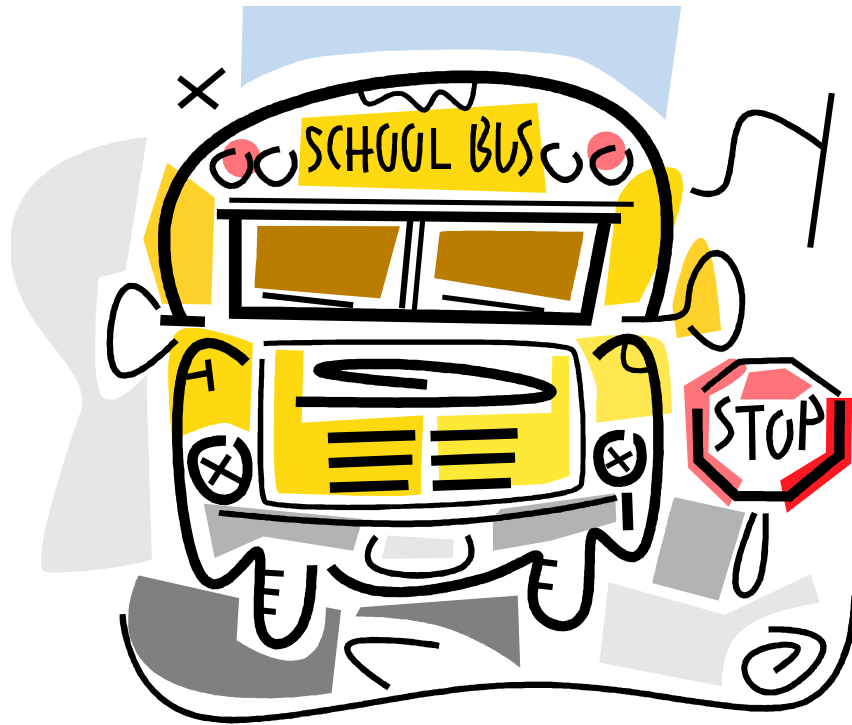


# Chillicothe R-II Bus Rider Safety Handbook 2011-2012



# **Chillicothe R-II Bus Rider Safety Handbook 2011-2012**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The “Chillicothe R-II Bus Rider Safety Handbook” is designed to help provide a safe and enjoyable experience for the bus rider through the communication of regulations and procedures under which students are allowed to ride school buses. Riding the school bus is a privilege provided by the school district and should be treated as such. Any statement contained within the policy which is found to be in conflict with governing statutes is automatically rescinded without effect upon other parts of the policy.

## **TO THE BUS RIDER**

Students who have the privilege of bus transportation to and from school are under the authority of Chillicothe R-II and will obey and follow the instructions of the drivers as if they were a classroom teacher. The school bus is an extension of the classroom. All rules that apply in the classroom carry over to the bus. The discipline will be administered by the Principal and Director of Transportation. All school board policies that apply to student conduct and other student related activities apply to the bus. Students are expected to do their part in making the trip pleasant and safe for all riders.

## **TO THE PARENT**

The school bus is a key to better education. It means that your children can go to school despite the distance. Riding a bus trains them in safety, responsibility, independence and courtesy.

Please review this handbook with your child so that he/she will know that you, as well as Chillicothe R-II School District, expect them to follow the simple rules outlined. Students are not allowed to ride any bus other than their assigned bus without written permission from a parent or guardian and a note from the school office. If there are questions concerning bus routes or bus drivers, contact the Transportation Department at 646-6309.

All district bus drivers, either regular route, substitutes, or trip drivers, have the appropriate required certification licenses and receive additional training each year in safe driving and emergency procedures. Providing safe, orderly transportation to and from school as well as to and from school related activities is the Transportation Department’s “top” priority.

All buses are equipped with two-way communication devices. If a rural student will not ride the bus on a particular morning, parents are asked to call the bus barn by 6:45 am. If a student does not ride for three consecutive days, the parent is requested to call the bus barn to resume pick-up/drop-off.

If a student is suspended from the bus for disciplinary reasons, that suspension excludes them from riding the bus during the time of suspension for any reason – including riding to and from school, field trips, extra-curricular activities and sporting events.

If you are the parent of a kindergartener there must be arrangements made for a responsible party to meet them at the bus stop. Students that have no one at the stop are considered undeliverable and will be returned to their home school.

