

Whittemore-Prescott Area Schools  
Transportation Handbook



Whittemore-Prescott Transportation Department  
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989-756-2503  
Gordon Seyler, Director of Transportation

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a reference tool that can be utilized by students, parents, schools and transportation staff to communicate policy, procedures and general transportation information. It is our belief that this is an important component of providing quality transportation services.

It is important to recognize that transportation services are not mandated by law. While the District sees the importance of providing transportation, these services should be considered a privilege.

The policies and procedures set forth in this handbook are subject to change without notice.

For additional information regarding the laws in respect to school bus operations and school bus stops, please see [Michigan PA 187 of 1990](#), commonly referred to as the Pupil Transportation Act.

### **General Information**

**Office Hours:** Normal business hours are Monday through Friday (excluding holidays) from 5:30am-9:30am and 1:00pm-5:00pm during the traditional school year.

## TRANSPORTATION ROUTING

### **General Guidelines**

Bus routes are planned to achieve safety of students and responsible economy of operation. To maximize route efficiency, students are assigned three to a seat up to the rated capacity of the scheduled vehicle. Elementary students may walk up to one-half (1/2) of a mile to a bus stop and secondary students may walk up to one (1) mile to a bus stop. Routes are also planned to keep individual riding distance and time to a practical minimum for a student going to or from school.

Most school bus riders will find it necessary to walk some distance to their designated bus stop. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure student safety while arriving and waiting at the bus stop and while returning home from the bus stop after drop off.

The Transportation Department reviews bus stop placement annually. No bus stop shall be established or added without a physical inspection by supervisory personnel from the Transportation Department.

Bus stops will be limited whenever possible; students from several homes shall meet at a central point for group pick up. Please understand that lack of sidewalks, lighting conditions, weather conditions, stop not being visible from home and/or the bus traveling past the house are not reasons that have any bearing on the placement of bus stops.

If your child is picked up at home and does not ride the bus for three days, the bus will not stop again until a phone call is made to the Transportation Office at 989-756-2503 to resume pick up.

### **Bus Stops**

**Student Pick Up** – Students should be at the bus stop at least five (5) MINUTES BEFORE THE BUS IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE. Students running late to their bus stop experience greater risk of using poor judgment to reach the bus before it leaves. Even though you might like us to wait for your child/children to

come out of the house, it is impossible. Drivers are on a strict time schedule. Your cooperation in having your child out at the stop is greatly appreciated.

**Not requiring Transportation** – If your child is the only one at the stop, and they are not going to be going to school, please call the Transportation Department at least one-half hour before his/her scheduled pick-up time at 756-2400 ext 751 so we may notify the driver.

**Dropping Off Small Children** – If your child is a kindergarten or pre-school please be available to meet your child/children's school bus. We will not drop off small children unattended. They will be returned to the Transportation Department and we are not a licensed daycare center. If it becomes a continuous problem that there is not a responsible person at the bus stop when a child is to be dropped off, it will force the Transportation Department to refuse transportation.

**Neighborhood and Bus Stop Concerns** – If you or your child/children are experiencing neighborhood problems at your bus stop, the Transportation Department cannot get involved.

**Late Buses** – The Transportation Department cannot guarantee that students will be picked up or dropped off every day at the same time as we are impacted by road conditions, weather and other outside influences. Your patience is appreciated.

**Student Visibility** – Students must be visible to the bus driver. If a driver does not see students, he/she will not activate the alternating flasher to stop traffic. Instead, the driver will proceed with the route.

**Application for Alternate Bus Stop** - Bus transportation is primarily designed for the transport of students from home to school and school to home. Stops must be at the same location every morning and every afternoon.

If parents wish to request an alternate bus stop for an **emergency only**, they must submit an Alternate Bus Stop Request to the Transportation Department. If a student is to go their alternate address a note must be sent with the student the day of the change. Our policy is not to accept changes by phone for transportation. The request will be honored if there is room on the alternate bus for the student. There are some buses that cannot accept passes due to the fact that they are at capacity.

I understand that riding is a privilege and can be suspended due to poor behavior choices per school policy and that an alternate address will be suspended if my child receives three bus conduct reports on the alternate bus.

## **DISCIPLINE PART 1**

### **Whittemore - Prescott Schools Discipline Code for Bus Riders.**

All students in the school system who ride a bus to or from school are subject to the bus code regulations stated here. Any conduct that distracts the driver is a very serious hazard to the safe operation of the vehicle and as such jeopardizes the safety of all the passengers. **Remember, busing is a service that is not required by law, because it is not part of the educational process.** Students disobeying the rules can be denied transportation.

Every school bus driver has been supplied with a school bus incident reporting system. Students will be cited for inappropriate actions, including but not limited to the following:

### **MINOR OFFENSES**

1. Boarding or leaving the bus in an unsafe manner

2. Sitting improperly
3. Failure to sit in assigned seat
4. Placing feet and/or legs in the aisle of the bus
5. Littering
6. Unnecessary noise
7. Consumption of food or beverages
8. Chewing gum
9. Inappropriate personal property
10. Tampering with bus windows
11. Using undesignated bus stop
12. Using cell phones on the school bus is prohibited

#### MAJOR OFFENSES

1. Fighting
2. Throwing objects at or on the bus
3. Possession or use of tobacco or controlled substances
4. Verbal abuse/harassment towards driver and/or other students
5. Use or possession of fireworks or smoke bombs or lighting matches
6. Insubordination – refusal to follow directions
7. Opening the emergency door
8. Hanging out of the windows
9. Profanity
10. Disruptive behavior
11. Mutilating or defacing bus in any manner

### **DISCIPLINE PART II**

If your child/children is reported for any minor or major violation (as stated earlier), or any other form of misconduct, he/she will be given a violation slip to take home. A copy of the violation will be given to the school principal and a copy will be retained in the transportation department. The parent **must sign the violation slip** and return it to the driver the next day in order to continue transportation.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> OFFENSE:

Minor Offense: Written violation, a violation report must be returned to the driver signed  
By the parent and/or guardian.

