



DeForest Area School District
Transportation and Student Conduct Guide



Transportation Provider:
Kobussen Buses, Ltd.
608-729-0167

District Transportation Contact:
Director of Business & Auxiliary Services
608-842-6510
Kathy Davis

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DeForest Area School District Transportation Handbook

Section I: Eligibility for Student Transportation

Note: Distance is measured from the nearest point where private driveways intersect with town, city, county, state or federal roads to the nearest accessible door of the school.

Pre- Kindergarten Students

All Pre-Kindergarten and 4K students are eligible for transportation services. They are expected to adhere to student policies, rules and procedures established by the District. Special education mid-day routes will be scheduled to allow for bus stops at or near the student's residence, whenever practical. Students will not be dropped off unless visual contact is made with someone at the residence. Pickups for 4K students may be scheduled at existing, nearby elementary group stops, when practical.

Elementary Students- Grades Kindergarten -4th

Elementary students, **residing 0.6 of a mile or over** from the school which they are assigned to attend or, in an unusually hazardous area, will be provided transportation to that school. Special mid-day 4K and kindergarten routes for ½ day kindergarten will be scheduled to allow for bus stops near or at the student's residence. Boundary exception students are not considered eligible for transportation since they are not attending their home school.

Middle & High School Students- Grades 5- 12

All Students in grades 5-12 **residing a distance of 1.0 mile or greater** from the school which they are assigned to attend or in an unusually hazardous area will be provided transportation.

Special Education/Physically Challenged Required Transportation

Special Education students will be eligible for transportation services **as provided by law.**

ALL STUDENTS

If there is reasonable doubt that a student cannot reach their home safely, the student will be kept on the bus and brought back to school or 4K provider. The school or administration office will be informed of the circumstances. Once the student is returned to the school or 4K provider, the school will contact the parents.

Unusually Hazardous Transportation Areas

The Department of Public Instruction provides guidelines for determining if an area is unusually hazardous. This designation must be approved by the county sheriff. Students residing in areas **that have been designated as unusually hazardous**, for their appropriate grade level, will be provided transportation services if identified in the Districts' *Unusually Hazardous Transportation Plan*.



The following have been determined to be unusually hazardous:

- **Vinburn Road**
Between County Highway CV and Highway 51. The narrowness of the roadway and lack of shoulders cause the roadway to be unusually hazardous for students who are required to walk along the roadway.
- **Highway 51**
The Dane County Sheriff identified Highway 51 to be unusually hazardous. The high volume of vehicle traffic provides hazards for all students required to walk along or across the highway.
- **County Highway CV (Lake Road)**
The highway between Vinburn Road and Windsor Road provides a hazard for all students required to walk along the highway.
- **County Highway V (North Street)**
The openness of the roadway and higher than posted actual speeds of the vehicles provides a hazard for all students required to walk along or across the highway.
- **Windsor Road**
County Highway CV to the interstate. The roadway is narrow with little or no shoulder present for elementary students to walk along and the posted speed limit of 45mph poses a danger to elementary students.
- **County Highway DM**

Outside the village limits has been considered hazardous due to the high rate of speed and the narrowness of the road. These conditions make it hazardous to walk along.

Private School Students

The District is obligated as specified in state statutes, to provide transportation for students attending private schools within 5 miles of the district boundary. It is the intent of the District to accommodate the needs of these students and their families as much as possible; however, such accommodations will not supersede existing bus routes or the schedules of District students. When situations arise that bus transportation is unavailable or significantly more costly, parent contracts shall be offered. Accommodations requiring changes in routes and schedules must be reviewed and approved by Director of Business & Auxiliary Services.

Non-residential Child Care Providers

Non-residential child care providers will have the ability to participate in an after school cooperative transportation arrangement. Students may be able to use this service dependent on provider participation and space availability. Non participating providers will be responsible for providing their own transportation. Parents/guardians should contact their child care provider for confirmation of transportation availability.

