no time should a parent/guardian follow the bus or pull in front to block the path of the bus. Such an action will result in a response from police officers working for the district.

The scheduled number of pupils assigned to ride a standard school bus will not exceed 100% of its rated passenger capacity, resulting with common student absenteeism, in the assignment of not more than three students per seat. Upon the opening of schools, should unforeseen circumstances result in overload, adjustments in routes and stops will be made, with attention being given to the most seriously overloaded routes.

### **If the School Bus Does Not Arrive on Time**

School bus routes can be delayed for a variety of reasons including traffic, road blockages and closures, weather conditions, delays on prior routes/trips, and unacceptable student behavior. Students should remain at their assigned school bus stop for at least 10 minutes after the scheduled school bus pickup time. Parents/Guardians who leave for work before the scheduled school bus pickup time should make arrangements with a neighbor or family member to assist their child(ren) in case of an unscheduled delay. Parents should ensure that children understand what action to take if the school bus is late or fails to arrive at the pickup locations.

### **Parents/Guardians Responsibility**

It is the parent/Guardian's responsibility for assuring safety to and from the students designated bus stop. Parents/Guardians who leave for work before, or not home after the scheduled school bus pickup/drop off times, should make arrangements with a neighbor or family member to assist their child(ren). Another option would be to utilize Red Oak ISD 's After the Bell Program, which is located at all the elementary campuses.

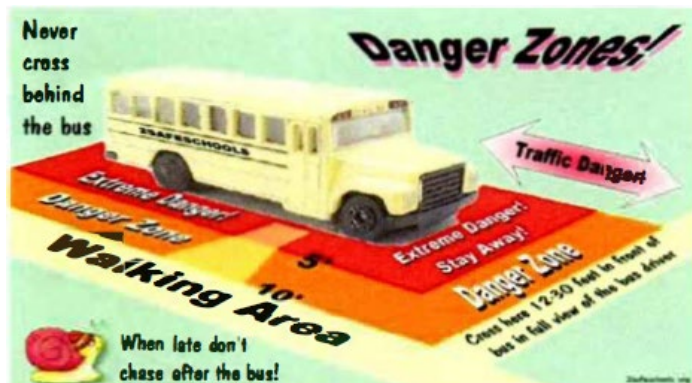
### **Change of Address**

If a student relocates/moves to a different address but still resides in the school district, it is the parent's responsibility to update that information with their child's campus. Transportation will not be provided to the new address until the update has been complete in the school system. A roster of eligible rider/official headcount sheet, through Region 10, is performed three times a year to verify that we have the correct information. This documentation is performed and updated every month to provide legal information to Region 10, which includes an updated Transportation Request Form.

### **School Bus Danger Zones**

The most dangerous time for a student riding the school bus is the loading and unloading process. It is critical that students are visible to the driver and out of the bus danger zones when the bus is in motion. The rule applies to loading and unloading both in the neighborhoods and at schools. If students are crossing the street they should move immediately out of the danger zone and proceed at least 15 feet in front of the bus before crossing the street and never cross behind the bus or crawl underneath to retrieve anything.

### **SCHOOL BUS DANGER ZONES**



Never enter the danger zone when the bus is in motion

### **General Information about Student Transportation**

- Do not approach the school bus or driver. If you need to speak with the driver regarding concerns, please contact us at (972) 617-5101 to make an appointment rather than delay the route.
- Students are not allowed to ride home with other students.
- Have your student ready at stop to board the bus (5) minutes before scheduled pickup time each morning.
- Knowing, understanding, and teaching your student to follow the bus rules.
- All secondary (6-12) students are required to wear their current ID badge at all times; failing to provide their current year ID badge could result in denial of transportation home.
- Notify the Transportation Office as early as possible when your student will not be riding. Failure to ride for (3) consecutive days will result in termination of service until the parent/guardian contacts the Transportation Office and reinstates the service. (Unless multiple student riders at said stop).
- Share information with the Transportation Department regarding changes in schedule, medical status or major personal disruptions that would seriously affect your student's behavior.
- Students with big band instruments are required to sit in the front of the bus to ensure other students' safety.
- Students carrying any objects that are deemed school projects may be asked to have their parent/guardian transport that item if it could cause a potential safety risk on the bus.
- Communicating in writing any medical information, medication or student health status changes which would affect your student's transportation.
- Boys and Girls will be separated unless they are siblings.
- Required assigned seat process for every bus route. This decreases vandalism to bus seats, reduces the expense for seat repairs, and aid drivers in knowing their students. It would also satisfy Department of Public Safety requirements for seating charts for any bus involved in an accident.
- Making sure your student goes to the restroom before boarding the bus.
- Remembering that students in wheelchairs must have properly operating lock brakes, footrests, arm rests, and a safety belt.

### **Student Conduct**

If a bus route has left a campus and is on his/her way to another campus to pick up students and a student displays behavior issues that is a safety concern for that route, then it is the responsibility of the Administrator to remove the student(s) involved and contact the parents even though they do not belong to that campus. It is the drivers and dispatcher's responsibility to contact an administrator before dropping the student(s) off. If that route is not at a campus when this

situation occurs, ROI SD Police Department will be notified, an Officer will be dispatched to their immediate location and the student(s) will be removed.

**If a student is suspended from transportation and he or she has an extra-curricular trip planned, suspension could remain, unless it is part of their curriculum.**

### **Transportation Rules and Regulations**

Rules and regulations defining student conduct are designed to protect the passengers and shall be observed at all times. The Bus safety rules are in addition to the general Code of Conduct used by the district, they include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Students will not be allowed to ride home with other students.
- All secondary (6-12) students are required to wear their current ID badge at all times; failing to provide their current year ID badge will result in denial of transportation home.
- The bus driver is in charge of students on the bus. Students shall follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Only authorized personnel and eligible bus students assigned to a specific bus are permitted to ride the bus.
- Buses will stop at established stops only. Students will not be permitted to leave the bus until the bus arrives at their established bus stop or the appropriate school. Students shall load and unload at their designated bus stop only.
- Students shall wait for a bus by remaining 10 feet away from the bus stop or remaining on the sidewalk. Students must wait until the bus comes to a full complete stop before boarding or leaving the bus.
- Students will remain properly seated at all times and not block the center aisle. Any or all students may be assigned seats.
- Students must keep their hands, head, feet and personal objects inside the bus and to themselves at all times.
- Scuffling, shoving, horse-playing and/or fighting is prohibited on the bus and at established bus stops.
- Littering or throwing items inside or from the bus is prohibited.
- Students are not allowed to consume food (including candy) or drink on the bus; water is the only exception.
- The use of tobacco products is prohibited, including E-cigs, vapors, etc.
- Students shall not deface or vandalize the bus or related equipment. Students that violate this rule will be required to pay for damages and not allowed to ride until payment has been received.
- Students are not to engage in loud talking, yelling, use profanity, inappropriate gestures or language on the bus.

- Students are not allowed to bring skateboards/longboards/hoverboards, or animals on the bus.
- Students, while on the bus, while entering or exiting the bus, and while at or in the general area of the designated loading and unloading zone area are required to comply with and will be subject to the Student Code of Conduct/Discipline Rules established by the school district.
- Transportation is provided for DAEP student(s) in the afternoon only.

The following are general guidelines for consequences for transportation violations. It is as follows;

1. 1<sup>st</sup> offense: A verbal and written warning is issued to the student with parent contact
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: 3-day transportation suspension will be issued to student, along with a campus disciplinary action.
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: 10-day transportation suspension will be issued to student, along with a campus disciplinary action.
4. 4<sup>th</sup> offense: 30-day transportation suspension will be issued to student, along with a campus disciplinary action.
5. 5<sup>th</sup> offense: Student will be issued transportation suspension for the remainder of the school year along with campus disciplinary action.

**Anytime there is an issue on the bus the student's parent and or guardian shall be notified.**

**\*\*\*Severe Clause:** If a student's conduct while on the bus, waiting at the bus stop, or while exiting or entering the bus jeopardizes the safety of other students or the bus driver; or constitutes an offense under the Student Code of Conduct could result in an immediate consequence not related to the offense steps. These consequences could include a bus suspension, along with a campus disciplinary action, including possible placement in the District Alternative Education Program.\*\*\*