

Whittemore-Prescott Transportation Bullying Policy

Bullying on school buses can be a problem but as parents you want to make sure your child gets home safe. In addition to all their over-the-road responsibilities, school bus drivers are ultimately responsible for managing the behavior of the students who ride the bus. Drivers create an atmosphere for safety on the bus, including being clear with the students that positive, supportive behavior is always encouraged and that disruptive or harmful behavior will not be tolerated. The school bus driver works to create a civil environment on the bus and students are expected to abide by transportation policies included in your handbook.

Parents need to remind their children that bullying, harassment and physical abuse are wrong and unacceptable behaviors. It is potentially dangerous to bully or harass a student on the school bus. If a driver is distracted by a scream or is alerted to an injured child while driving, he or she could veer into another vehicle or off the side of the road. In that instance, all the children on the bus are endangered.

Bullying is intentional aggressive behavior. It can take the form of physical or verbal harassment and involves an imbalance of power (a group of children can gang up on a victim or someone who is physical bigger or more aggressive can intimidate someone else) Bullying behavior can include teasing, insulting someone (particularly about their weight or height, race, sexuality, religion or other personal traits), shoving or hitting someone. Bullying can cause a victim to feel upset, afraid, ashamed, embarrassed, and anxious about going to school.

It's important for parent to fully understand that bullying is not just "kids being kids" - it is assault and aggression that should not be tolerated. Whittemore-Prescott Transportation Department abides by a "Zero Tolerance" policy for bullying. Unlike other discipline codes which include two warning before transportation is denied, any documented bullying offense will result in an immediate bus suspension of 1-3 days.

The school bus remains an icon of safety. We all must do our part to ensure that all children feel safe inside the school.

Thank you for your support,
Gordon Seyler
Transportation Director