

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES 2019-20

Berrien Springs Public Schools establishes bus routes and stops to conform and/or comply with local school policy and guidelines and laws set forth by the State of Michigan. Resident public school students living outside the boundaries of the Village of Berrien Springs may ride buses as assigned by the Transportation Department. Resident non-public students living outside the boundaries of the Village of Berrien Springs may be granted riding privileges by meeting the criteria as set forth by the Berrien Springs Board of Education and the State of Michigan. Non-resident school-of-choice students will be assigned to buses on a first come, first served basis. Should there not be available seating, a waiting list in order of application will be maintained and seating will be assigned in that order by the transportation Department as vacancies occur.

BUS STOPS

The district reserves the right to change bus stops and routes when necessary. Bus routes are planned to provide for the maximum number of students at each pickup and drop-off point with minimum number of turn-around and back tracking for each bus.

- Bus stops are chosen with care and are based on several important factors as well as the State of Michigan guidelines. Stops should not be on a hill, or immediately before or after a curve. Buses should be visible from the belt line (approximately headlight level) for 400 feet in both directions when stopped, and stops shall be at least 200 feet apart.
- Students must stay back at least 10 feet to allow the bus to safely enter the loading zone, wait for the door to open before approaching the bus in a single file line. Students should be at their bus stop location 5 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time and must stay off the traveled roadway. Students should be visible to the driver for a minimum of 500 feet where there is clear visibility. If student is not visible where possible, the bus will not stop. If students are not out at their bus stop, the bus will not stop. You may not wait inside; you must be at the bus stop. Bad weather, road conditions and traffic may detain the bus, in these situations if the bus is more than 10 minutes late please call transportation at (269) 471-2594.
- Students who must cross the road to board a bus must wait for the driver to indicate that it is safe for them to cross, and should do so 10 feet from the front of the bus. Students unloading at a bus stop should walk 3 steps away from the bus and 10 feet from the front of the bus, so they are visible to the driver, and wait for a signal from the driver that it is safe to cross. Students should walk not run. Students should never approach the bus stop from the back of the bus once the bus has arrived, nor should they bend down and reach under the bus for any reason.
- For safety reasons school-of-choice students must have a parent/guardian (or a designated person with photo identification) at the bus stop location before that student may leave the bus. **Parent must come to the bus to receive their preschooler, kindergartener and Young 5 students.** **Students may not leave the bus until their ride is at the bus stop. Students may not leave the bus and walk to a different location.** Students may not play outside their vehicle; they must remain in their vehicle unless boarding bus. Students may not enter the place of business at their stop after leaving the bus; they must go directly to their vehicles.
- Preschool students **must** have an adult at the bus stop at pick up and drop off time to assist them. If no one is there the student will be returned to their appropriate school and the parent will be responsible for picking them up.
- Kindergarten students must have someone at or visible from the bus stop before they will be allowed off the bus. If no one is visible or present the student will be returned to their appropriate school and the parent will be responsible for picking them up. An exception can be made for afternoon kindergarten students who can walk from bus stop to home with an older sibling. The request must be made in writing to the Transportation Department and approved.
- If your student is returned to school 3 times in one semester it will result in loss of riding privilege for the remainder of that semester.
- **BUSES WILL NOT WAIT FOR TARDY STUDENTS AT BUS STOP OR LOADING AT SCHOOL.**

PROCEDURES FOR CHANGING BUSES

All students shall be assigned to buses and bus stop locations by the Transportation Department. Students are required to ride only the bus, to which they have been assigned, and to be picked up and dropped off only at their designated bus stop location. Any deviation will require a bus pass issued by the students school office and presented to the driver upon entering the bus. Any student without an approved bus pass will not be permitted to ride the bus.

- Students may be transported to a child care provider but the provider must be a Berrien Springs resident and live on an established bus route.
- **Students will not be transported to different stops for birthday parties, scout meetings, social activities or any other program not directly sponsored by the school system.**

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent cooperation is required to make sure students ride their assigned bus. This insures that the district knows exactly who is on a bus, that a student can be located in an emergency, that over-crowding is controlled and that other possible problems can be prevented. You are also responsible for the safety and conduct of your children while going to and from the bus stop and while waiting for the school bus to arrive.

- Accept joint responsibility with school authorities for proper conduct of their children when riding the bus. Discuss with their children appropriate bus rider/bus stop behavior.
- Make certain their children arrive at the bus stop on time in the morning.
- Children must be out at bus stop, **not**, in garage, on porch or inside the door.
- Provide necessary supervision and/or protection of their children while going to and from the bus stop and be responsible for them until the bus arrives.
- Review and discuss bus safety rules with their children.
- Work with school personnel to reinforce appropriate behavior whenever necessary.
- Provide alternate transportation for their children if they are suspended from the bus.
- Insure that payment is made for damages resulting from vandalism to the bus made by their child.
- See that objects to be transported are limited to items that can be safely held by a student in a bus seat.
- Support emergency evacuation drills and early dismissal plans as established by the District. Establish family emergency plans if they arrive home early and no one is there to meet them.
- Parents may not board the school buses at any time without permission from the Transportation Supervisor or building Principal.
- **If you pick your student up from a bus stop, be there 5 minutes before the scheduled arrival time in the event the bus should arrive early.**
- If your student is returned to school three times for any reason they will lose riding privileges for the remainder of the semester.

If your student does not ride the bus to and from school for 3 consecutive days (without notifying transportation) the bus will not stop at your bus stop until a parent/guardian contacts transportation to reactivate busing.

The bus driver is sole authority on the bus and is responsible for the safety of all riders and the enforcement of the rules and regulations. This includes advising students concerning the rules, assigning seat, encouraging and praising good behavior and other generally accepted means of maintaining and developing a constructive student-driver relationship. Bus rules are distributed to all students at the beginning of the school year or may be had by calling the Transportation Department. Bus transportation guidelines apply not only to transportation to and from school but also on field trips.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Realize that riding a school bus is a privilege. Show proper respects for the rights, safety and comfort of others on the bus. Recognize that the driver is the sole authority on the bus by following the driver's instructions the first time they are given. Realize that any driver distraction is potentially hazardous to the safety of all passengers and the driver. Report any damage of the bus to the driver. Intentional damage to the bus will result in disciplinary consequences including restitution.

Conduct yourself as if you were in class, the same rules in your school also carry over to the bus.

BUS CONDUCT RULES

Boys on one side of the bus and girls on the other side

Observe same conduct as in the classroom

Use class room voices – no yelling or screaming

Cooperate with the driver

Must sit in assigned seat

Must angel seat in A.M & P.M.-(A.M. sit in Angel seat after boarding bus, move to assigned seat at next stop. In the P.M. move to angel seat at stop before your stop.)

Keep bus clean

Do not use profane language or gestures

Do not eat, drink or have gum on the bus

Do not bring suckers or straws on the bus

Do not bring tobacco, drugs or alcohol on the bus

Do not damage or tamper with seats, bus equipment, and other student belongings

Do not push, shove or bully

Do not bring animals on the bus

Do not bring flammable materials, matches or lighters on the bus

Do not bring glass or glass containers on the bus

Do not place items in the aisle, in front of the emergency door or in unoccupied seats

Do not stand or change seats while bus is in motion

Do not use cell phones or personal electronic equipment including ear buds and head phones

Do not put heads, hands, feet or any other body parts out the windows or in the aisle

Do not bring weapons or weapon look-alikes on the bus

Do not have sharp objects (pens, pencils, drum sticks, ect) out; must be contained

Do not bring balloons on the bus

Do not bring potted plants on the bus unless confined in a Ziploc baggie

Do not spray or use hand lotion, perfumes, colognes, nail polish or nail polish removers on the bus

Do not interfere w/ discipline of others

Do not interfere with others riding experience

Do not verbally abuse others

Do not kick or trip others

No hoods on head in bus (from any type of clothing/outerwear)

No stealing

No fighting on bus/bus stop

No disrespectful language or disrespectful behavior toward Transportation Staff

No spitting

No noise/talking at railroad crossings

No hitting or horseplay

No skateboards, hover boards, balls (unless contained in backpack) exposed baseball bats (must be in an enclosed bat bag that is able to be completely closed and small enough to hold on lap)

MISCONDUCT INFRACTIONS

Infractions of the bus rules will be handled in the following manner:

Sexual Misconduct – Sexual misconduct will result in loss of riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

Gross Misconduct & Major Infractions - First offense will be suspension from bus without written warning.

Minor Infractions - First offense will receive a warning ticket.

Each offense after first suspension, one day will be added to last suspension time. After third suspension a meeting will be called with the student, parent, bus driver (if needed) and the transportation Director, where at that time a decision will be made to determine riding privileges.

Any student who accumulates a combined total of ten (10) or more days of suspension as a result of disrupting the safety on the bus will be suspended from the bus for the remainder of the semester.

Persistent Disobedience is defined as a student who receives twenty (20) days of bus suspension within one school year or a student who receives thirty (30) days of bus suspension within two consecutive school years. Student may lose bus riding privileges for an amount of time determined by the Director of Transportation.

BUS MISCONDUCT TICKETS

Below are the bus infractions with the assigned consequence for that infraction. If you receive a misconduct ticket while a substitute driver is driving the bus, 1 extra day will be added to the suspension time.

