



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

PUPIL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

**YOUR CHILD
AND THE
SCHOOL BUS**

A Parent Guide for Transportation Services

TO: Parent/Guardians of MPS Yellow Bus Riders

FROM: Pupil Transportation Services

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This pamphlet will give you a better understanding of what you as parents/guardians can do to help your child enjoy a safe bus ride to and from school.

Because the time before and after school is as crucial to your child's health and safety as the time during school, a safe bus ride is a key element of your child's education.

Pupil Transportation Services (PTS) considers the transportation of your child a very important assignment, but this assignment requires a high level of parental cooperation and support. For your child's safety, please discuss this material with him/her.

If you have questions regarding procedures covered in this booklet, or need additional information, please contact your child's school or Pupil Transportation Services at 475-8922 between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm.

Use this booklet as a Quick Reference Guide. Write your child's bus information below. The information is on the postcard you received earlier in the U.S. Mail.

My Child's Route Number: _____

Pick-Up Time: _____

Corner Stop: _____

Bus Company: _____

Bus Company's Phone: _____

School Phone: _____

MPS TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Walk-to-Stop Distance

Elementary School (K3, K4 and K5) - Riders will be picked up at the closest safe corner location to their residence and dropped off at that same location at the end of the school day.

Elementary School (1st – 8th Grade) - Riders may be required to walk up to a quarter mile to a corner stop.

Middle School – Riders may be required to walk up to half mile to a corner stop.

High School – Riders may be required to walk up to one mile to a bus stop; or their nearest elementary school.

Assigned Bus Stops and Routes

Students may board and leave only on the specified route and at the stop to which they are assigned.

Corner Stops

Pick-up and drop-off sites for regular riders are at corner stops. Riders should be at their assigned corner stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. A student should wait at least 10 minutes past the pickup time before returning home to inquire about a late bus.

Inclement Weather

Traffic delays are to be expected on days with inclement weather. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately.

Address Changes

When a child moves and there is no existing bus service from the new address, every effort will be made to adjust the route to allow the child to continue at the present school. If the child attends elementary school, the new address must be in the same transportation region as the school of attendance, in order for the child to receive transportation.

Parents are reminded that it can take up to **two (2) weeks** to adjust bus service. Parents should notify the child's school of the change of address **before the move takes place.**

SCHOOL BUS RULES AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

A safe bus ride for your child is our main priority. However, we need your help. **Parents please review the following bus rules and safety guidelines with your child:**

- Remain seated at all times.
- Follow any directions given by the school bus driver.
- Respect your neighbor (no fighting, pushing, or shoving).
- Never throw objects out of the bus windows.
- Keep head, hands, and arms inside the bus at all times.
- Profanity is not allowed.
- No yelling or shouting (loud noises distract the driver).
- Respect your neighbor's property when waiting for the bus.

Disciplinary Procedures

Students who disobey bus rules will be subject to the same disciplinary actions as at school. If the student violates the bus rules, the driver will file a written report with your child's school. Parents will be notified when riders break the rules. A rider may have bus riding privileges suspended by school officials when the unacceptable behavior jeopardizes other passengers or the safe operation of the school bus.

School Bus Stops:

Parents/guardians should instruct their child not to cross the street diagonally or behind the bus. Parents picking up and/or dropping off students at the bus stop should park safely away from the stop, but on the same side of the street as the bus stop to avoid the possibility of a student being hit by a vehicle while crossing the street.

Parents should remind the child to stay out of the **DANGER ZONE** (*the area in front of the bus, area in back of the bus, and the area around the side of the bus where the driver is unable to see the child*).

As the child nears his/her corner or drop-off site he/she should begin to gather belongings and wait for the bus to come to a complete stop. After leaving the bus, the child is to remain on the sidewalk until the bus pulls away. This allows the child to have an unobstructed view of

any oncoming traffic. The child should then proceed directly to his/her residence.

Bus Accidents:

School bus transportation is the safest form of passenger transportation. Bus drivers are specially trained and licensed as school bus drivers. School buses are regularly inspected to ensure each bus meets all safety standards. If your child is involved in an accident, your school will contact you within 24 hours of the accident. If your child complains of an injury, seek medical attention immediately.

