

Lexington Local Schools



Student Transportation Handbook

A letter from the Director of Transportation

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Our goal is to ensure the safety of student transportation at Lexington Local Schools. We have developed this handbook to establish guidelines that will help make the school year successful for everyone. To obtain this goal, the cooperation of students, parents/guardians and bus drivers is paramount.

The drivers at Lexington are highly trained professionals who take their job seriously. They attend in-services each year to better handle their driving, student behavior, and all other aspects of their job. The job of a bus driver requires great responsibility each and every day while transporting students to and from school.

The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize students and parents on the safety procedures while riding the bus. I encourage you to take a few minutes to become familiar with the procedures outlined within. It is truly an honor to serve your students. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please call the Transportation Department at (419) 884-2349.

Yours in service,

**Johneen Gordon
Director of Transportation**

**Ray Cunningham
Head Mechanic/Assistant Director of Transportation**

I. Bus Stops-Time Schedule:

A. Buses will run within five minutes of the scheduled time except in emergencies or inclement weather. Route times will be established within the second week of school.

B. Students may be asked to walk a reasonable distance to a bus stop as the bus cannot stop at every house.

C. Students must only use the bus and bus stop that they are assigned to on a daily basis. If the bus stop changes the student and parent will be notified by the driver or the Transportation Department. If a student changes addresses during the school year, they must call the Transportation Department *and update in Final Forms* to be reassigned to a new bus. They will be notified when the new assignment is ready. Students are not permitted to ride another bus until they are re-assigned.

D. Students are expected to be at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to bus arrival. This is for their own and other student's safety, the bus cannot wait for tardy students.

E. Please practice safety around the bus. NEVER run up to the bus and NEVER get under the bus. Notify the driver if something falls under the bus.

F. Students are expected to stay *10-feet minimal* back from the street in their place of safety as the bus arrives and wait until the bus stops. (A place of safety is a location decided upon by the driver on the student's side of residence and a safe distance from the bus when it arrives, ask the driver if you do not know where it is).

G. Students should act in an orderly manner at their bus stop.

H. When getting off the bus, go directly to your place of safety. Do not get the mail, paper or trash cans until the bus is gone.

I. If exiting to your place of safety requires you to cross the road, always cross in front of the bus. Walk far enough away from the bus that you can see the driver and they can see you. Wait until the driver initiates the crossing procedure, then walk to the edge of the bus or traffic edge. Stop and look both ways on your own both ways before crossing. The driver will be watching too and that way there are two sets of eyes watching for cars. After crossing, go to your place of safety and wait until the bus leaves. If you hear the horn that means danger. Look for the danger and if you do not see any, look at the driver for further instructions.

II. Loading and Unloading on School Grounds

- A. Always walk to the bus, do NOT RUN. Until boarding, try to stay at a safe distance along the bus and on the sidewalks when possible.
- B. Know where your bus parks and your bus number.
- C. Get on the bus and quietly find your seat.
- D. Never push or shove and remember to observe classroom behavior at all times on the bus.

III. Student Behavior

The student code of conduct will be followed while on the bus. Students are expected to behave on the bus as they would in a classroom. If a student is in violation of the student code of conduct or not following bus riding guidelines, a bus referral will be sent to the school building in which they attend. Below are guidelines for bus riding:

- Reasonable conversation is permitted; noise should be kept at a minimum. Profane language will not be tolerated.
- All students should enter and exit through the front door except during an emergency.
 - Silence must be observed when crossing all railroad crossings or other emergencies as indicated by the driver.
 - Students must remain seated while the bus is in motion.
 - Drivers may assign seats and in most cases they do. Please sit in the seat the driver assigns you. Students may sit three to a seat in some cases. Book bags and band instruments should be on the student's lap.
 - The aisle should always be kept clear.
 - No part of the body or any object should be placed out of a window.
 - No eating or drinking will be permitted except for special or medical conditions and prior approval.
 - Students are not allowed to have on their person anything that they are not permitted to have on their person in the school building. This includes but is not limited to medication (including over the counter), drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, or weapons.
 - Inappropriate touching will not be tolerated. Students should keep their hands to themselves.
 - Students are expected to help keep the bus clean and throw any trash away as they exit the bus.
 - In accordance with state law and board policy (5513) parents shall be held fully responsible for any damage done to school property by their children.

