

# **Brown County Schools Transportation Policies and Procedures**



Brown County Schools  
Board of School Trustees Approved: 8/2/18

Effective Date: 8/8/18

**Riding a school bus is a privilege based on appropriate, safe, and respectable behavior. The following rules are in place to keep all riders of the bus safe.**

- 1) Students shall be seated immediately upon entering the bus.
- 2) Students must stay in the seat while the bus is in motion and must stay out of the aisles. Students will never lay on or across bus seats.
- 3) The bus driver is authorized to assign seats, if necessary.
- 4) Students will stand at least 10 feet from the bus stop while waiting for pick up.
- 5) Students must be alert to traffic when they get on and off the bus. Students must always check both ways for traffic and watch the driver for the ok (universal sign) to cross.
- 6) Students are not to enter or exit the bus until it has come to a complete stop and the driver has opened the door.
- 7) Students must keep their hands to themselves.
- 8) Loud and/or profane language will not be tolerated.
- 9) Students must keep all body parts inside the bus. Windows can only be lowered at a measurement of  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total window.
- 10) Windows can be opened with only after permission is received from the driver.
- 11) Always walk in front of the bus. Students must never walk behind the bus.
- 12) Brown County staff and students are the only individuals allowed to ride on the bus.
- 13) Students need to wait at their bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to their regular pick up time. The driver is required to stop at each designated stop but is not required to wait on the student if the student is not at the bus stop at the designated pick up time.
- 14) Student are not allowed to bring food or drinks on the bus. Water is permitted.
- 15) Students are not permitted to destroy any school property on the bus or in the bus.
- 16) Students are not permitted to engage in any illegal activity on the bus. This includes using a laser pointer or any other device that would cause harm to the riders or the driver.
- 17) Seatbelts must be worn at all times if the bus is equipped with this restraint.
- 18) All items carried on the bus must be held on the lap of the student or placed on the floor directly in front of the student and between their knees.
- 19) No large objects will be allowed on the bus that cannot be fit as described in item 18.
- 20) If an electronic device is used, it cannot interfere with the safety of the driver and riders. A driver may confiscate a cell phone or any other type of electronic device if it is an interference with the safety of the bus. The device may be given back to the student at the end of the route or given to the building principal to handle the situation, as appropriate.
- 21) Students are not allowed to ride a school bus to the home of another student as some of our buses are full to capacity.
- 22) Students must ride their assigned bus and shuttle.
- 23) Students cannot be delivered to any district other than their home school district.
- 24) Students will be quiet at railroad crossings.
- 25) A bus route will not be changed if a student does not like their driver.
- 26) Animals, reptiles, insects, fowl, fireworks, glass or other dangerous or unsanitary objects are not permitted on the bus.
- 27) The wearing of cleats or spiked athletic footwear on the bus is prohibited.
- 28) Taking valuables on a trip is not recommended. The school or bus driver is not responsible for lost or stolen items from the bus.

## Transportation Policies and Procedures

Brown County Schools provides transportation to and from school to all children in grades K-12. However, school bus transportation is a privilege. It is not mandated by Indiana law that general education students are provided transportation to and from school. Students who ignore safety rules or engage in disrespectful activities may lose their riding privileges. In the event a student is suspended from riding the bus, the parent or guardian shall be responsible for transporting the child to and from school. Students play an important part in accomplishing SAFE and EFFICIENT school bus transportation. We appreciate the support from our parents and guardians in teaching the importance of safe riding behavior.

If a student attends a school outside their home school district, the parent/guardian will be responsible for providing their own transportation.

Brown County Schools allows two locations for pickup and drop off transportation. These days must be consistent throughout the school year. Locations must be inside the elementary school district where the student resides. (Example: picked up Monday thru Friday at home, dropped off Monday and Tuesday at day care etc. and the rest of the week back at home address. Students cannot live in the Sprunica district and ride another bus to the Van Buren district)

Students will be allowed to ride a different bus for a day if approved by the Transportation Department as an emergency. The student must have a stamped note with a signature from the school for the driver showing proof of the special circumstance. If a note is given to the driver without a stamp, it will not be accepted. Parents will be required to pick up their student at that location.

Students younger than third grade cannot be dropped off without a parent visually present for the driver to see.

Students who walk to school must be a minimum of 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

No adult, including parents and/or guardians, are allowed to board a bus for any reason. If there is a concern, please contact your child's bus driver at a later time or Brown County Schools Transportation Dept. 812-988-5412

### Student Drop-Off without a Responsible Person Present

- 1) Students younger than third grade will not be dropped off if the bus driver does not see an approved adult at their stop, no exceptions. It is the parent's responsibility to be waiting (or have an approved adult waiting) at the bus stop for their child. The bus cannot sit in the road for long periods of time.
- 2) A parent must be present when a student riding a special needs bus is dropped off, regardless of age.
- 3) If a parent is not at the stop, the Transportation Department or the school will try to contact the parent. If the parent is not reached or is reached and not home, the student will be taken to After School Care. (There will be a fee for this service.)

## **Preschool Transportation**

Parents of General Education Preschool students are responsible for providing transportation to and from preschool for their child.

Special Education preschools who attend a Half-Day session may receive transportation to and from school Monday – Thursday. Preschool buses do not run on Fridays.

Special Education Preschoolers who attend a Full-Day session will only receive bus transportation one way to or from school Monday-Thursday. any other transportation parents are responsible for providing.

In the event of bad weather that leads to a two-hour delay in school starting, there will be no AM preschool. Students who attend all day will need transportation provided by the parent/guardian.

