

# School Bus Safety Tips for Students and Parents

## Wa-Nee Community Schools

Choosing the school bus as an option to get your child to and from school is a very safe choice. School buses are the safest form of transportation in the US. See more at [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov). Getting to and from the school bus requires safe procedures.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure safety to and from the school bus doors. There is a transfer of responsibility at the bus doors between the parents and the school.

Bus stop safety rests on the parents and the students. Therefore, at Wa-Nee, we have expectations that parents will help supervise students, ensure safety at school bus stops, and ensure proper loading and unloading procedures.

There are times when students will be required to cross the roadway to get to or from the bus. Safety protocol must be followed. School buses are designed to stop traffic with the use of yellow warning lights, red warning lights, and stop signs.

### Getting Ready for School

- ✓ Have your children put everything they carry in a backpack or school bag so that they won't drop things along the way.
- ✓ Have them wear bright contrasting colors so they will be more easily seen by drivers. Reflective material is the best.
- ✓ Make sure they leave home on time to walk to the bus stop and arrive before the bus is due. Running to or after the bus is dangerous.
- ✓ Make sure there are no loose drawstrings or other objects that may be caught in the door or become a tripping hazard.

### Walking to the Bus Stop

- ✓ Walk your young child to the bus stop and have older children walk in groups. There is safety in numbers; groups are easier for drivers to see.
- ✓ Practice good pedestrian behavior: walk on the sidewalk.
- ✓ If you must walk in the street, walk single file, face traffic and stay as close to the edge of the road as you can.
- ✓ Stop and look left, right, and then left again if you must cross the street. Do the same thing at driveways and alleys. Exaggerate your head turns and narrate your actions so your child knows you are looking left, right, and left.

### Waiting at the Bus Stop

- ✓ Be out and waiting at the bus stop at least 10 minutes before the scheduled bus stop time. Wait 10 minutes past the published stop time before leaving the stop or calling the school office.
- ✓ Students wait at bus stops for buses. The buses do not wait at stops for students.
- ✓ Do not let your child play games or push and shove at the bus stop. This dangerous behavior near traffic.
- ✓ Make sure your child stands at least 10 feet (5 giant steps) from the road while waiting for the bus. Have younger children practice taking 5 giant steps to become familiar with 10 feet.

### Getting On the Bus

- ✓ Stay out of the Danger Zone. Never cross behind the bus or come to the bus doors from alongside the bus.
- ✓ Board the bus at your assigned bus stop. Drivers count students and have expectations of how many should be getting on at each stop.
- ✓ Remain 10 feet from the roadway and do not move toward the bus until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- ✓ Before moving toward the bus, wait for the driver's signal and check for hazards before moving forward.
- ✓ Always be responsible for your own safety and continuously look for hazards. Look left, right and, left again.
- ✓ Be prepared to respond to the driver's instructions.
- ✓ Use the handrail when boarding. Go immediately to your seat and be seated.
- ✓ Tell the driver if you are aware of any other student who may be running late.
- ✓ Warn children that if they drop something, they should never pick it up. Instead, they should tell the driver and follow the driver's instructions.

For more information regarding Wa-Nee bus procedures for safety visit:

<http://www.wanee.org/ParentsandStudents.aspx>

## Getting Off the Bus

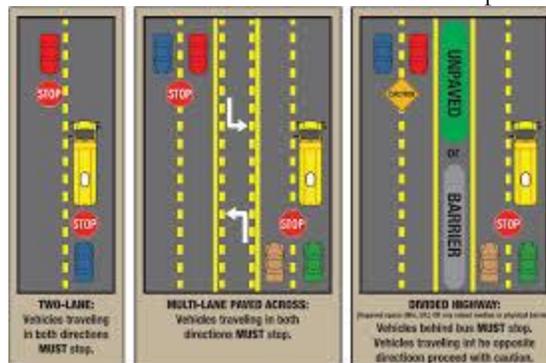
- ✓ Children must get off the bus at their assigned stop.
- ✓ Teach your children to secure loose drawstrings and other objects that may get caught in the handrail or door of the bus as they are exiting and to place all items in a bag.
- ✓ Remind children to look to the right before they step off the bus. Drivers in a hurry sometimes try to sneak by buses on the right.
- ✓ Non-crossing students should get off the bus as a group first.
- ✓ Crossing students must wait 15 feet in front of the bus and wait for the driver's signal to cross.
- ✓ Once crossing students reach the center of the road, they should pause and look both ways for traffic before continuing.
- ✓ When you meet your child at the bus stop after school, wait on the side where the child will be dropped off, not across the street. Children can be so excited at seeing you after school that they dash across the street and forget the safety rules. Cross with children using the same rules as above.
- ✓ Do not allow children to go along side the bus, behind the bus, or pause to get the mail. They must move out of the danger zone immediately.

## Riding the Bus

- ✓ Children should talk quietly, keep their hands and feet to themselves, and be courteous to others.
- ✓ Children should stay seated during the entire bus ride and keep the aisles clear.
- ✓ The bus driver is in charge. Be courteous to the driver and follow the driver's instructions.
- ✓ Children should be prepared for emergencies and ready to follow driver or safety helper's instructions.
- ✓ Children should never distract the driver from driving and especially when other students are boarding or leaving the school bus.

## Know the Motorist Laws

- ✓ Treat school bus lights like a stop light. Yellow = prepare to stop. Red = stop.
- ✓ Yellow flashing lights on the top of the bus mean the bus is preparing to stop for children.
- ✓ A school bus must be completely stopped before the driver can turn on the red lights and deploy the stop arm.
- ✓ Passing a school bus with the stop sign out and the red lights flashing is against the law and will be punished with fines, tickets, and license points that lead to suspension and increased insurance rates.
- ✓ Wa-Nee has buses with stop arm cameras and we will move toward full punishment of any violation.



## Report any Violators

- ✓ If you witness a stop arm violation and have video proof, report the following information to local authorities. Report a complete plate number, make and model of the vehicle, driver description, direction of the violator, and direction of the bus.

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