

# Student Transportation Handbook

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## Eligibility/Ineligibility of School Bus Riders

**Grade K-5 (Elementary):** A Student whose registered address is one (1) mile or more one-way from his/her assigned school will be eligible for school bus service.

**Grade 6-8 (Mid/Jr. High):** A Student whose registered address is one and one-half (1 1/2) miles or more one-way from his/her assigned school will be eligible for school bus service.

**Grade 9-12 (High):** A Student whose registered address is two (2) miles or more one-way from his/her assigned school will be eligible for school bus service.

A student will not be afforded transportation if attending a school outside of his/her residence school unless specified by an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Transportation for attendance at another school will be the responsibility of the parents or guardians unless specified by an IEP.

## Preschool Students

1. The student's registered address meets the distance requirement for transportation to his/her home school.
2. The Preschool is in the same school attendance zone as the student's residence.
3. The Preschool is located in the statutory distance from the school.
4. There is space available on the school bus servicing that route.

5. **Added equipment, cost and/or mileage are not incurred.**
6. **There is no change in the school bus route.**
7. **The pick-Up location is the same all five days of the week and the drop-off point is the same all five days of the week.**

### **Identification Cards**

**High School and middle school students issued a school identification card that are eligible to ride a school bus are required to have their identification card in their possession and to display the card to any GMCS employee, school bus driver, or law enforcement officer upon request. The school bus driver may make discretionary checks of identification cards and will report any unauthorized passengers to the appropriate school administrator.**

#### **Student Identification Card Requirements**

**Grades K-5 (Elementary): ID card not required**

**Grades 6-8 (Middle): ID card required**

**Grades 9-12 (High): ID card required**

### **Bus Registration**

**All students must be registered in order to ride the bus. Bus rider registration will take place when students register at the school. The students physical address entered into Power School will determine student's eligibility for bus transportation. All students and parents will be required to read the Student Transportation Handbook, sign and return the signature page provided in the handbook stating that the parents and students have read it. This information is needed for funding and to ensure student safety in the event of an emergency.**

### **School Bus Disciplinary Plan**

**When a principal/designee receives a school bus incident report, the administrator may use the following disciplinary plan:**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Offense: A warning to the students with a report to the parent/guardian will be issued. It is expected the parent/guardian will work with the student to help prevent a recurrence.**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Disciplinary action will be taken at the discretion of the principal, depending on the seriousness of the infraction. A report to the parents/guardian will be made.**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Suspension of riding privileges will result. The length of suspension will depend on the seriousness of the infraction. A report to the parent/guardian will be made.**

**A different sequence in handling an incident may be selected.**

**The driver has the authority to suspend a student from the bus for a maximum of one day after the student has arrived at the assigned stop or school for inappropriate and dangerous behavior.**

**Sever Disruption and Dangerous Behavior will result in immediate suspension of transportation privileges. This may include, but is not limited to the following:**

- 1. Physical harm to any student.**
- 2. Physical harm to the driver/attendant.**
- 3. Physical harm to the bus.**
- 4. Possession of a weapon.**

**In addition to the suspension of transportation privileges, legal action against the student and/or parent/guardian may be taken.**

**In the event a driver suspends a student for one day, the principal/designee and the student's parent/guardian must be notified before the suspension begins.**

**Serious disruption and dangerous behavior will be referred to the Hearing Authority.**

**Students who are suspended from the bus are not necessarily suspended from school. When a student is suspended from the bus it is the parent's responsibility to transport their student to and from school.**

### **Delivery of Students Receiving Modified Services**

**When delivering a student receiving modified services and the parent/guardian is not present, the driver shall refer to the student's Confidential Emergency Information Form and will follow the steps outlined herein:**

- 1. If the Transportation Form, the parent/guardian has authorized that the student can be left unattended, the driver/attendant may leave the student at the designated drop-off point.**
- 2. If the parent/guardian has not authorized that the student can be left unattended, the driver/attendant shall not leave the student alone, but will do the following:**
  - a. The driver/attendant shall radio the bus barn and have them attempt to contact the student's parent/guardian at work or another phone number.**
  - b. While attempting to make contact, the bus may proceed on the designated route to deliver any other students onboard to their destinations and then return to the student's delivery point.**
  - c. If the bus barn is still unable to make contact, the driver will transport the student back to the school. The principal or designee will accept the student and continue to attempt to get in touch with the parent/guardian.**

3. **If GMCS Principal or designee is unable to contact that parent/guardian, or other emergency contacts, the student will then be referred to the appropriate child protective agency (police). Social Services will be informed.**
4. **It is not recommended that prescribed medication be transported on any GMCS buses. If there is a need to transport prescribed medication it will follow the following guidelines:**
  - A. **Appropriately labeled medication will be transported in a backpack or the student will maintain possession of the medication. Exception: If the student is unable to do this the driver/attendant may care for the medication in an appropriate container until the student arrives at the school or drop-off point, at which time the medication will be given to the school staff or parent/guardian.**
  - B. **No medication will be administered by the driver or the attendant. When necessary, only health care providers accompanying students as specified in an IEP or 504 Plan will be authorized to administer the medication.**