## **Bus Stops**

Placement of the bus stop will be assigned and approved by the Transportation Department. Safety is the absolute priority and careful consideration will be given in making each stop safe for students. If the Transportation Department determines that a stop is unsafe and needs to be changed, it will need to be changed. There are some locations in this county that are not safe for pick up or drop off. An alternate location may need to be identified.

Parents/Guardians and students are not permitted to follow the bus after missing their designated pick up. Students should never run up beside the bus when it is stopped and picking up students at another stop.

Students are permitted to meet the bus at approved bus stops only. No exceptions.

It is expected for all adults to act in a professional manner at all times with the driver and students at a bus stop. Brown County Schools will not tolerate loud and/or vulgar language by adults around students. If this happens, the Brown County Sheriff's Department may be called. This action may also result in the loss of bus privileges for your student.

## **Boarding the Bus**

When the bus approaches and while on the bus, students must observe the instructions of the driver. It may be necessary to cross the road to board a school bus. Students should wait until the bus comes to a complete stop, the door is open, and the bus driver has given the student the signal to cross. Students must always cross in front of the bus with the aid of flashing stop arm and an overhead light. Students must never reach down or go under the bus for anything. If a student drops anything, the student should inform the driver immediately.

## **Driver Authority**

The driver has full authority over the passengers on the school bus. Seating assignments may be necessary to assure student safety. If inappropriate behavior is demonstrated by a student, the parent and/or guardian will be contacted to assist the student's modification of the behavior of concern.

The Transportation Department is committed to making every effort to establish positive communication with parents/guardian.

### **Serious or Persistent Violations**

Safety is our main concern in bus transportation; therefore, the drivers and other school authorities are responsible to maintain discipline on the buses. Students disobeying the safety rules shall be denied the privilege of riding the bus until the privilege has been reinstated.

Endangering the safety of others will result in progressive discipline. A student may receive a verbal warning, receive a written warning, be suspended from the bus, or be denied bus privileges and possibly criminal charges. These include but are not limited to:

- 1) Fighting on the bus
- 2) Throwing objects in or out of the bus
- 3) Possession of weapon(s)
- 4) Defacing or destroying school district or private property
- 5) Smoking, use/possession of drugs/alcohol or any form of tobacco including Vapes
- 6) Obscene gestures or profanity directed at the bus driver or others
- 7) Any part of the body extended outside the bus
- 8) Assault on a bus driver

### **Students Management/Discipline**

When students are being transported on a school bus, the students are under the supervision, direction, and control of the school bus driver/monitor and are subject to disciplinary measures. IC 20-27-10-1 The driver shall be consistent in following bus conduct and be sure all students understand what is expected of them on the bus.

- 1) Verbal Warning: When first realizing that a student may be come or have a potential problem:
  - A. The bus driver will talk with the student.
  - B. The bus driver will call the parent and ask for help on the issues.
- 2) First Written Warning: If the behavior continues after step one, a written warning is issued using The BCS Transportation Discipline Form. This form is given to the building principal.
- 3) Second Written Warning: If a second written warning is issued, students may be removed from the bus for one day by the Driver. A building Principal/Assistant Principal may add extra days depending on the severity of the behavior. The driver must notify the parent/guardian before the student can be removed from the bus.
- 4) Third Written Warning: If a third written warning is issued, students may be removed from one to three days from the bus, as determined by the building Principal/Assistant Principal.
- 5) Forth Offense: The Transportation Director and school Principal will work together to determine the consequence. A suspension from bus privileges could range from days, weeks, or may include a permanent loss of bus privileges.

## **Support for Students with Special Needs**

Students with special needs are expected to follow the same rules as the other students in the district. However, if the disability is the root of the child's behavior, the traditional discipline procedure may not be appropriate. The Transportation Department and the school will work with the parent/guardian to identify successful strategies so that the safety of the student, the other riders on the bus, and the driver/monitor is the priority.

Students are not permitted to be carried on to a bus. If a student cannot get up and down the steps without assistance, they will need to ride a special needs bus with a lift and be seated in a wheelchair.

## **Band Instruments**

As long as there is room, students are permitted to have their instruments on the bus. The following rules apply:

- 1) The instrument will not take away the seat of another student.
- 2) Instruments must be carried on the students lap or stored on the floor between their legs.
- 3) Instruments may not block any emergency doors or windows or exits.
- 4) Large instruments will not be allowed on the bus.
- 5) Cargo bays cannot be used for storage of musical instruments.

## **Bullying**

Bullying by one student against another student is prohibited and is a violation of school and bus discipline rules. "Bullying" is defined as overt, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications transmitted; physical acts committed; or any other behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate or harm the other student. Bullying is prohibited when a student is on school grounds immediately before or during school hours; immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a group; off grounds at a school activity, function or event; traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or using school property or equipment provided by the school. (I.C. 35-42-2-2)

## **Accidents/Breakdown**

Bus drivers are thoroughly trained in defensive driving techniques and buses are carefully maintained. Yet given thousands of miles of traveled annually, accidents and breakdowns do happen. All buses used in Brown County Schools have radio communication and we are able to provide swift assistance within the county. Student cooperation during an event of an accident or breakdown is necessary. It is very important that parents and guardians communicate to their children to listen to the driver and their directions at all times.

Parents will be notified as soon as possible if an accident or breakdown of a bus occurs.

## **Video Policy**

Buses in Brown County Schools are equipped with video monitoring equipment. This capability significantly increases the safety of the students riding the bus. Parents are not allowed to watch videos because of student privacy issues. Videos are the property of Brown County Schools.