The District uses video cameras for safety purposes. Student discipline is recorded and viewed by District Administration. Because of student privacy issues, parents may not view students by video. This policy is in effect to protect our total student population.

### **TO THE BUS DRIVER**

Chillicothe R-2 School District regards student transportation to and from schools and on special trips as a serious responsibility and takes every precaution to insure student safety. During bus rides, the driver has the same authority that a teacher has in the classroom. Riders are expected to respect this authority and to behave in such a way that the driver will not be distracted while operating the bus.

### **DAY TO DAY BUS CHANGES**

From time to time it may be necessary to make a one time/daily change for your child's bus transportation. If your child needs to be picked up instead of riding the bus, please call the school **BEFORE 2:30 PM** to let them know. Any changes in the regular busing routine, please contact the bus barn directly at 646-6309. All changes must be made **before 2:30 pm**.

### **AT THE BUS STOP**

The following safety tips for school bus riders are recommended:

- Leave home in time to reach the bus stop about five minutes ahead of the bus. Arriving later may make you and other riders late to school. Arriving earlier exposes you unnecessarily to traffic.
- If there are no sidewalks on your route to the bus stop, walk on the left side of the street or road, facing traffic. Stay as far off the road as possible.
- If you are walking with others where there are no sidewalks, go single-file.
- Do not stand in the street to wait for the bus or step into the street.
- When the bus approaches, stand back at a safe distance until the bus has come to a complete halt.
- Do not cross the road at the bus stop until directed to do so by the driver.
- While exiting the bus move at least 10 feet away so the bus can proceed.
- Students are held accountable for their behavior at the bus stop before the bus arrives and after the students are dropped off.

### **LOADING THE BUS**

- Line up in a single file line and board in a safe and orderly manner.
- Use the handrail as you go up the steps one at a time.

- Take your assigned seat and remain in it until the bus has come to a complete halt at your school.
- Students will not be allowed to leave the bus at any point other than your school or home bus stop unless you have a signed note from the office.

### **CONDUCT ON THE BUS**

- Remain seated while the bus is moving. Students should face forward for the duration of the trip, and shall keep their feet on the floor in front of them and out of the aisle.
- The driver will assign seats. The student will remain in their seat until instructed otherwise by the driver.
- Normal conversation is permitted. Any loud noises may distract the driver and create an unsafe condition.
- Horseplay, fighting and the use of obscene, vulgar or profane language or gestures are forbidden and may constitute dismissal from the bus.
- Do not spit or throw any object inside or outside the bus.
- Do not mark, cut or scratch any part of the bus. Vandalism costs will be paid by the person responsible.
- The emergency door and exit controls should be used only during supervised drills or an actual emergency.
- Do not open windows without the driver's permission. Do not lean against windows as some are designed to pop out under pressure in case of an emergency.
- Students will not extend any part of their body or any article out the window of the bus whether the bus is in motion or not.
- **NOTE: The school administrator and resource officer will be involved when there are fights on the school bus.**

### **GETTING OFF THE BUS**

- Stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Use the handrail when exiting the bus.
- Do not push or crowd while leaving the bus.
- You must have a signed note from the school office to get off at a stop other than your own.  
**The note must be given to the driver when boarding the bus.**
- You will not be able to ride any bus other than your own without a signed note from the school office. **The note must be given to the driver as you board the bus.**

### **CROSSING THE STREET OR HIGHWAY**

No student will be allowed to cross the roadway unless there is no way to avoid it. If the student does have to cross, move 10 feet away from the side of the bus and walk 12 to 15 feet in front of the right bumper. Look at the driver and wait until you are signaled to cross. Check both directions and walk

directly across the road. Never cross behind the bus. **CAUTION! Be alert for vehicles that do not stop for the bus loading and unloading.**

### **PROHIBITED ITEMS**

- Tobacco, drugs and alcohol
- Any animals or insects
- Glass Containers
- Weapons, explosives, (such as fireworks) knives, water guns, or any other object that could be considered dangerous or conflict with the safety of the students or driver.
- Balloons
- Band instruments that are excessive in size should not be brought on the bus, i.e., tuba, drums. Consult with the Band Director about transporting these items home.
- Matches or cigarette lighters
- Students are not allowed to eat or drink on any school bus. Bottles or cans whether full or empty will not be allowed on the school bus unless they are kept in a lunch box or backpack
- No electronic devices, including laser pens or pointers, will be allowed on the school bus. Students who bring electronic devices on the bus do so at their own risk.
- Drivers have the right to confiscate any items causing a distraction/disturbance on the bus.
- **Drivers and school officials are not responsible for articles left on the bus.**

### **PHILOSOPHY AND EXPECTATIONS**

Chillicothe R-II School District provides transportation for eligible students enrolled in the public schools from home to school each morning and from school to home each afternoon. Eligible students must live one or more miles from the school in which they are enrolled; or must cross a defined hazardous route. All stops (daycare, relatives' homes, etc.) must meet eligibility requirements.