Major Offense: Loss of transportation for up to three (3) days.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> OFFENSE:

Minor Offense: Written violation #2, a violation report must be returned to the driver  
By parent and/or guardian.

Major Offense: Loss of transportation for up to ten (10) days.

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> OFFENSE:

Minor Offense: Written violation #3, loss of transportation for one (1) day.

Major Offense: Loss of transportation for up to thirty (30) days.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> OFFENSE:

Minor Offense: Sequenced loss of transportation service listed in major offenses.

Major Offense: May result in total loss of transportation for rest of the school year.

To improve communication, the transportation office will send to each school building, a copy of all violations which pertain to them. The director of transportation and the building principal work together cooperatively.

#### **Further Reminders:**

\*Remember your Bus Driver is in charge.

\*All suspensions are for school days only if school is cancelled, suspension will be extended the number of day's school is out.

\*Anytime a discipline (conduct report) is sent home, it must be signed by the Parent and returned to the Driver. Students will not be allowed back on the bus until Parent signed conduct report is returned.

\*Physical assault on a Driver by a Student will immediately result in loss of all bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

\*Supervisor will determine major offenses.

\*Written notification of any offense will be given to the Student by the Driver the next time the Student rides the bus.

\*Action by Supervisor to set up conference with Parent and Principal will be carried as soon as possible.

\*The use of cell phones on school buses is prohibited except in emergency situations.

#### **DON'T LOSE YOUR RIDING PRIVILEGE – FOLLOW THE RULES**

- Be courteous to your driver and other students.
- Observe same conduct as in the classroom.
- Do not use profanity.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Cooperate with the driver.
- Do not smoke.
- Do not be destructive.
- Stay in your seat.
- Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
- Bus driver is authorized to assign seats.

#### **PENAL CODE – MALICIOUS MISCHIEF AND DESTRUCTION INTENTIONAL DAMAGE TO BUSES**

Anyone found causing damage to school district property will be billed for costs to repair or replace the damaged equipment or article. Please be advised, that Public Act No. 13, H.B. No. 4155 Regular Session of 1995, PENAL CODE- MALICIOUS MISCHIEF AND DESTRUCTION – INTENTIONAL DAMAGE TO SCHOOL BUSES, Sec 377c. States the following:

- (1) If a person intentionally damages, destroys, or alters a school bus without the permission of the entity that owns that school bus and that damage, destruction or alteration creates a health or safety hazard to any individual occupying that school bus or who may occupy that school bus, the person is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than 5 years, or a fine of not more than \$5,000.00 or both.

## Whittemore Prescott Area Schools TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

This form is intended to supplement guidance in the WPAS transportation handbook. For full rules and regulations please refer to the transportation handbook.

Gordon Seyler, Transportation Director 989 756 2503

Dear Parent/Guardian, The Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan Department of Education, and the Federal Government has many laws and regulations we must follow. The following are some guidelines on how the transportation department works and what is expected from parents/guardians and students.

### BUS STOPS

- All new stops or changes must be authorized through the transportation department.
- Please call ahead and allow up to 3 business days for transportation changes to take affect
- For students that seldom ride, a call to the transportation department is required for pick-up.
- It is recommended that students be at their bus stop five (5) minutes prior to the bus's scheduled time. The bus will not wait for students.
- **Parents are not allowed to meet the bus along the road. If the bus has begun to drive away, the student has missed the bus.**
- Students that cross the roadway must understand and follow the schools hand signal policy.
- Parents need to be on time when meeting the bus.

### DELAYS

- On inclement weather days, we may close or delay school due to weather. Delays or closings are posted on Radio WKJC, 104.7, WKCQ 98.1, WCLS 100.7 and Television Stations, WNEM TV 5, WJRT TV 12, WEYI TV 25. We also have our Stay Connected App and district Facebook Pages where we post notices to, please visit our website to download the app.
- To figure out your pick-up time on a delay morning, add the delay time to your normal pick-up time.
- Drivers may be running earlier than normal on a delay start due to the low number of riders. Please be prepared for this.

### MISSED THE BUS

- If your child missed the bus, the bus will not turn around and come back.
- Buses will not meet along the route for a missed stop.
- If the bus has begun to drive away, the student has missed the bus.
- If your child was missed and you believe the school is at fault, please contact the Transportation Department so that it may be corrected before the next run.

### BUS RULES

- On the bus, all school rules and polices apply. The Transportation Department promotes three basic rules. If followed, transportation issues are significantly reduced. 1. Students must stay seated at all times unless the driver has given them permission to move. 2. Use appropriate language at an appropriate volume. 3. Show respect to the driver and other students.
- Deviations from these rules can result in assigned seating, loss of school and/or bus privileges, or loss of transportation. The driver has the right to enforce these rules. **Our first priority is the safety of your children.** Please read and review this letter with your child. All forms and/or polices noted in this letter are available on the schools web site <https://www.wpas.net/District/Links-Forms>. If you have any questions or comments regarding this letter or any other transportation issue, please feel free to call.