



WILLOWS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

823 W. Laurel St., Willows, CA 95988

Transportation Department: (530) 517-3962

District Office: (530) 934-6600

PARENT HANDBOOK For STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Annual Registration of Bus/Van Students

PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Students, who qualify for school bus transportation, are transported to their assigned school through a coordinated transportation system.

The information in this booklet is provided for your information. Your cooperation will aid considerably in transporting our students with maximum service, courtesy, and safety.

QUESTIONS regarding Pupil Transportation should be forwarded to:
Jaime Thorpe at (530) 517-3962

WUSD Return to School - Special COVID-19 Bus Rider Policies

- These special policies are being put in place to ensure safe transport for our students to and from school.
- They will remain in effect until normal school operations begin.

What are the guidelines for buses?

- Drivers will meet students outside of the bus.
- Windows will be open as weather allows to circulate fresh air through the bus.
- Enhanced disinfection—drivers will sanitize the bus on return to the District and will thoroughly clean and sanitize the bus at the end of the day.
- Extra cleaning will be focused on high-touch surfaces including seats, windows, floors, and fixtures.
- Drivers and aides will be required to wear a mask and gloves.

What will it be like to ride the bus?

Home to School Transportation:

- **Parents will be required to wait at the bus stop and not leave until the student has entered the bus.**
 - **Bus privileges will be revoked if a parent is not available at the bus stop.**
 - If no parent is available, the bus driver will contact school and school will contact parent/guardian.
 - School bus will wait until the parent arrives **OR** the school administrator arrives at the bus stop.
- Parents will be required to check their child's temperature and symptoms before sending their child to the bus stop. **Please keep ill children at home.**
- Parents should have their children wash their hands before heading to the bus stop.
- Students will be required to wear a mask at the bus stop and on the bus.
- Students will: have a temperature check (must be below 100.4); have a visual/verbal check for illness by bus driver / bus aide; be provided hand sanitizer as they enter the bus; and be offered a mask if they do not have one.

- If a student has a temperature over 100.3 or is showing any signs of illness, they will not be allowed on the bus.
- Students should be at their stop five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
- Students who do not live together should maintain six feet of distance from one another at the bus stop and while loading and exiting the bus.
- If a seat is marked with an X, it is not available to sit in.
- First students on the bus must take a seat in the rear, then others will continue seating from back to front.
- Students who live in the same household may sit together. All other students should sit one student per seat.
- Riders may not change seats and must sit with their bottoms on the seat, facing forward.
- Upon arrival at school, riders should exit the bus one at a time from the front to back, maintaining six feet of distance from one another.

School to Home Transportation:

- Students who ride the bus home will be required to proceed directly to their bus upon dismissal from their classroom.
- Students will board the bus and sit according to seat assignments provided by the bus driver or bus aide.
- Students will be required to wear a mask at all times while on the bus.
- Students who do not live together should maintain six feet of distance from one another at the bus stop and while loading and exiting the bus.
- If a seat is marked with an X, it is not available to sit in.
- First students on the bus must take a seat in the rear, then others will continue seating from back to front.
- Students who live in the same household may sit together. All other students should sit one student per seat.
- Riders may not change seats and must sit with their bottoms on the seat, facing forward.
- Upon arrival at their bus stop, riders should exit the bus one at a time from the front to back, maintaining six feet of distance from one another.

Please refer to the remainder of the Parent Handbook for Student Transportation for additional procedures and guidelines.

Please refer to bus routes published on the district website at:

<http://www.willowsunified.org/Departments/Transportation-Department/index.html>

Routes and times will be modified as in-person instruction increases, as permitted by public health agencies.

REGISTRATION OF STUDENTS

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Willows Unified School District has an enviable record of safe transportation for our bus riding students.

Our school bus drivers follow State rules regarding loading and unloading of school buses. Drivers will stop only at school bus stops that have been approved by the Board of Trustees. Drivers will operate the school bus amber/red warning lights and stop-arm as required by State law at each bus stop. If students must cross the roadway where the bus is stopped, they will be escorted across the roadway by the school bus driver. Students being escorted across the street will stand on the side of the roadway near the school bus front door and wait for the school bus driver to verbally tell them when it is safe to cross the roadway. Students will cross the roadway between the school bus driver and the front of the school bus. Students will not return to the school bus or re-cross the roadway after being escorted across the roadway by the school bus driver at any time.

To safely transport your child(ren), we have rules and regulations to assist students in understanding their responsibilities while riding the bus and while waiting at school bus stops.

As a concerned parent, we encourage you to discuss the rules and regulations listed below with your children.

