

# Code of Conduct for Bus Travel

The East Rockaway School District provides transportation services for its students to neighboring private and parochial schools.

Proper behavior is expected while being transported to and from school. However, misbehavior by some students can make travel unpleasant for their peers, cause bodily injury, disrupt the driver and result in possible damage to vehicles.

To help ensure that school students behave sensibly and safely on the buses, we have developed this Code of Conduct.

## ***I. What is this Code of Conduct?***

The Code is a set of guidelines for students to follow when using bus transportation. It forms the basis for the specific rules that students must follow in order to responsibly manage their own behavior.

## ***II. To whom does it apply?***

This Code applies to all students attending schools where transportation is provided by bus. These buses are used to travel to or from school and for other school related activities.

## ***III. How does the Code benefit you?***

The Code sets standards of behavior and provides a systematic process so that disruptions or misbehavior by students is dealt with quickly and fairly. It also aims to minimize the number and severity of these disruptions.

## ***IV. What are the standards?***

The following table lists some of the types of behavior that are encouraged and those which are not allowed.

Parents/Guardians should discuss these with their children so they all clearly understand what they should and should not do.

For most students, complying with the Code will not require any change in their current behavior. By continuing to act in accordance with this Code students will help ensure that all will have a comfortable and safe journey.

### **Behavior**

### **Examples of How to Meet the Code**

**Respect other people and property.**

Treat other people and their possessions with respect.  
Follow the bus driver's directions without argument.

Do not interfere with bus property, equipment, shelters and signs by marking, removing or damaging them. Good citizenship and student character includes being honest and cooperating with authorities when relating important facts and information.

**Wait for the bus in an orderly manner.**

Wait well back from the bus until it stops.  
Stand quietly without calling out or shouting.  
Do not push other people in line.

**Upon boarding the bus.**

Board in an orderly fashion.  
Present photo ID card upon request.

**While on the bus conduct yourself in an orderly manner.**

***Students should:***

- Always follow instructions from the driver about safety on the bus.
- Show their bus pass on request by a person of authority.
- Sit properly in a seat if one is available (in an allocated seat if directed by the driver.)
- If standing, remain in the area designated by the driver.
- Store school bags under the seat.
- Speak quietly and do not create unnecessary noise.

***Students must not:***

- Bully other students.
- Place feet on the seats.
- Fight, spit or use offensive language.
- Throw any article around or from the bus.
- Leave rubbish on the bus, or at stops or interchanges.
- Consume food or drink, or play music.
- Smoke (prohibited on all buses).
- Allow any portion of their body to protrude out of the bus.
- Stand forward of the front seat.
- Damage or vandalize the bus in any form.
- Damage any part of their uniform or that of another student.

**Use designated stops.**

It is the responsibility of students to disembark at their correct designated stop.

**When exiting from the bus, do so in an orderly manner.**

Wait until the bus stops before standing to get off.  
Get off the bus in a quiet and orderly fashion.  
Never cross the road in front of the bus; wait until the bus has moved away and it is safe to cross.  
Use crossings or traffic lights if available.

**In case of an emergency or a breakdown, follow the driver's directions.**

Leave the bus in a quiet and orderly fashion.  
Wait in the area indicated by the driver.  
If the police are called, remain on the bus until the police arrive and follow their directions.  
Alternate buses may be used in case of a bus breakdown

### ***V. What happens if students don't comply with the Code?***

When a student does not abide by the Code, action may range from a warning to refusal of future travel on the buses depending on:

1. the threat to the safety of passengers on the bus and the nature of the incident;
2. the seriousness of the breach;
3. age of the student; and
4. whether the breach was a first or one of a series of incidents about which the student had been previously cautioned.

To promote consistency and fairness in responding to students who do not abide by the Code, misbehavior has been divided into three categories of seriousness.

### **Categories of Seriousness & Consequences**

#### **I. Nuisance and Offensive Behavior**

**Examples:** Category one includes behavior that may be irritating or unpleasant but not physically dangerous. Behaviors such as:

- failing to show a bus pass;
- eating on the bus;
- spitting;
- using offensive language.

**Result:** Initially a warning will be given. The third category one offense will lead to a ban on the student traveling for up to 10 (ten) school days.

#### **II. Dangerous Behavior**

**Examples:** Category two includes behavior where there may be some physical danger to individuals, including:

- distracting the driver by persistent noise;
- harassing and bullying other passengers;
- not remaining seated;
- failing to disembark if requested;

- standing on steps;
- verbally threatening the driver;
- swinging on bus handrails.

**Result:** No warnings given and will lead to a ban on the student traveling for up to 20 (twenty) school days.

### **III. Very Destructive and Dangerous Behaviors**

**Examples:** Category three includes behaviors that are very dangerous to individuals or very destructive such as:

- throwing objects that have the potential to cause harm or damage;
- fighting;
- marking or damaging bus property (breaking windows, slashing seats, etc.);
- repeated occurrences of dangerous behavior;

**Or**

Are life threatening such as:

- physically attacking the driver or other passengers;
- pushing students out through doors or windows;
- lighting a fire on the bus;
- interfering with the safe mechanical operation of the bus;
- threatening physical harm with a dangerous weapon.

**Result:** No warnings given, immediate suspension on bus travel up to one school year (Section 3214 of the Education Law) and possible civil or police action.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. The bus driver may take any one of the following actions:

- Warning the student
- Stopping the bus
- Calling the police
- Filing an incident report/sending it to the student’s home district
- Other appropriate action

2. The home district may take any one of the following actions:

- Notifying parents of misbehavior
- Notifying parents that the student’s bus privileges have been suspended
- Sending disciplinary reports to private school personnel who will appropriately discipline the student
- Other appropriate action

*Note:* Appeals must be made in writing to the Superintendent of the home school district.

I have received, read and agree to abide by the guidelines set forth in the Code of Conduct for Bus Travel.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

**Student Copy – Code of Conduct Acknowledgment**

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**School District Copy – Code of Conduct Acknowledgment**