Residential Child Care Providers

For residential transportation to another residence other than the student's home, one alternative location may be requested. It is understood that all such arrangements are subject to restrictions based on budgetary limitations, route structure, school boundaries and bus capacity.

The following are the accompanying procedures and limitations under this policy:

- A residential childcare provider must be **located on or near an established bus route**; the residential childcare provider will be looked at similar to a student residence for eligibility purposes except that routes will not be altered-the bus shall not add mileage to its route-to accommodate requests for services under this policy.
- Requests are submitted to the transportation provider using the Special Transportation Request Form and will be handled on a first-come, first-serve basis. There must be sufficient space on the bus and service may be suspended if additional children move into the established route area. In the event of the displacement, the last student(s) accepted for transportation services under this policy would be the first displaced.

- Residential childcare arrangements must be consistent on a weekly basis; only a limited number of provider changes will be accepted during the year. Each change will require submission of a new Special Transportation Request Form.
- A Special Transportation Request Form for transportation to and from childcare providers must be submitted, approved and renewed each school year.
- Students who are not eligible for transportation may be transported to a residential daycare provider at parent's expense. All other conditions of the section must be followed.

Open Enrollment, Tuition, or Other Non-Eligible Students

Provided the following conditions are met, tuition students, boundary exception students, or others that are not eligible to be transported under the above rules may request in writing to transportation provider to be allowed access to our transportation services. Students attending a school outside of their regular school's attendance area are ineligible for transportation to the school of attendance but may contract for service if written request is provided by the parent, space is available, routes are not modified, and approval by transportation provider's office is obtained. Parents will be required to pay a fee to the transportation provider. Rates for this fee are determined by the transportation provider. This applies to students who would normally be eligible for transportation within their home attendance area. Students not normally eligible for transportation within their home attendance area may ride at their parents' expense.

Section II: Bus Conduct Rules

All students, regardless of age, are subject to the rules and regulations of the School District while riding the bus. When a student's bus riding privileges are suspended the suspension may include field trips and extra curricular activities. For the safety of all bus riders, students shall follow the following *Student Bus Conduct Rules*:

Prior to loading (both at the bus stop and at the schools):

- Be at the bus stop on time and ready to board. This is mandatory. Delays on the schedule affect the rest of the bus stops and arrival times.
- Stay off the road, whenever possible, while waiting for the bus. Bus riders should conduct themselves in a safe and respectful manner while waiting.



- Do not move toward the bus or attempt to enter it until the bus has come to a complete stop.
- Loading should be done in an orderly fashion, without pushing or shoving.
- Check clothing and backpacks for attachments that may get caught in doors when loading and unloading. Students should avoid footwear that contributes to tripping or falling (flip flops).

While on the bus:

- Students shall keep hands and head inside the bus at all times after entering and until leaving the bus.
- No loud talking, laughing, or unnecessary confusion that could divert the driver's attention and cause a serious accident.
- Students may drink water; no other food or beverage may be consumed while on the bus. No smoking or chewing of tobacco is allowed.
- No dangerous objects or pets will be allowed on the bus.
- Bus riders are not permitted to stand or leave their seats when the bus is in motion.
- There must be absolute silence when approaching a railroad crossing and until the bus is safely across the tracks.
- While on the bus you must remain courteous to fellow riders, bus drivers, and chaperones. Profane or indecent language will not be tolerated.
- All books, packages, coats and other large objects will be held on the riders lap. The aisles, entrance door, and emergency doors cannot be blocked.
- Treat bus equipment respectfully. Damage to seats, windows, or equipment must be paid for by the offenders.
- Trash and/or debris are not to be thrown on the bus or from the bus windows.
- Each student rider is responsible for the general condition of his/her seat assignments.
- Remain on the bus until the bus reaches the designated bus stop or shuttle transfer bus, unless authorized by the school bus driver, transportation provider's office, school official or parent written request.
- Bikes are not allowed on the bus. Students are discouraged from carrying scooters or skateboards for school activities. Students must be able to independently manage loading and unloading and place the items behind the seat. No items are allowed in the aisles. It is recommended that parents transport these items to school for those activities.