### **Inclement Weather**

**The most common use of the abbreviated day schedule occurs when severe weather causes street conditions which would endanger the safety of students going to school. The abbreviated day schedule is a shortened school day which begins two hours later than the regular schedule and ends at the regular time. Morning pick-up times will also be two hours later. Some schools may have different bell schedules. Please refer to your school for bell schedule information.**

**Television, Radio stations and the Internet (District Web-site) as well as the District Weather Line will have information of inclement weather reports, to access this information call (505) 721-2233. All drivers, parents and students should listen for these announcements. The decision to delay school will take place no later than 5:00 AM. If weather conditions worsen and it is necessary to cancel school the decision and announcement will be made no later than 7:00 AM.**

**On days where inclement weather causes a morning delay, there will be no morning class for the Developmental Delay Program (Pre-K), but afternoon classes will be on their regular schedule.**

### **Bus Stops and Routes**

1. **Notes from parent/guardian designees authorizing the bus driver to drop off a student at a point other than his/her regular stop will not be permitted. Only the Principal can authorize this.**
2. **Students will not be required to walk a greater distance to a bus stop than the walking distance for each grade level as specified by the State Statue. Parents of students that live further away from the bus stop than the walking distance under State Statue will be eligible for the Feeder Route. Parents can contact the GMCS Transportation Department for applications and information.**

3. **Complaints regarding route schedules or school bus stop will be addressed to either the transportation department or principal. Complaints regarding discipline on board school buses will be addressed to the principal.**
4. **Drivers will not transport anyone that is not a student or approved school personnel assigned to their bus while making regular routes.**
5. **Drivers will not give permission to anyone other than assigned students and/or approved school, transportation, emergency, or law enforcement personnel to board their bus.**
6. **In the PM the driver will not be required to wait more than eight minutes after the dismissal bell has rung. The driver and/or attendant will not be allowed to leave the bus to search for unaccounted students. Once the bus departs, the driver will not stop in the loading zone or be expected to return to the school for students who are late for the bus.**
7. **It is the responsibility of elementary teachers to have their class to the bus loading zone on time. Elementary schools will develop a bus loading check off plan to ensure all students have been loaded on the right bus within the eight minutes of the dismissal bell.**
8. **All GMCS bus drivers will have assigned seats on their bus.**
9. **In consideration of student safety, live animals, unless specified in a student's IEP or 504 accommodation plans, will not be transported. Toys, items in glass containers, or other dangerous objects, as well as skate boards, band instruments, or other large objects that might block the aisle, the emergency door, or service door, will not be permitted on the bus. Basketballs, Volleyballs, and Soccer balls, may be taken as long as the students maintain control of them.**

### **School Bus Roster/Seating Charts**

**School bus drivers will maintain a student roster and student seating chart for each school bus route. Student rosters/seating charts will contain the following information:**

1. **First and last name of each student on the bus**
2. **Each student's address and phone number**
3. **Two emergency contact names and phone numbers**
4. **Student's assigned seat**

**Information contained on student rosters/seating charts will remain confidential and in the school bus. Student rosters/seating charts will be made available upon request to school officials and law enforcement officers.**

## **Evacuation Drills/Emergency Plans**

Student emergency evacuation drills or emergency evacuation demonstrations will be conducted twice each school year. GMCS personnel and school bus drivers will work with school administrators and teachers to develop emergency evacuation plans.

Public safety officers such as firemen and law enforcement will also be invited to participate in evacuation drills as well as be involved in developing emergency plans for buses.

## **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

For safe riding on a school bus by their child, parent/guardian responsibilities include the following:

1. Parents should be at assigned bus stop for Pre-K -2<sup>nd</sup> grade to pick-up their child otherwise the student will be sent back to their assigned school.
2. Parents are fully responsible for the conduct and safety of their child before the school bus arrives, and after it departs.
3. Insure your child arrives at the designated bus stop (10) minutes prior to the arrival of the school bus.
4. Provide protection or supervision for the child when unusual conditions arise beyond ordinary circumstances. (Such as late buses due to unforeseen circumstances).
5. Parents should make sure that their child is wearing proper clothing for the season.
6. Actively cooperate with school officials and school bus operators regarding appropriate conduct of your child at bus stop and while walking to and from bus stop.
7. Parents/guardians will be held responsible for any observed acts of vandalism for private property by their children while on the bus or at the bus stop location and restitution may be pursued. Students will be suspended from riding the bus until damages are paid in full.
8. Parents/guardians will not be transported to and from school on a bus.
9. Parents/guardians will arrange for their students to have physician-prescribed-medication that is to be transported to school for use during the day appropriately labeled and in a backpack or parcel to be kept in the student's possession during the route. No medication will be administered during the route by either the driver or the attendant. Only health care providers accompanying students as specified in a 504 Accommodation Plan or the IEP will be authorized to administer physician - prescribed medication during transport.

