

## Frequently Asked Bus Questions & Bus Rules

**Dear Parents,**

Each Bus Driver and employee of the Winnebago School District Transportation Department takes their job very seriously when transporting one of the most precious cargos of the District, Your children. In order for the Team of Drivers to fulfill this responsibility in a safe, timely and organized system it is important to understand some of the process involved. We look forward to working with you in providing a safe and happy experience for your child. Please call us any time you may have questions, concerns and/or suggestions. We welcome your calls.

### ***Q. Is my child eligible for Free Transportation?***

The Illinois State School Code sets the guidelines for the transportation of students. Under those guidelines districts are required to transport students at no additional fee who live 1½-miles or more from the school they attend. The State of Illinois has also qualified specific areas under the 1½-mile distance for transportation as well, however these areas must have met certain Hazardous Criteria guidelines. (District 323 offers transportation for students to/from caregiver's address, however, this too follows the same above guidelines.)

- Should your child *not* qualify for free transportation, **the yearly charge is \$350.00** whether or not a student rides full-time or part-time; all of the year, or just part of the year. **The full amount is to be paid at the time of registration.** We will no longer accept monthly payments. We can tell you if your address qualifies by calling 335-2903 or visiting our School District's web site.

### ***Q. What about Multiple Pickup and Drop-off Addresses?***

Multiple Pickups and Drop-offs are not permitted. There will be ONE address for transportation to and from school. This means that a *set* AM and a *set* PM schedule, **all five days each week** must be in place. AM and PM addresses can be different *provided they are consistent throughout the entire week.* We may consider making an exception in an emergency-only situation, however this must be done only with approval from the Transportation Office. In the event a situation occurs that would require the child to come or go to a different address not normally scheduled, it would be necessary for you to provide transportation or have someone you have designated through the school office to pick up or drop off your child. In all events of transportation changes, the Transportation Office must be notified so that we can relay, to the driver, the whereabouts and safety status of each child assigned on his/her route.

### ***Q. Can my child ride on any Bus and who may pick them up once on the bus?***

Drivers are required to transport only the students in which are assigned on their route sheet. Any family seeking an exception to this rule due to a family emergency must call the Transportation Department and receive approval. Any and all students riding **MUST be regularly scheduled on a bus.** All children once boarded on a bus are to be released only to their parent/guardian that the School District has listed on file or by a person you have designated by contacting the Transportation Office at (815) 335-2903.

### ***Q. May my child transport his/her band instrument/s on the bus?***

Only instruments that are small enough to be safely and comfortably carried on student's lap may be allowed on the bus with your child. Larger instruments must be transported to and from school by parent or by a parent arranged alternative method.

***Q. I can't see the bus stop from my house.***

The Transportation Department provides transportation for over 1100 students on over 22 routes. We are not able to position bus stops so that all parents are able to see the stop from their home.

***Q. From my front door or window, I can't see my child's bus stop.***

Parents are encouraged to accompany young children to the bus stop. Bus stops are placed so that no elementary child has to walk more than 0.5 of a mile.

***Q. My child has to cross the street to get to the bus stop.***

This is a safety issue. Parents are responsible for the safety of their children to and from bus stops and are particularly encouraged to accompany young children. Bus routes may be designed where students have to cross a roadway to get to or from the bus. School bus drivers are trained and school buses are equipped with traffic warning devices to enhance a safe crossing.

***Q. Why can't you come further into my subdivision or cul-de-sac?***

Most cul-de-sacs are not designed with school bus transportation in mind. Except for special education, buses are generally not routed into a cul-de-sac. (There may be exceptions for Pre-Kindergarten.) They are considered dangerous for the following reasons:

- Cul-de-sac stops create blind spots often causing students to enter or exit in a danger zone around the bus
- Different styles and sizes of buses make maneuvering in cul-de-sac difficult
- The rear of the bus has potential to swing around close to the sidewalk
- Parked cars, piled snow and other obstacles create road hazards
- Property damage to mailboxes and landscaping

***Q. I leave for work early and can't watch my child get on the bus. Can't the stop be at my home?***

In order to be consistent and fair in placement of bus stops, the Transportation Department is not able to establish stops or stop times based on personal circumstances.

***Q. My child has to walk past the residence of a convicted sex offender or vicious dog, etc.***

Traffic conditions are the primary factor the Transportation Department uses when establishing or evaluating routes and stops. Parents are responsible for the safety of students going to and from school bus stops and while waiting for the bus. This is another reason it is important for an adult to accompany students to the bus stop.

***Q. The bus drives right past my house. Why can't it stop at my house?***

Student ride time is longer with more stops. The higher the frequency of stops causes the bus to use more fuel. Bus stops are centrally located for all students on the route. Bus stops are not changed to accommodate one or more students because it may displace other students further from their stop. In order to remain consistent no stops will be established based on personal circumstances.

***Q. What about when my child is not going to ride the bus?***

When your child is sick or you plan to take and/or pickup your child (such as the day of a Field Trip), please contact the Transportation Office at (815) 335-2903, and if possible, give prior notification to the driver. This will help us greatly in timing the route for the remainder of the children who are riding the bus.

\* *Early Childhood and Field Trips:* On Field Trip days for the PM class of the Early Childhood Program please plan to have them ready a little earlier for pick-up and to expect them to arrive home a little earlier from the AM and PM classes. This is due to the number of parents who participate in going with their children on trips.

***Q. What time will the Bus come to pick-up or drop-off my child?***

There are many factors which play into the time your bus will arrive such as, children who are absent, children who are not on time for the bus, road conditions and repairs, the number of miles covered in the route, and weather conditions. Occasionally all of the situations mentioned could happen within one route, which will greatly effect the time.