After leaving the bus:

- Move directly away from the bus. Do not walk along the side of the bus, or go to the mailbox until the bus has left the stop.
- When it is necessary to cross the road to get on the bus, it should be done only after receiving a signal to do so from the driver. The student should also check traffic conditions before crossing the road.

Drivers:

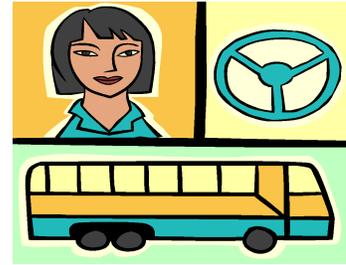
- Drivers and/or school officials may assign seating arrangements.
- The bus driver is responsible for the safety and welfare of the child and must therefore adhere to statutory provisions and regulations.
- The driver is responsible to see that the bus shall not be overloaded at any time. Any complaints to this effect shall be reported to the District Director of Business & Auxiliary Services immediately.
- The driver under no circumstance shall ask a student to leave the bus while in route unless the student is returned to school staff, transferred to another of transportation provider's vehicle's or taken to the transportation provider's office. The parent is to be contacted by the transportation provider. Except for serious violation, which would be handled above, the driver has the obligation to complete the route with the violator on board, discharge the violator at the normal stop, and report the incident, in writing, to the transportation provider's office, at the completion of the route.
- The school bus driver has the authority to discipline the student if any of the rider rules are broken. Authority to discipline is construed to mean taking appropriate action to rectify the problem in accordance with district administrative regulations.
- If there is reasonable doubt that a student cannot reach their home safely, the student will be kept on the bus and brought back to school. The school or administration office will be informed of the circumstances. Once the student is returned to school, the school will contact the parents.
- Driver will not allow animals or pets to be on the school bus.
- Drivers will not allow any object to be placed in the aisle, or allow any object to block the entrance or emergency doors.

Section III: Discipline Process

All students, regardless of age, are subject to the rules and regulations of the School District when riding a bus. When a student's bus riding privileges are suspended, the suspension includes field trips and extra curricular activities.

Driver Action

The bus driver will be responsible for the safety of the student riders and for enforcing bus rider rules under the direction of the transportation provider and the School Administration. The driver has the responsibility to address and correct misbehavior on the bus. Depending on the severity of the situation, a driver may handle the misconduct offense by taking appropriate action on the bus, such as assigning seats. The bus driver will complete a Bus Conduct Report at the completion of the route.



The severity of the offense may cause the progressive disciplinary procedure to begin. Examples would be throwing objects, swearing, fighting and damage to the school bus.

Progressive Discipline

School bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. Students who refuse to accept and follow necessary rules and regulations relating to safe, comfortable transportation will be subject to a progressive ladder of discipline. Minor infractions will be handled by transportation provider, first through phone calls and/or notifications to parents for seat assignments or warnings.

When further incidents occur while being transported on the bus, and corrective actions taken by the transportation provider have failed, or when the rule infraction is of a serious nature, the incident will be referred, via Skyward disciplinary entry, to a principal at the student's school for investigation and action. Upon receipt of a bus conduct referral, the principal will meet with the student to discuss the infraction. A copy of the referral will be sent to the parent/guardian and entered into the discipline section of the student's records. The level of discipline imposed by the principal will be in proportion to the: 1) the seriousness of the offense, and 2) the previous disciplinary record of the student, and the age of the student and other relevant factors. Below are descriptions of each level and corresponding consequences.

- **Level I**
Level I discipline is used for minor acts of misconduct that interfere with providing a safe and comfortable ride on the bus. Consequences may include, but are not limited to written warning, seat assignment, restitution, parent/student/principal conference, or restorative solution.
- **Level II**
Level II discipline is used for repeated minor acts of misconduct or intermediate acts of misconduct such as misbehaviors directed against persons or property, but do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others. Consequences may include, but are not limited to restitution, a service project, or suspension from riding the bus for up to three days*. If a student is suspended from the bus, the

principal may suspend the student's bus riding privileges for field trips and other extra curricular activities.