Student Identification:

During the first day of school, an MPS identification necklace will be provided by the school for all students in Grades K3 through K5. Students should wear the necklace when they are on the bus. Students in Grades K3-K5 are normally seated in the front seats of the bus unless accompanied by an older sibling. If a child is wearing an MPS identification necklace, the bus driver will not drop the student off unless there is a responsible person to receive them.

Absence of a Responsible Person

K3, K4, K5 riders must be received by a responsible person when they leave the school bus at the end of the day. If there is not a responsible person to receive the child, the bus company will attempt to contact the parent or guardian. If unsuccessful, the company will transport the child to the MPS Child Care Center at the MPS Administration Building at 5225 West Vliet Street. The Child Care phone number is (414) 475-8462. The parent will be required to pick up the child from that location. **If a parent receives three (3) *Absence of Responsible Person* notices in a year, bus service for that child may be cancelled.**

Emergency Contact Information

Bus companies may access the emergency contact information furnished to your child's school. This information is provided to them to help ensure the safe and timely return of children who may have become lost or confused. The bus companies are aware that any information they obtain is to be used only for that purpose, and is to be treated in a highly confidential manner. Please be sure this information is accurate and up-to-date. Notify your child's school of any changes.

ANSWERS TO PARENT QUESTIONS

What to do in case of:

Late Bus or No-Show

If your child's bus is often late, or fails to show, contact the bus company. If the problem continues, contact your child's school.

Note: Always have your child's school and bus route information nearby before contacting the bus company. Always have your child ready at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled stop time.

Behavior Problems on Bus

If you feel your child's safety is being jeopardized by the behavior of other riders, you should contact your child's school.

Inappropriate Driver Behavior

If you suspect your child's bus driver is engaging in inappropriate behavior, you should first contact your child's bus company. If the problem continues, contact your child's school.

If you notice a bus speeding, traveling in an unsafe manner, or the driver is talking on a cell phone, call Pupil Transportation Services at (414) 475-8922. Please note the name of the bus company, the bus number, and the time and location of the bus.

Driver/Parent/Student Conflict Prevention Tips

Cooperation between parents and the bus driver will insure a safe bus ride for all riders. Please follow these simple guidelines:

- ❖ Be at your child's stop on a regular basis, and get to know the bus driver.
- ❖ Speak to the driver from the curb or sidewalk.
- ❖ Wait for all students to board before speaking to the driver.
- ❖ Do not board your child's bus unless authorized.
- ❖ Do not request route changes with the driver.
- ❖ Do not threaten the driver or other riders at the bus stop or on the bus.

MORE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

❖ **How are bus stops and routes determined?**

Pupil Transportation Services use mapping and computer programs to determine the safest, most efficient bus routes possible. Student data, traffic conditions and safety are all considered.

❖ **The bus passes by my house. Why can't it just stop and pick up my child at home?**

MPS transports more than 45,000 students on school buses each day. It would be impossible to provide door-to-door service to everyone, and arrive at school on-time.

❖ **What is the difference between the “bus number” and the “route number”?**

The “bus number” is a unique bus identification number. Students and parents need to know their “route number” which is posted on a yellow sign next to the door of the bus.

❖ **What qualifications do bus drivers have to have?**

In order to qualify as a school bus driver, a person must receive a School Bus Drivers License from the State of Wisconsin. They undergo a thorough criminal background check, and must pass a complete medical exam. They must also have a safe driving record. All drivers must complete a comprehensive School Bus Driver Training Program, and complete first aid training.

❖ **Why are there no seat belts on large school buses?**

Neither the State of Wisconsin nor the federal government requires seat belts on large school buses. School buses are designed to take a great deal of impact, not to crush in the event of a roll over, and to cushion children with compartmentalization between the seats in the event of a crash or fast stopping. Seat belts are largely intended to prevent a child from being ejected from a vehicle. Only children standing in the aisle or out of their seats are at risk of being ejected from the school bus. The Milwaukee Public Schools requirements for school buses adhere to the State of Wisconsin laws and statutes.

For further information on Wisconsin seat belt guidelines, see www.dot.wisconsin.gov/safety/vehicle/schoolbus/seatbelts.htm

NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE

It is the policy of the Milwaukee Public Schools that, as required by section 118.13, Wisconsin Statutes, no person will be denied admission to any public school or be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational or program or activity because of the person's sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

This policy also prohibits discrimination under related federal statutes, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, and national origin), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (disability), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (disability).



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