If your child is not out waiting for the bus, but normally rides every day the Driver may or may not honk and then go on if the child is not in sight. **Illinois Administrative Code Chapter I, Sec.275.110** states: The driver on a regular route is not expected to wait for a student but may proceed on the route if the student is not in sight. If your child misses the bus it is your responsibility to transport him or her to school.

We ask that you have your child outside and ready to board the bus **5-10 minutes PRIOR** to their scheduled pick-up time. In extreme weather conditions it is understandable to have the children under shelter, but please be ready to send them *quickly* to the bus when it arrives. If the students are at the stop when the bus arrives, the bus can remain on schedule. If the students are not at the stop, a number of situations can occur:

- Student does not get on the bus, and may not get to school.
- Driver may not be able to see the door where you are, though you may see the bus.
- Driver sees student and waits then is behind for the next stops. (e.g. if the driver has 20 stops and each stop is a 30 second wait by the end of the route the bus will be 10 minutes late.) It is not fair to the students who are on time and standing out in the weather.

***Q. When will I know my child's "bus schedule" details?***

After registration we begin building the routes for the coming school term. *Our desire is to have this information available at least a week prior to the start of school.* We will send out a SchoolMessenger and include an email with this information directly to you. If you have not received notification 2-3 days prior to the start of school feel free to call us at 335-2903 with your Childs Name and Grade Level or email at [buses@winnebagoschools.org](mailto:buses@winnebagoschools.org) Last minute changes are a challenge for **all** involved. Please contact us as if you have any changes, as it will likely affect the whole route your student(s) ride and the other students on the route.

We ask as a courtesy that you call when your child will not need to be picked up. You may call (815) 335-2903, 24-hours a day to leave a message.



**On behalf of the entire Transportation Department we look forward to transporting your children and wish you and your children a wonderful year ahead.**



Winnebago CUSD 323 Transportation  
302 E McNair Rd  
Winnebago, Il 61088  
**815-335-2903**

[www.winnebagoschools.org/district/trans/trans.htm](http://www.winnebagoschools.org/district/trans/trans.htm)

# Student Bus Rules



Drivers communicate the bus rules with students at the beginning of the school term and/or periodically when necessary to ensure the bus is operated in accordance with the rules.

We ask that you also go over the rules with your children as they may listen to this easier at home where they may not be distracted while discussing them.

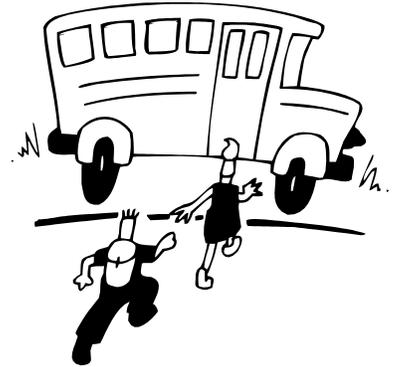
All students are to follow school rules while going to the bus stop, while on the bus, and when walking home from their bus stop.

The following infractions by any student's on the bus will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in writing to the Building Principal, may be given an assigned seat, and/or dismissed from riding privileges (Principal's decision) dependent on the infraction at any time.

- Fighting, Pushing/Shoving, or Tripping
- Profanity, Racial Slurs, Belittling, Bullying
- Any article which could be construed as/or used as a weapon
- Using/applying scented items, such as spray aerosols or heavily scented liquids
- Lowering of bus windows beyond the designated lines
- Extending any extremity or littering out the window
- Yelling on the bus and/or out the windows
- Public display of affection
- Transportation of live Pets/Animals
- Using or possessing Drugs, Alcohol or Tobacco
- Handling any bus equipment not intended for student use
- Not remaining seated facing forward while the bus is in motion
- Refusing to sit when and/or where the Driver instructs
- Being excessively late to the bus and/or not standing in line safely when the bus arrives
- Crossing the roadway without the appropriate signal from the Bus Driver
- Boarding or exiting from unsafe surrounding areas of the bus
- Vandalism or damage to the busses interior or exterior
- Creating situations which are unsafe to the driver and/or students
- Eating and/or drinking at any time
- Refusing to follow the Bus Drivers instructions

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Only students who are eligible will be permitted to ride the bus. No student may ride a bus that they are not assigned to. Students are required to get on and off at their assigned stop only.
- Please be sure to be at the bus stop at least 5-10 minutes prior to your stop time.
- Wait for your bus in a safe place, well off the roadway. Do not play or wait in the road. Respect the property of the area your stop is located at.
- Do not approach the bus until it has completely stopped and the driver has opened the door. If you must cross a roadway to get to your stop, you should cross only when the school bus arrives and stops, the red lights are flashing and the driver has signaled you to cross. **ALWAYS** cross in front of the bus, **NEVER** behind.
- Keep the noise level at a minimum for the safest driving conditions. Be totally silent at all railroad crossings.
- Know and follow all Bus Rules. **They are there for YOUR safety!**



## PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Parents are responsible for the safety of students until they board the bus. Parents are encouraged to escort their children to the bus stop, especially along and across busy roadways.
- Parents of Pre-K/Early Childhood students are **required** to meet them at the stop at the end of their school day. Should there be no one to receive the child, he/she will be taken back to the Transportation Department, or in some cases – Latchkey, and transportation home becomes the responsibility of the parent.
- For departmental safety and tracking, your child is only permitted to ride the bus he/she is assigned to and get on and off at their assigned stop only. No ineligible riders are allowed on the bus.