- **Level III**

Level III discipline is used for repeated intermediate acts of misconduct or serious disruptions of the bus environment, threats to personal health, safety and property. The consequences may include, but are not limited to restitution, a service project, or suspension from riding the bus for up to five days*. If a student is suspended from the bus, the principal also has the option of suspending the student's bus riding privileges during the school day. The principal will communicate the student's bus referrals with the Director of Administrative Services.

- **Level IV**

Level IV discipline is used for acts of an illegal nature that may include, but are not limited to, bringing drugs or weapons on the bus and causing serious physical harm to another. This level may also be used for students who have had several interventions through the school year in the previous three levels and little change in their misbehavior. The principal will make a discipline recommendation to the Director of Administrative Services and District Administrator. Consequences may include a period of suspension time more than 5 days or the student may be referred to the Board of Education for expulsion from the bus for up to the remainder of the school year*. During the expulsion process, the student will be suspended from riding the bus for all activities.

**When a suspension or expulsion from the bus occurs, parents or guardians are responsible to transport their student to and from school. If the student does not attend school because of bus behavior, the student is truant and will be disciplined as such.*

Video Cameras on School Busses

District authorizes the use of audio-video cameras on school buses used by the District as one method of supervision, enhancing that provided by the driver. Disciplinary action may be taken based on video documentation. Video recordings under this policy are considered student records. Rules shall be established that guarantee individual student rights to privacy under state statute and district policy with regard to the storing, viewing and disposition of videotaped records. *Reference: Administrative Regulation AR6.3b(3m)*

Section IV: Route Restrictions

Assignment of Bus Stops

The District has the responsibility, with the help of its contracted transportation provider, to establish bus stops. The bus stops will be established first with the safety of the students in mind. The second factor that affects the establishment of bus stops is route efficiency. Grouping students at a bus stop provides for a safer and more efficient method of picking up or dropping off students.

Wisconsin law does not require the District to provide door-to-door general school bus service and the District reserves the privilege of requesting students to collect at prearranged points in order to reduce the number of stops and improve efficiency. It does not relieve parents of students from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Once a child boards the bus – and only at that time – does s/he become the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day. Walking distances to such prearranged collection points will be measured from the nearest point where private driveways intersect with town, city, county, state or federal roads. The absence of sidewalk, in and of itself, does not mitigate such walking distances to collection points. In the case of dead end roads, the District shall determine the advisability of their use as bus routes. Bus stops in all cases shall be arranged consistent with good safety practices and efficient operational procedures.

Walking Distance to Bus Stops

Every effort shall be made to establish bus stops within 0.3 of a mile from the homes of students fourth grade and under. Discretion will be used in establishing bus stops for students in grades 5-12.

Dead End Streets

It is the policy of the District not to assign bus stops on dead end streets or roads. Exceptions to the policy may be made when acceptable bus turnarounds are available.

Deletion of Unused Stops

Parents of eligible students who will not utilize district provided transportation are encouraged to contact the transportation provider and notify them they will not require service. Particularly in cases of rural stops, transportation provider may eliminate unused stops, provided it has made an attempt to contact affected families, in the interest of promoting efficiency for students utilizing the service. Reinstatement of such eliminated stops will be made within three business days of receiving such request to reinstate.

Route Modification

Routes are adjusted throughout the school year as students move in and out of the District and into and out of a bus route. When route modifications are necessary, transportation provider will contact parents.

Temporary Riding Eligible/Non-Eligible on another Route

Parents may not ride route buses with their students.

Students will be allowed to ride a different bus, or get off the bus at a different stop, provided:

- A written note from their parents and/or school officials is provided,
- Space is available,
- Route is not modified,
- Approval from transportation provider's office is obtained.