Sexual Misconduct – Loss of bus riding privilege for remainder of the school year.

Gross Misconduct Infractions-No Warning

	<u>HIGH & MIDDLE SCHOOLS</u>	<u>SLVESTER & MARS</u>
Tobacco products/drugs	10 days	5 days
Starting a fight	5 days	3 days
Weapon or weapon look-alike	10 days	5 days
Matches/Lighter/Fireworks	5 days	3 days
Bullying –Verbal/Physical	5 days	3 days
Vandalism	5 days & restitution	3 days & restitution

Major Infractions-No Warning Ticket

Physical abuse of others	2 days	1 day
Disrespectful language or behavior towards Staff	2 days	1 day
Left bus without permission	5 days	3 days
Hitting/Kicking/Tripping others	3 days	1 day
Stealing	3 days	1 day
Spitting	2 days	1 day
Body parts out window	2 days	1 day
Profanity/obscene gestures	2 days	1 day
Verbal abuse of others/name calling	1 day	1 day
Bus stop safety violation	2 days	1 day
Any safety violation	2 days	1 day
Changing seats while bus is in motion	1 day	1 day
Standing while bus in motion	1 day	1 day

Minor Infractions

Talking/noise @ railroad track	1 day	1 day
Water guns or squirting device	1 day	1 day
Did not use angel seat	1 day	1 day
Refuse assigned seat	1 day	1 day
Blocking aisle with body parts	1 day	1 day
Excessive noise	1 day	1 day
Littering	1 day	1 day
Interfere with discipline of others	1 day	1 day
Interfere with others riding experience	1 day	1 day
Horseplay	1 day	1 day
Eating/drinking/gum on bus	1 day	1 day
Throwing things in/out of bus	1 day	1 day
Cell phones, head phones, ear buds, electronics	1 day	1 day
Hood on head in bus	1 day	1 day

OUT OF DISTRICT SCHOOL-OF-CHOICE BUS STOPS

For the safety of our students we have implemented some bus stop rules that all parents, guardians and representatives you send must follow when dropping off and picking up your students. It is your responsibility to inform anyone you send to the bus stop of these rules. There will be **NO TOLERANCE** for breaking these rules.

If it is reported that **any** of these rules have been broken by you or your representative the following steps will be taken:

First offense – Your student(s) **may** be suspended from riding the bus for the remainder of that semester.

PARKING LOT LOCATIONS:

Road to Life Church, 3800 Niles Rd., St. Joseph, MI

Comfort Keepers, 3820 M-139, St. Joseph, MI

Church of Christ, 3550 Niles Rd., St. Joseph, MI

BUS STOP TIMES ARE: 6:45/2:55-3:00 High & Middle Schools and 7:50/4:05-4:10 Sylvester & Mars Elementary

1. **No child** is to leave their vehicle until you are one of the first three vehicles beside the bus.
2. No dropping off students early to wait alone.
3. All vehicles should arrive five (5) minutes before bus stop times in the A.M. and P.M.
4. If you arrive late and the bus is exiting the parking lot, **do not** attempt to stop the bus or let your student out of your vehicle due to being close to the traffic on the road. **Never allow your student to approach the bus from behind, this is very dangerous.**
5. No students are allowed to enter the place of business at the bus stop.
6. Respect the property. 5 MPH in parking lot and no littering. No playing on property, students must stay in vehicles.
7. Be courteous to fellow drivers.
8. All A.M. & P.M. (P.M. excluding Comfort Keepers excluded) vehicles at all times should pull forward, even if you are the only vehicle there so that others pulling in may also get to the drop off point.
9. We are using a number system for P.M. pick up. Your student and vehicle will receive a matching number. The number for the vehicle is to be hung on the rear view mirror with the number facing out so the driver may see your number as you approach the pickup point. If you have someone else picking up your student make them aware of the number and ask them to have it on paper and place it in the right front side of the windshield.
10. At **Comfort Keepers only** in the PM. Cars should park around the outer perimeter of the lot. Please park closely to fit all vehicles in a parking place. Do not leave the lot until all children are at their pickup vehicle. If you arrive late do not attempt to drive through the lot where children are walking.

Each parking lot has a diagram showing directions. It shows where to enter and exit the lot, where the bus will park and in what direction traffic should flow. It is important that you follow these directions to keep the drop off and pick up flowing smoothly. Each student will receive a copy to give to parents on the first day of school. We will continue to hand these out throughout the year to new students or upon your request. Following the diagram is also a part of the parking lot rules that must be followed. Please share this information with your representatives; we will be happy to give you extra copies for them. If you have any questions you may contact the Transportation Department at 269-471-2594 from 6:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

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