**Bath Community Schools**

**Transportation Handbook**

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**Contact Information**

Transportation Office..........(517) 641-6723 | Bus Drivers...............(517) 641-4647

**Introduction**

Attending school is an important aspect of every child’s life and our goal at Bath Community Schools Transportation Department is to provide safe and timely transportation for our students. Our district provides services to our students when they travel to and from school, on class field trips, and when they go to various competitions. In order to meet the many transportation needs of our students, we do ask for support from the parent community. With your support, we can work together to ensure safety of students transported in or out of the district.

This handbook is provided to share information regarding our responsibilities in providing services to your child, and your student’s responsibilities when riding district transportation. Please, read this information and share it with your student.

Each driver has completed the required driver’s training and licensing to drive a school bus and shows a desire to serve our school system in a safe, dependable, and efficient manner.

**Eligibility**

Bath Community Schools will provide bus transportation to and from school for students in grades

Pre K-12 who reside within district boundaries. Students remain eligible to ride the bus when they

adhere to appropriate behavior. If a student violates the Bath Community Schools Code of Conduct, the Transportation Supervisor may collaborate with the building principal to reach resolution. Discipline administered may include loss of bus-riding privileges in addition to any school consequences. When students ride a bus for extracurricular activities, the student Code of Conduct remains in effect. The school bus is an extension of the classroom.

**Student Responsibility**

Riding the school bus is a privilege and all rules shall be followed by students. Your bus driver has

the responsibility for your safety and the safety of all students assigned to the bus. The driver can

only perform this responsibility with your cooperation and assistance in the following ways:

* Be at the bus stop five (5) minutes before the scheduled pick up time. In order to be

consistent and stay on schedule, buses will not wait at bus stops.

* At the bus stop, wait in a safe location and distance from the street.
* If you must cross the street to board or depart your bus, cross only in front of your bus--

never behind it. Students shall cross only after they have been directed to do so by the bus

driver with the crossing paddle.

* Stay in view of your driver at all times.
* Walk— never run to the bus.
* Remain seated until the bus comes to a full stop.

When boarding or leaving the bus, do so in an orderly manner.

**Parent Responsibilty**

Parent cooperation is essential to student well-being on and off the school bus.

* Review all bus safety rules with your child, encourage proper conduct.
* Provide the necessary protection for students traveling to and from the bus stop during
times of inclement weather.
* Visit the bus stop with your child and determine the safest route to take to the stop, where

to wait (at least 10 feet from the roadway), and to be aware of unsafe situations.

* Backpacks are helpful for keeping all school supplies intact and freeing hands for holding

handrails when entering or exiting the bus. Teach your children to secure loose drawstrings,

long backpack straps, and other objects that may get caught in the handrail or door of the

bus as they are exiting.

* Have a plan with your child if the bus is missed.
* Have a plan in case of early dismissal.
* For Pre K and kindergarten students: parents/caregivers are required to be

present when the bus arrives. If the driver does not know that someone will be responsible

for the child when they get off the bus, the child will be returned to the Transportation

Office and the parent/guardian will be responsible for picking up your child.

* Provide the necessary transportation if your student is suspended from riding the bus.

**Bus Rules for Students**

Safety for all students is our priority when transporting students. The following rules, although not

all inclusive, have been established to maintain order, safety, and well-being for all.

* Follow all bus driver’s directions
* Sit on back pockets facing the front
* Classroom behavior is expected
* Talk quietly; be respectful of others
* Beverages, food, candy, and chewing gum are not allowed on the bus
* Do not throw items on or out of the bus
* Aisles must be clear at all times
* All items must be in backpack/bag, and be held on your lap, including band instruments
* Large or fragile items are not appropriate for bus transportation
* Athletic and playground balls need to be in a bag or container
* Do not write on or damage seats
* Any behavior that distracts the driver will be cause for discipline
* The district’s policy for tobacco, alcohol, weapons, and illegal substance/materials is enforceable on the school busses
* Electronic devices are a privilege—not a right. Inappropriate use may result in loss of that

privilege:

* Telephone calls shall not be allowed after boarding the bus
* No video recording, sound recording, or picture taking will be allowed
* Sounds must be muted or turned off
* Drivers shall remove a device that is not being used appropriately

**Elementary School Consequences:**

First Offense:

* Disciplinary referral sent by bus driver to parents.

Second Offense:

* Disciplinary referral by bus driver and letter sent from elementary office to parents.