1. General rules of conduct at school bus stops.

Students must:

- a. Be at the bus stop, (not across or down the street), 5 minutes before the posted arrival time of the bus.
- b. Wait on the curb and walkway – NOT in the street.
- c. Wait until the bus arrives, stops, and opens the door before approaching to enter the bus.
- d. Keep their hands to themselves and refrain from pushing others as the bus approaches.
- e. NOT trespass onto private property (for example, entering or playing in a neighbor's yard).
- f. NOT play around the tires of the bus or underneath the bus.
- g. NOT get off the bus at any stop other than their regular stop without the prior written permission of their parent/guardian.

2. Guidelines for walking to and from the bus stop.

Students must:

- a. Watch for cars when crossing the street.
- b. NOT play games to and from the bus stop (for example, games that involve a ball).
- c. Walk on the walkways, and stay off the street and private property.

- d. Have respect for their neighborhood and not disturb private property such as: sprinklers, mailboxes, plants, or automobiles.
- e. Kindergartners must have a parent or guardian/designee at the school bus stop.

3. Danger zones around the school bus:

- a. School buses are large vehicles. The drivers depend on their mirrors to monitor the outside of their buses. Because of this, there are areas known as danger zones around buses. These are listed below:
 1. Directly behind the bus.
 2. Underneath the bus.
 3. Close by the side of the bus at the entrance door.
- b. When students step off the bus, they should move at least six feet out from the door before walking down the side of the bus.
- c. Drivers are directed not to move the bus until students are at least 10 feet from the bus. When the bus is moving, students are not permitted to approach the bus.

4. Red light crossing procedures:

- a. All children that must cross the street after exiting the bus will be escorted across the street by the bus driver.
- b. The driver may not know when a student is new – new students must inform the driver if they need to cross the street.
- c. This procedure includes the use of red cross-over lamps and a hand held stop sign.
- d. The red cross-over lamps are used as a signal to inform other motorists that they must stop for the bus.
- e. Drivers will indicate on their route sheet all students that require escorting.

5. Video camera monitoring.

Student behavior on the school bus and the driver's management of that behavior are the two key elements to a safe and enjoyable bus ride. A video camera on a school bus is but an aid to monitor bus discipline. It does not replace the discipline policy, the authority of the driver, or the responsibility of the school officials. The basic safe riding rules must prevail and the consequences of misconduct must be carried out. There will be zero tolerance for violence on the school bus. To promote safe riding habits, the Board authorizes the use of a video camera on school buses as designated by the Director of Transportation. The SD cards will be available for viewing for one week in the transportation office. Please call for an appointment with Jaime Thorpe, 517-3962.

6. Boarding Procedures at the school bus stop:

- All school bus stops designed by the Willows Unified School District will be on the right hand side of the roadway.
- Students will arrive at the school bus stop in a timely fashion but not more than five minutes before the scheduled time of the school bus.
- Students will form an orderly line at least 10 feet from the traffic lane and facing toward the street.

- When the school bus arrives, the students will not approach the school bus until the school bus makes a complete stop, the driver effectively sets the parking brake and opens the passenger entry door.
- If a student is late arriving to the school bus stop, the student will not approach or run after the bus after the door has been closed. The students are directed to return home.
- The safety handrail shall be used while walking up the bus steps.
- Riders shall remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion.

7. Boarding procedures at the school or field trip destination loading zone:

- At school, the students will wait for the school bus in an orderly line at the pre-identified pick up point. Students will stand at a safe distance from the curb, approximately 10 feet or a distance determined by the Superintendent or designee.
- Riders shall remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
- The students will not approach the school bus until the school bus makes a complete stop, the driver effectively sets the parking brake and opens the passenger entry door.
- Students will enter the school bus in an orderly manner and take the first available seat or any seat assigned to them by the school bus driver, Principal, or teacher.
- On a field trip, the students will approach the school bus from the right side of the vehicle in a single line formation.
- If a student is late to the school bus stop, the student will not approach or run after the bus after the door has been closed. The students are directed to go to the main office of the school and ask for assistance.
- The safety handrail shall be used while walking up the bus steps.

8. Exiting procedures:

Anytime students exit the school bus, whether at the student's stop, at their school, or at a trip destination, the following procedures shall be followed:

- The student(s) in the front right side seat will enter the aisle and walk forward. The student(s) in the front left side seat will enter the aisle and walk forward as soon as the first students are clear. This right – left alternation pattern will continue until the last seat, or all the students are off the school bus at their destination. Students should walk, remain quiet, and not come in contact with any other student during this process.
- Students shall remain seated until the bus is completely stopped, the driver opens the door, and the driver signals to the riders that it is safe to stand and exit the bus.
- The safety handrail will be used while walking down the bus steps.