IV. Student Code of Conduct (In relation to board policy 5500 and O.R.C 3313.20, 3313.534, 3313.66, 3313.661)

- Respect for law and for those persons in authority shall be expected of all students. This includes conformity to school rules as well as general provisions of law affecting students. Respect for the rights of others, consideration of their privileges, and cooperative citizenship shall also be expected of all members of the school community. The Board of Education has zero tolerance of violent, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior by its students.
- Student conduct shall be governed by the rules and provisions of the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code. This Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code shall be reviewed periodically. R.C. 3313.20, 3313.534, 3313.66, 3313.661

Discipline (In relation to board policy 5600 and O.R.C 3313.20, 3313.66, 3313.661, 3315.07, 3327.041)

- The driver-pupil relationship on the bus should be one of mutual respect at all times.
- The bus driver shall be recognized as the person in authority to maintain the decorum on the school bus.
- The Board of Education delegates to school officials and those in authority to enforce regulations regarding conduct of students.
- The Board of Education will support drivers, school officials and administrators to the fullest in their efforts to maintain proper discipline among students.
- A violation of any rule may result in disciplinary action. We believe student discipline should be handled in the least intrusive manner possible. A student may be asked by the driver to stop the behavior/rule violation or move to another seat to stop the behavior. If the behavior continues to happen the student will receive a write up. *The write up will be forwarded to the principal or designee of their building to be handled.* Write up's will be handled in a progressive fashion depending on severity. The more write up's the more severe the discipline. Students may receive lunch/recess detentions to suspension of riding privileges to up to any other discipline outlined in the code of conduct.

V. Emergency Evacuations

Emergency evacuation drills will be held at least once per year. Practicing these drills as actual emergencies will help students know what to do in case of a real emergency. Your driver will explain each procedure before doing them. Your cooperation is a must for them to be successful. The three procedures are as follows:

1. Exit out the front passenger door (this would be the easiest way to exit in an orderly fashion).
2. Exit out the rear door (this would be if there was an issue in the front of the bus and the front door was not usable).
3. Exit out both Rear and Front doors (this would be used in an extreme emergency where time is of the essence).

Students should sit quietly in their seats until told otherwise by the driver or proper authorities.

Stay calm and follow the directions of the driver.

When you are told to leave the bus, do so quickly and quietly. Walk to the indicated place of safety and stay together.

Do not bring lunch boxes or book bags with you. They can be replaced, students cannot.

Drills will, whenever possible, be done on the morning bus before going to school to minimize the need for late buses.

VI. School Closings and Other Emergency Communication

Each year there is a possibility that the schools will be forced to close for emergencies such as bad weather, equipment failures, etc. In such cases you will be notified through a text blast as well as local radio and TV stations. WMAN, WMFD, Y-105 and WVNO. In most cases notification will be provided by 6:00 AM.

If children are already at school when it is necessary to close, you will be notified with the same procedure.

It is highly recommended that parents make advance arrangements beforehand with neighbors or relatives so that their child will have care in the case of a closing/ delay when parents are not at home.

In the event your student's bus is running substantially late due to a breakdown or another emergency issue, every effort will be made to communicate with you through a text message. The message will be sent from the school and will include an expected time of arrival for the bus. While we strive to keep these occurrences at a minimum, they do happen from time to time.

VII. Substitute Drivers

During the year, it is possible that you will have a substitute driver on your bus. The substitute drivers are fully trained, licensed and qualified bus drivers. However, because they are new to your route, they may need your help and deserve your best behavior. Please be courteous to them and help if asked.

VIII. Tips for ALL Motorists

- Do not pass a school bus that has red alternating flashing lights on. This is the signal that the bus is stopped to load or unload children. Traffic should not move until the bus resumes motion or the driver signals traffic to proceed.
- When a bus has alternating flashing yellow lights on, it is preparing to stop to load or unload children. Be ready to stop and watch for children on the road.
- Parents: review the safety rules with your child. Help them to understand why each rule is important.
- Dress children in light colored clothing or jackets on dark mornings.
- Help children to be ready at the stop before their bus arrives.
- Take turns supervising bus stops for smaller children.
- Drivers will signal to children that need to cross the street only when traffic has stopped.
- If a motorist fails to stop for a school bus, the error will not go unnoticed. Bus drivers will report the license plate number of any vehicle that fails to comply with the law.

Transporting our most precious cargo...our children! Safety is our top priority!