**The primary goal of Chillicothe R-2 School District Transportation Departments is the safe and orderly transportation of eligible students to and from school.** To accomplish this philosophy, the district will not tolerate misconduct while students are loading, unloading, or on a school bus. Students who have the privilege of bus transportation also have the responsibility to make the trip safe, orderly and pleasant for each student.

Riding the bus is a privilege and not a right. The privilege may be revoked for just cause. The privilege of being transported to and from school and on school trips depends on the rider's behavior and cooperation. This privilege may be withdrawn if the rider:

- Fails to observe proper safety rules.
- Disregards the authority of the bus driver or other adults in charge.
- Behaves in disorderly, distasteful, or unsafe manner.
- Creates excessive noise, such as loud talking, screaming or whistling or by the use of electronic equipment.

- Abuses, defaces, and destroys property or equipment on the bus. Restitution may be required.
- Handles the emergency equipment inside the bus (emergency doors, fire extinguisher).
- Throws articles within the bus, out the window of the bus or at any other vehicle.
- Behaves in such a manner that he/she jeopardized the safe operation of the bus.

#### **ASSIGNED BUSES ONLY**

Students are assigned to a bus and a bus stop. No change in either bus or bus stop is permitted without authorization. Students must have a pass form the school office to ride a bus other than his/her assigned bus. Failure to ride assigned bus from bus stop or school may jeopardize student's safety and could result in disciplinary action.

#### **TRANSPORTATION OF SCHOOL RELATED/NONRELATED ITEMS**

No materials, including: knives, guns, loaded or unloaded, gasoline cans, empty or full, animals, or any object of nature is allowed on the school bus when children are being transported. Band instruments that will fit either in the students lap or under the seat will be allowed on the bus. **Instruments may not be in the aisles or take the place of another student. Neither the bus driver nor the district is responsible for items left on the bus.**

#### **ACCIDENTS OR EMERGENCIES**

- **Follow the bus driver's instructions.**
- **Do not touch the emergency equipment or safety releases unless you are told to do so.**
- **If you must leave the bus, keep your hands free leaving everything behind. If you must jump from the bus keep your knees bent slightly as you jump. Move quickly away from the exit and stay in a group away from any point of danger.**

#### **VIDEO**

Video cameras are located on buses. Viewing will be by Chillicothe R-2 Administration. Videos may also be viewed by the local Law Enforcement Agency and may be subject to release through a court ordered subpoena.

## Chillicothe R-II School District School Bus Safety Rules Summary

It is very important that students be aware of and follow all of these bus safety rules for the welfare of all students.

1. ***The driver is in charge.*** Obey the driver's directions promptly and without argument the first time they are given.
2. ***The driver may assign seats.*** Students are to stay in seats at all times while the bus is in moving. Only when the bus has come to a complete stop, will students be allowed to exit a bus.
3. ***Students must be seated before the bus is put in motion and remain seated throughout the trip.*** Stay in your seat, with feet on the floor, while the bus is in motion, keeping your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
4. ***Use classroom voices.*** The driver should not be able to hear one voice above another. The bus is considered an extension of the school day, and the same behavior expected in the classroom will be expected on the bus.
5. ***When getting on the bus--*** (1) Be on time at your stops---the driver will wait only a short time (2) Wait for the bus in a safe place. Do not stand in the road way while waiting for the bus (3) Don't play around or be involved in horseplay (4) Get on the bus in a single file and use the handrail (5) Don't push or shove.
6. ***When crossing the street (road) to get to the bus--*** (1) Wait for bus to arrive before crossing (2) Look for the driver to signal before crossing (3) Look left, right, and then left again before crossing (4) Cross in front of the bus ---never behind.
7. ***When getting off the bus--*** (1) Wait for the driver to signal (2) Get off single file (3) Do not push or shove others and use the handrail (4) Cross in front of the bus---never behind.
8. ***When crossing the street (road) after unloading--*** (1) Walk 10 feet in front of the bus (2) Make sure the driver can see you (3) Wait for the driver to signal that it is okay to cross (4) Look left, right, then left again before crossing.
9. ***The driver will not discharge students at places other than their regular bus stop or at school, unless authorized by the appropriate school district personnel. These arrangements will be made before departing the bus barn or school.***
10. ***Keep hands, feet, books, and*** other objects to yourself—never put anything out the windows.
11. ***No swearing, rude jesters, cruel teasing or put-downs will be allowed.***