## **The parent /guarding of students who have been approved for modified transportation services will:**

1. Cooperate in the completion of the GMCS transportation form by providing emergency phone numbers and addresses of responsible persons to be contacted in case of an emergency such as illness, injury, or abbreviated day due to inclement weather.

- 2. Allow at least three (3) to five (5) working days to implement any changes in pick-up and/or drop-off locations. The driver is not allowed to change or modify a route.**
- 3. Have the student ready to board the bus at the assigned pick-up time.**
- 4. Cooperate by ensuring students have clean diapers if they are not toilet trained and that colostomy bags are not filled to capacity before boarding the bus. Transportation will not be provided for students who are soiled or have full bags before boarding the bus.**
- 5. Transport their student when exceptional situations arise which call for a deviation from established bus service (e.g., the student needs to be dropped off at a different address temporarily).**
- 6. Transport their student in the event of a bus suspension.**
- 7. Make arrangements to have a responsible person meet the bus when it is indicated on GMCS modified transportation form that a student cannot be left unattended.**
- 8. Notify the Transportation Department in advance if possible or signal the bus when it arrives in the event the student does not plan to attend school on a specific day.**

### **Student Responsibilities**

**For safe riding on school buses the following are students' responsibilities:**

- 1. Students who are required to walk a distance to meet the bus should walk on the side of the road to their left facing traffic, except on divided or multi-lane roadways.**
- 2. Students must be at their regular bus stop 10 minutes prior to scheduled stop times. The bus driver will not wait for students who are not making an effort to reach the bus. Students receiving modified transportation services will be ready at the assigned pick-up time.**
- 3. In the p.m. the buses will depart from the school eight minutes after the bell has rung**
- 4. Bullying will not be tolerated, on or at the bus stop, by any student.**
- 5. Students will exhibit safe and appropriate behavior when waiting for and boarding the bus.**
- 6. Without the advance written permission from the principal, students will not be permitted to get on or off at any stop on the way to or from school except at their regular assigned stop or school.**

- 7. Students will not get on or off the bus while it is in motion. Students must remain seated and keep the aisle and exits clear.**
- 8. Students will occupy the seat assigned to them by the driver. If the bus is equipped with seat belts, students must wear them.**
- 9. Students will not be permitted in the driver's compartment while the bus is in motion. Students will not tamper with any equipment on the bus.**
- 10. Students will not use profane language or make obscene gestures while on the bus.**
- 11. Rough or boisterous conduct will not be permitted in the bus.**
- 12. Students will be absolutely quiet when the bus is approaching a railroad crossing and will remain quiet until the bus is safely across the tracks.**
- 13. Weapons, explosives, breakable glass, or other dangerous objects are not permitted on the bus.**
- 14. Animals, except those animals authorized by IEP or a 504 Accommodation Plan, are not permitted on the bus.**
- 15. Students will not eat any food, or drink any beverage while being transported to and from school (with the possible exception of special needs students with an IEP)**
- 16. Students will not extend their hands, arms, heads, or any object out of the bus.**
- 17. Students will exhibit respect, act responsibly, be trustworthy, practice fairness, have a caring attitude, and display good citizenship while on the bus.**
- 18. Students will cooperate with the bus driver in keeping the bus clean.**
- 19. Students should remember that misconduct and/or carelessness endangers not only their own safety, but also the safety of the other students on the bus.**
- 20. Students will not open or close the bus windows without the permission of the bus driver. Students will not throw any items inside or outside the bus while boarding, riding or leaving the bus.**
- 21. The use, possession or distribution of tobacco, drugs, alcohol or any other controlled substance will not be permitted while on the bus.**
- 22. Students and parents/guardians will be held responsible for malicious destruction to the bus.**



**Activity Trips**

Only GMCS students, sponsors, and chaperones will be transported on school buses and/or activity buses used for activity trips. All sponsors and chaperones must be finger printed and have a back ground check before they will be allowed to travel on an activity bus with students.

All overnight activity trips must have School Board approval before the trip is allowed to go. Sponsors are responsible for making sure overnight activity trips other than athletic trips, are approved by the school board before they are requested in the district field trip program (Trip Direct). If you have any questions concerning activity trips, please call 505-721-1191.

**Around every Bus is a Danger Zone**

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Transportation: 721-2252.

Thank you in advance for your attention to these details and your cooperation in helping the GMCS Transportation Department provide safe transportation for your child. Please return this portion signed within 10 school days to your bus driver.

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I have read the GMCS rules and responsibilities for bus safety and agree to follow them for the 2016/2017 school year.

Parents Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Signatures: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Students Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Students Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