9. Adverse driving conditions:

- The Superintendent or designee may consult with the California Highway Patrol weather service when determining the degree to which he/she will limit home-to-school transportation service when atmospheric or weather conditions reduce visibility on the roadway to 200 feet or less.
- Flood Advisory Days – During severe rain storms that have potential for flooding, please call 934-6611 Ext.2022 before sending your child to the bus stop. If some or

all highways and/or county roads are closed, we will not be discharging any buses on those affected routes. Please remember to call the numbers or listen to the KNVN/KHSL radio station. Television channels are 24 and 12. If buses are not being discharged due to high water or severe fog, we will have this information out for you.

10. Riding another bus/obtaining a bus pass:

- Bus notes (requests for students to ride a bus other than their regular bus or to exit at a bus stop other than their regular stop) will be processed in the main office of the student's school.
- When district transportation is provided, students may ride a bus other than their regular bus or exit at a bus stop other than their regular stop. This may occur only with prior written permission of their parent/guardian, which includes the address or bus stop number they wish to exit and whether or not they need to be escorted across the road.

Guide to Student's Responsibilities while Riding School Buses

The following list of student actions constitute violations of the established rules and regulations:

Transportation Safety

- Putting any part of body out of a bus window
- Any movement out of seats while bus is in motion
- Unauthorized opening, closing, or tampering of any kind with bus doors, emergency exits, and windows
- Any damage or defacing of the bus
- Bringing combustibles onto the bus
- Throwing any objects in, out of, or at the bus
- Transporting live animals, reptiles or insects on the school bus (Science specimens are to be encased in safe containers of plastic or cardboard – glass containers will not be allowed on the bus.)
- Eating, drinking, or chewing gum on the bus
- Using other than the student's regularly designated bus stop
- Tampering with radio or bus controls

Driver/Rider Safety

- Abusive body contact in or when loading or unloading bus
- Using profane language or obscene gestures
- Creating excessive noise that distracts the bus driver
- Failure to obey driver or disrespect to the bus driver
- Riding the bus after receiving a "No Ride" penalty
- Any improper bus stop procedures (e.g., not lining up, rock throwing, playing in streets, damaging property at bus stop)
- Giving improper identification when requested by driver
- Improper behavior
- Other

Authority of bus driver per section 14263 California Administrative Code Title 5:

Pupils transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of, and responsible directly to, the driver of the bus. The driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street, highway, or road. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation. A bus driver shall not require any pupil to leave the bus en route between home and school or other destinations.

Driver's responsibility for student safety.

The driver's supervision starts approximately at the point where the driver can recognize the pupil as the bus approaches or leaves a bus stop. While at the bus stop, if a driver observes pupil misbehavior (e.g., destroying property, playing in the roadway, running across the roadway to the bus), the driver (for the safety of the pupil and the public) must take appropriate action to correct the situation. The driver must report the problem to their supervisor. While the bus is stopped to load or unload, the pupils are the direct responsibility of the driver.

Pupils transported in a school bus or in a school pupil activity bus shall be under the authority of, and responsible directly to, the driver of the bus. The driver shall be held responsible for the orderly conduct of the pupils while they are on the bus or being escorted across a street, highway, or road.

Disciplinary procedures

Board of Education Policy 3540.3 allows the denial of transportation service as a consequence of misbehavior on the bus. Violations may be subject to the following action:

- 1st violation - Warning to student by Principal or his/her designee with notification to parents
- 2nd violation - From two days to two weeks denial of transportation, with notification to parents
- 3rd violation - Denial of transportation up to one full semester, with notification to parents

Depending on the severity of the violation and the circumstances, the above actions may be modified.

Transportation to and from school by school bus is a privilege and not required by law.

RETURN THIS PAGE ONLY – TO YOUR SCHOOL OFFICE

**SIGN-OFF FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK
FOR STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**

On _____ (date), I received a copy of the parent/guardian handbook for student transportation and agree to read and familiarize my child(ren) with the information. If I have difficulty understanding any part of the book, I may ask for and receive an explanation from the transportation supervisor.

Student Name School Grade

Student Name School Grade

Student Name School Grade

Student Name School Grade

On _____ (date), I familiarized my child(ren) with the student transportation handbook.

Parent/guardian Signature Address

Print Name Phone

For office use only:

Route _____

Bus Stop _____

Please list any physical limitations or medication requirement that the bus driver should be aware of: