

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 38

BUSING

The School Bus is an extension of the classroom, and riding the school bus is a privilege. While on the bus, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with established guidelines for student behavior. The bus driver is responsible for the safety and well being for all who ride the bus and, in this regard, students are expected to comply with his/her requests at all times.

The following guidelines have been established for the safety of all who ride the bus. Violation of these guidelines may result in the loss of privilege to ride the bus.

All students are assigned to a bus and should ride that bus to and from school unless the Transportation Department has been advised of other circumstances.

BEFORE RIDING THE BUS

1. All students should be at his/her bus stop at least five minutes before the scheduled arrival of the bus.
2. Students should stay out of the road at all times while waiting for the bus.
3. Students should wait for the bus to stop completely and let the door open before moving to load the bus.
4. If it is necessary to cross the road to board the bus, wait until the bus driver signals it is safe to cross. Students must stay 12 feet in front of the bus at all times when crossing in the road.

RIDING THE BUS

1. When students exit school, they should go directly to their assigned bus, load immediately, and remain on the bus unless given permission to exit by the driver.
2. Students must obey the driver at all times. This is necessary to insure the safety of all students. Students are not to engage the bus driver in a discussion or argument with respect to the driver's expectations or directions. Drivers are expected to be on time and to maintain safety at all times. Therefore, students who challenge the bus driver's decisions or argue with the bus driver will be dealt with in a serious manner.
3. Students shall go directly to their seats without crowding or pushing and remain seated. Students are expected to remain seated and should not change seats unless given permission by the bus driver.
4. Students shall not throw anything out the windows; extend arms, legs, head or feet out of the bus at any time. Students should face forward while the bus is in motion to avoid injury should the bus make a quick and/or unexpected stop.
5. Students shall not damage any part of the bus. Payment for damage is the responsibility of the student/parent.
6. Students shall not create any safety hazard by tampering with fire extinguishers, emergency exits, or loosening seats.

7. Students shall not create a disturbance on the bus which may distract the driver. Those actions include, but are not limited to: shouting, gesturing, standing, spitting, throwing objects in or from the bus, etc.
8. The aisles must be clear at all times. Store backpacks, school bags, musical instruments, and other large objects under the seat, on the lap or as otherwise directed by the driver. All athletic equipment must be secured in a container or travel bag.
9. Littering on the bus is prohibited. It is the responsibility of all students to dispose of litter properly.
10. Due to safety issues glass containers, animals dead or alive, and the consumption of food will not be allow on the bus.
11. Alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or other substances which are in violation of Maine State Law are prohibited on the bus.
12. Tools and sleds are prohibited on the bus.
13. No weapons, ammunition, fireworks of any kind, flares, explosives, knives, or other materials which may cause injury are allowed on the bus.
14. Physical abuse, verbal and emotional harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.
15. Due to allergic reactions, students must refrain from spraying perfumes, deodorant, hair spray, etc. and using hand sanitizer on the bus.
16. Cell phones or cameras will not be used for any purpose on the school bus unless the student has received permission from the bus driver.
17. iPad use is prohibited on the bus.
18. Students may use IPods responsibly while riding the bus; however, earbuds/headsets or devices may not be shared across the aisle. Students getting on or off the bus must remove one earbud or headset in order to listen for directions. These devices are personal property. The school is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage. Should safety issues arise with the use of any device, the driver has the authority to ask the student to discontinue use.
19. Each student is assigned a seat on the bus and must sit in that seat until driver has assigned a different seat. Students are responsible for that particular seat.

LEAVING THE BUS

1. Students must remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop and the door is opened.
2. When it is necessary to cross the road after leaving the bus, cross at least 12 feet in front of the bus, but only after the driver has given the signal to do so.
3. Students who are not crossing the road shall move a safe distance away from the bus and remain there until it has left the area.
4. Students should not stop and pick up mail from roadside mailboxes when leaving the bus.
5. Due to school liability, students shall not be permitted to leave the bus at places other than their regular bus stop unless proper written authorization has been given in advance by the parent and/or school official.

INAPPROPRIATE BUS BEHAVIOR

The following procedure for dealing with bus conduct is followed throughout Regional School Unit #38 (RSU #38). The procedure emphasizes the need to have appropriate behavior on the bus that insures the safety for all children.

STEP ONE: – Written Warning Report: These warnings are issued by the bus driver to the student when verbal warnings have not been successful. The purpose is to communicate to the student that his/her behavior is a concern. Specific disciplinary action may not be taken at this time, depending on the incident. The white copy of the warning will be sent home with the student, to be signed by the parent and returned to the bus driver the next school day. If copy is not returned to the bus driver the next school day, the parent will receive a call from the Transportation Supervisor. A copy of the warning will be given to each administrator and put on file.

STEP TWO: First Bus Conduct Report: This reports inappropriate action by a student to the administrator. The administrator will meet with the student, along with the transportation supervisor, to discuss the problem. The parent will be notified by phone and a copy of the report will be sent home. Consequences will vary depending on the incident.

STEP THREE: Second Bus Conduct Report: With the second bus conduct report, the student is automatically suspended from the bus for a period not to exceed two weeks. The parent will be notified by phone and a copy of the report will be sent home. Additionally, a meeting must be held with the administrator, parent(s), student, transportation supervisor, and the bus driver (if needed) before the student can return to the bus. This suspension includes all buses of RSU #38, and covers all sports and field trips.

STEP FOUR: Third Bus Conduct Report: This is the final step. A student receiving a third bus conduct report will be suspended from all RSU #38 buses for the remainder of the school year. Administrators will notify parents in writing and by phone when this occurs. This suspension includes all buses of RSU #38, which covers all sports and field trips.

Severe violation of the guidelines for school bus safety could result in the suspension of bus riding privileges at any time. Questions concerning this procedure can be addressed to the building administrator.