Third Offense:

* Disciplinary referral by bus driver and 3 day suspension from riding privileges.

Fourth Offense:

* Disciplinary referral by bus driver and 5 day suspension from riding privileges.

Fifth Offense:

* Automatic 10 day bus suspension.

Sixth Offense:

* Administrative decision.

**Middle School Consequences:**

First Offense:

* Disciplinary referral sent by bus driver to parents (a referral will be written for all offenses).

Second Offense:

* Disciplinary referral by bus driver and 3 day suspension from riding privileges.

Third Offense:

* Disciplinary referral by bus driver and 5 day bus suspension from riding privileges.

Fourth Offense:

* Automatic 10 day bus suspension.

Fifth Offense:

* Administrative decision.

**High School Consequences:**

First Offense:

* Disciplinary referral with parent sign off.

Second Offense:

* Disciplinary referral by bus driver and 3 day suspension from riding privileges.

Third Offense:

* Disciplinary referral by bus driver and 5 day bus suspension from riding privileges.

Fourth Offense:

* Disciplinary referral by bus driver and 10 day bus suspension from riding privileges.

Fifth Offense:

* Long-term suspension or permanent loss of transportation privilege.

These steps may be accelerated depending upon the severity of the offense.

***Transportation offenses are cumulative throughout a student’s high school career.***

**Bus Routes and Bus Stops**

Setting bus routes and bus stops involve many factors, most importantly those set by the Federal

and State of Michigan Laws. Also taken into consideration are additional factors such as road

configurations, speed limits, school grade, and students with special needs. Every effort is made to

make every bus stop safe for students. Students are expected to walk to a bus stop. Our department

will strive to make walking distances reasonable and uniform throughout the district.

Door-to-door service is not provided and buses will not drive through cul-de-sac unless it is necessary for the bus route.

If there is a concern regarding the location of a bus stop, a written request can be made to the BCS

Transportation Office for review. The request should include:

* Location of the bus stop
* Safety concern
* Contact information for a response

Transportation department staff will review the request and if necessary, visit the location prior to responding to the request.

**Change to Transportation Needs**

Any change to your child's school bus transportation needs must be in writing. Please

complete a Transportation Request form, available either in your child's school building or

on the schools' website. A separate form is required for each student. Updates to the bus

schedule will be made and the parents will be notified. Please allow three (3) business days

for processing.

**Bus Passes**

School bus transportation shall not be used for play dates, scout meetings, birthday parties, school

projects, or other social activities scheduled for after school. Parents are expected to transport their

children for these events.

If a family emergency occurs, a written, signed note by a parent/guardian is required.

Upon arrival to school, the student should present a note to the office which includes:

* Student’s name/address
* Dates the change will be needed
* Reason for the emergency change
* Bus number and name and address of the person they are going home with
* Parent contact phone number
* Bus passes for daycare arrangements shall not be issued for junior high or high school students.

**Inclement Weather**

On occasion, inclement weather may disrupt bus service to and from school. It is possible that start

times may be delayed for two hours or school may be canceled for the day. Information regarding

bus delays will be posted on the district website and provided to local media as time allows.

Should there be a two hour delay, students should report to their bus stops 2 hours after the regular

scheduled time, (i.e., if the stop is at 7:52 a.m., be at the bus stop at 9:52am). In the case of

threatening weather at the end of the day, buses may be delayed until the threat of severe weather

subsides.

**Impassable Roads**

If the gravel roads become impassible for any reason we may travel paved roads only. Students will be expected to go to the nearest paved road to board a bus or parents may transport their children to school. It will be announced on local media that buses will travel paved roads only.

**Passing a School Bus**

It is illegal in the State of Michigan to pass a stopped school bus, from either direction, when its red

lights are flashing. If a vehicle passes a district bus, our students are put in danger and the license

number will be reported to local law officials. Please help keep our students safe and never pass a

bus when its red lights are flashing.

**Accidents or Emergencies**

In the case of a bus accident or emergency, students should stay in their seat and wait for the

driver’s instructions. Routine bus evacuation drills will be held during the school year to teach

students the proper procedure in an emergency evacuation.

**Video Monitoring System**

For the safety and security of our students, all district school buses may be equipped with a video

monitoring system. Students should be aware that their actions and communications could be

recorded at any time by this recording system and used for disciplinary action. Parents should be

aware that the recorded video will not be made public and will only be viewed by authorized district

personnel.