12. ***Students may bring onto the bus only items that will fit on their lap or under the seat and not interfere with seating of fellow passengers.***
13. ***Students must not carry liquid, unless it is in and remains in a closed lunch box or back pack. Students must not carry glass onto the school bus.***
14. ***No creatures on the bus.*** Students will not be allowed to take such things as turtles, mice, snakes, etc. on the bus.
15. ***No objects will be allowed on the bus that might distract a driver***—such as water guns, jam boxes, laser pointers, cameras etc.
16. ***Stay behind yellow line at the middle school before loading***—students are to wait in line behind the yellow loading line in the circle drive at the middle school until the driver signals “okay” to board.
17. ***Do not litter, write on or damage the bus. Damage to bus should be reported immediately to driver***—the bus is school property. Students must use trash basket on the bus. Throwing items on the floor or out the window is prohibited. Students who are caught vandalizing (damaging) any part of a school bus will lose bus riding privileges and be held responsible for costs of repairs. In severe cases of vandalism where older students are involved, law enforcement officials will be contacted.
18. ***No food or drinks will be allowed on bus*** during regular daily bus routes. Exceptions will be made on activity or athletic trips.
19. ***Tobacco and drugs are not allowed on the bus.***
20. ***Bullying is not allowed.*** Drivers should pay close attention to physical bullying as well as verbal bullying. Stopping bullying early can make for a better school year for everyone. Report bullying to principal and parents as needed.
21. ***Parents needing to get message to drivers should call 646-6309.***
22. ***Parents needing to make changes to transportation must communicate that change BEFORE 2:30 pm the day of the change.***

The safety of every student riding a bus is our number one concern. Rules are made for safety purposes. Whenever a parent has a question or would like information concerning bus transportation feel free to call 646-6309 or email [acool@chillicotheschools.org](mailto:acool@chillicotheschools.org) or [tmammen@chillicotheschools.org](mailto:tmammen@chillicotheschools.org) .

## Chillicothe R-II School District Bus Discipline Consequences

The school bus driver makes every effort to deal individually with minor discipline problems on the bus. When a student's disruptive behavior is persistent or when a student's behavior puts the safety of other students in jeopardy, then the student will be subject to the following consequences: (It should be noted that consequences will be handled on a semester basis—meaning that unless a student receives more than 2 conduct reports or has persistent or severe behavior problems, he/she will begin each semester with a clean record. Further, length of time between discipline conduct reports for a student will be considered when determining whether bus suspension is in order.)

- *A bus discipline conduct report will be sent home as a “warning” to the student and the parents that any further disruption may result in suspension of bus riding privileges for the student. The student must return the form signed by parent or legal guardian to the bus driver the following day or the student will not be allowed to ride the bus. A copy of the report will also be sent to the school principal, who will confer with the student concerning further consequences.*
- *If a student receives a second conduct report, the student will receive from 1 to 3 days suspension of bus riding privileges from the building principal. The principal will notify the assistant superintendent of any suspension. The parent(s) will be responsible for the student's transportation during the suspension period.*
- *Should a student receive a third discipline conduct report, the student will be referred to the Director of Transportation/Assistant Superintendent and the student will receive an automatic 5 day suspension of bus riding privileges. The student and the student's parents will be required to have a conference with the Director of Transportation before the student will be allowed to ride the bus again.*
- *Should a student receive more than 3 discipline reports or if a severe behavior problem occurs, the discipline consequences for that student may be indefinite suspension of bus riding privileges and a conference with the superintendent of schools.*

Students who intentionally damage or cause damage to a bus will be required to make payment for repairs and may also be required to provide community service hours for cleaning buses in addition to receiving a suspension of bus riding privileges.

**\*Students receiving bus suspensions of riding privileges for regular routes will not be allowed to ride activity and athletic trip buses during the time of their suspension.**