

**BORDER LAND SCHOOL DIVISION
SCHOOL BUS
RIDERSHIP HANDBOOK**

Dear Students and Parents

This booklet is intended to present students and parents with an outline of the responsibilities of the School Division, the bus driver, the students and the parents. Each group has unique duties and obligations that together form a basis for a safe and efficient transportation system. Even though a student does not regularly use the transportation system of Border Land School Division to get to school, he or she will probably ride the bus often for activities or field trips. It is important to ensure that all students are aware of and follow the rules set down for them. Failure to follow these rules may jeopardize the safe operation of the buses and may result in disciplinary actions including suspension from bus privileges. Whether you are a student, or a parent please carefully read the complete booklet. Border Land School Division would like to thank you for your continued cooperation that enables us to provide the safest possible school bus system. If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to call:

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Border Land School Division Responsibilities

1. Principals are legally responsible for children from the time they leave home, including the bus trip, thus discipline concerns will be dealt with by the school principals in co-operation with bus drivers and Transportation Manager.
2. Provide clean, safe, and well-maintained vehicles to transport students.
3. Hire qualified, trained concerned individuals to drive.
4. Constantly monitor the busing system always with an emphasis on improving safety by providing professional development training for all personnel involved, i.e. drivers, mechanics and administrators.
5. Provide bus safety instruction twice yearly to all students in the division.

Drivers' Responsibilities

1. To operate the vehicle in a safe and efficient manner.
2. Ensure the orderly conduct of passengers and report unacceptable behaviour to the principal of his or her school.
3. Be prepared to handle emergencies.
4. Provide maximum safety for students riding on, loading or unloading from the bus.
5. Report immediately all items that require maintenance on the bus.

Pupils' Responsibilities

1. Be aware that pupils are responsible for their own action and behavior.
2. Know what the rules and procedures are and abide by them.
3. Display proper respect for the rights and comfort of others.
4. Realize that school bus transportation can be denied if they do not conduct themselves properly.
5. Be aware that distracting the driver is potentially hazardous to their safety.
6. Be familiar with emergency procedures.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

1. Know the rules and encourage children to abide by them.
2. Support safe riding practices.
3. Support drivers and/or schools in disciplinary actions.
4. Ensure that pupils are on time at bus pick up points.
5. Ensure that pupils are properly clothed according to weather conditions.

Bus Rules

Loading

- a. Be at the pickup point before the bus arrives.
- b. Wait away from traffic, at least six feet from the road or street.
- c. Avoid pushing, shoving or fighting.
- d. Do not run to the bus. Wait until it has stopped, and the door is open.
- e. Board single file, using the handrail.
- f. Go directly to your assigned seat.
- g. Carry-on items shall be limited to those items that can safely be stored under the seat or held on the pupils' knees. Skates shall be carried in equipment bags or provided with skate guards. Skateboards must be in equipment bags or securely fastened to backpacks. **Some** of the articles that cannot be transported include hockey sticks, live animals, large project boards or large musical instruments. In all cases the driver will determine if any item may be transported on a bus.

NOTE: In no case shall items be allowed in aisles.

Riding

- a. Talk to the driver only when it is absolutely necessary.
- b. Refrain from loud or boisterous talking and use radios, walkman or cassette players only with the approval of the driver.
- c. Obtain driver's permission before opening windows.
- d. Eating and drinking on the bus may be allowed on field trips only when the bus is not in motion and with the permission of the driver.
- e. Absolutely no items shall be thrown in or from the bus at any time.
- f. Assist the driver in keeping the bus clean and neat at all times.

Unloading

- a. Remain seated until the bus is stopped, and the door is open.
- b. A "Goodbye" or "Thanks" is a nice courtesy to the driver.
- c. Exit slowly, using the handrail. Move away from the bus. Be aware of the "Danger Zones" around the bus and never re-approach the bus for any reason.
- d. If crossing the roadway is necessary use the following procedure:
 - WALK away from the bus and about ten feet in front of the bus.
 - CHECK with the driver - watch for his signal to cross.
 - WALK across the roadway.
 - CHECK for traffic in both directions as you reach the edge of the bus.

**ALWAYS REMEMBER
NOT ALL VEHICLES OBEY THE STOP SIGNALS ON THE BUS.**

Notes

- Students shall not board or exit a bus at any point on the route other than designated approved locations except in the case of emergencies.
- Only those students assigned to a bus will be allowed to ride. Any student within the Border Land School Division may be transported on any Border Land School Division bus. These arrangements must be made by the parent with the driver or Transportation Manager, prior to bus use and are subject to space availability.

Storm Policy as per Administrative Procedure 7.A.20

Student safety has highest priority with Border Land School Division. With respect to transported students, the Division, under the provisions of the PSA and supporting regulations, is responsible for student safety from the time that students board the bus in the morning and are delivered back to their designated stop after school. In the event that bus transportation is deemed unsafe due to weather conditions, policy will determine the process for the cancellation of bus service and related school closures.

With respect to severe weather, the Division is divided into three regions. The Transportation Manager, in consultation with senior divisional administration, may cancel bus transportation in one, two, or all three regions.

The regions are delimited as follows:

Western: from Dominion City to Altona, including the Roseau Valley, Emerson, Blue Clay, Ridgeville, Glenway, Gretna, Elmwood, West Park, Parkside, W. C. Miller, and Rosenfeld Schools.

Central: encompasses the Vita area. This includes Shevchenko School.

Eastern: encompasses the Piney and Sprague areas. This includes the Pineland and Ross L Gray Schools.

In any unforeseen circumstances, the Transportation Manager, together with senior divisional administration, has the authority to decide whether or not there is a full or partial cancellation of bus service.

Severe weather for the purpose of this procedure is classified into two categories.

Wind Chill Days

School bus service will be cancelled if the wind chill factor is in excess of -45° C. When the wind chill factor is between -40° C and -45° C, the Transportation Manager will consider existing road and local weather conditions to determine the advisability of school bus service.

On wind chill days, although bus service may be cancelled, schools are considered to be open and generally all staff will report for work as usual. Students are not expected to attend unless special circumstances exist (i.e. Hutterian schools).

Staff Expectations for Wind Chill Days

- All staff are in attendance at work.

Storm Days

Storm days occur when weather conditions, warnings, or reports of impending weather conditions create visibility and/or road conditions that make travel unsafe or impossible. On storm days, schools are considered closed.

Staff Expectations for Storm Days

- Professional staff attendance is discretionary, but a professional staff member must be designated to meet any students who come to school
- 10-month employees – secretaries, educational assistants, and librarians do not report to work and will not be paid for the first two storm days in the school year. Employees are permitted to use a personal leave day to receive payment for the day. Beginning on the third storm day of the year, these employees are not expected to report but will be paid.
- 12-month employees may access leave days if they are unable to report to work.

The school Principal/Head Custodian are responsible for the safety and security of the building on all weather-related closure days.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

Parents have the fullest knowledge of actual and probable road and weather conditions in their area. They are obliged to exercise discretion in permitting their children to ride the bus when the weather conditions are, or are expected to become, dangerously inclement. Parents shall call the school if their children will not be attending.

Parents are also responsible for naming possible local billets if the buses are unable to run after school.

Severe Weather

The Transportation Manager or his/her designate will check existing weather conditions and consult with senior divisional administration and designated bus drivers to determine the advisability of running the school buses.

In the AM

If weather conditions are such that bus service is deemed inadvisable, the Transportation Manager will make the decision between 6:30 and 7:00 AM. A decision not to run buses will mean that students will not be in attendance for that day in the affected region.

The Transportation Manager will:

1. Post the announcement on the following radio stations:
CAN AM 105.1 FM
CFAM 950 AM
CJOB 680 AM
CBC 990 AM
KG102 FM (ROSEAU, MINNESOTA)
KQ92 FM (WARROAD, MINNESOTA)
2. Notify the principals so that appropriate information is available for parents and staff.
3. Notify the bus drivers, who will in turn call all of the parents on their route.
4. Post on Divisional Website at www.blsd.ca

In order to facilitate this process, the Transportation Manager shall keep a list of bus drivers, custodians, divisional administration, and other contacts with their phone numbers. This list shall be updated as necessary and checked annually.

In the PM

For the afternoon regular dismissal:

Buses will either leave at their regularly scheduled time, or not at all. In order to ensure safety of transported students, it is recommended that buses do not leave the school at other than regularly scheduled times.

If the weather has deteriorated significantly over the day, the buses will not run. This decision will be made at 2:00 PM so that schools have ample time to notify parents and/or to arrange appropriate billets.

Special Services

Requests for special services due to medical or other reasons shall be made to the Transportation Manager at the Division Office.