



West Allegheny Transportation Handbook

2016-2017

West Allegheny School District – Transportation Guidelines and Expectations

The West Allegheny School District Administration recognizes that safety is paramount in transportation. The administration is committed to working with the Board of Education, parents, students, principals, drivers and staff to maintain a safe and orderly environment. The following guidelines are in place to ensure positive and safe passage to and from school and school sponsored events.

Transportation to and from school is a privilege. Abuse of this privilege may result in loss of transportation to and from school. When you lose your transportation privileges, you cannot ride a bus owned by the Monark Bus Company and contracted by the West Allegheny School District during the time of the suspension.

Video camera systems with audio capability are installed on Monark Transportation School Buses. The information from these tapes can be used to determine disciplinary action. The cameras on buses and vans are to help ensure the safety of all students and staff.

Special education students will be subject to the same disciplinary procedures, including suspensions from riding the bus as regular education students unless otherwise noted in the student's IEP. The IEP will be reviewed to be sure that there are not any special circumstances that would warrant alternative forms of discipline, especially when a bus suspension is under consideration.

It is to be understood that in the event of a bus suspension, the student is still required to attend school and any absence during the suspension without a valid written excuse will result in school officials following the standard school truancy process.

DELAY OR CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

The Transportation Department could be impacted by several variables during the winter weather season. The main factor for a delay or cancellation decision is weather conditions, but other factors do play a part.

The following are the steps that the department uses to make a recommendation for a delay or cancellation:

1. Weather conditions and local radar are monitored to determine the time and duration of snowfall. The temperature and wind chill are also considered.
2. Early morning checks of the roads are conducted. Typically starting at 4:00 AM, a sampling of township and state roads are driven to check road conditions.
3. Township and state road crews' status of snow removal and road treatment is monitored to determine what the road conditions will be like during student pickup hours.

The Superintendent makes the decision to delay or cancel school based on the data collected in the previous stated steps. Students and staff are notified via School Messenger, the district's mass phone notification system. Additionally, local media outlets are notified and the West Allegheny Website and Facebook accounts are updated.

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The following are expectations all drivers are expected to follow in operating a bus in the West Allegheny School District.

1. Drivers will greet all students as they enter and exit the bus in a pleasant and welcoming manner.
2. Drivers will assign all students an area or seat on the bus and set expectations for students to sit in assigned seats or areas.
3. Drivers will maintain focus on student safety and not engage in distracting behavior including but not limited to cell phone usage.
4. Drivers will maintain open lines of communication with teachers, administrators and the Monark Transportation administration in regards to the safety, security and behavior of all students.
5. Drivers will act in a professional manner at all times when interacting with students, parents, staff members and administrators.

The following are expectations all administrators are expected to follow in supporting the safe operations of district transportation

1. Administrators and/or their designees will reinforce seating arrangements on all buses.
2. Administrators and/or their designees will enforce all school and school bus safety rules when made aware of a violation.
3. Administrators and/or their designees will maintain open lines of communication with bus drivers, Monark Transportation administration and District Office Administration in regards to transportation related issues.
4. Administrators and/or their designees will request and review video from any bus violation that reaches level three or higher in the transportation guidelines and expectations.

The following are expectations all students are expected to adhere to during transportation to and from school.

1. Students will sit in their assigned area or seat and face forward at all times. No standing is permitted while the bus is in motion.
2. Students will keep hands, feet and personal belongings to themselves and out of the bus aisle.
3. Students will wait their turn to enter and exit the bus at the stop for which they are assigned.
4. Students will use appropriate language, tone and volume when speaking on the bus.
5. Students will be respectful of all other students and the driver while on the bus and at the bus stop.
6. Students will not eat or drink on the bus.
7. Students will not play loud or distracting music on the bus.

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Parents can contribute to the efficient and safe transportation of their children in the following ways:

1. Ensure that students are at their designated bus stop at least five minutes prior to bus arrival time. Drivers are not required to wait for children as all children further down the route would then be forced to wait that much longer.
2. Ensure students stay off the roadway at all times while waiting for the bus.
3. Ensure students cross in front of the bus when crossing the road or highway.
4. Ensure students wait until the bus has come to a complete stop and red lights are flashing before attempting to enter or leave the bus.
5. Ensure special items and projects are transported by parents to school rather than on the bus due to space and safety consideration.
6. Ensure students do not chase after a bus.
7. Ensure students are orderly while awaiting the bus.
8. Ensure that the bus stop is safe and maintained.
9. Ensure that if driving students to the bus stop you do not interfere with the traffic pattern of the bus.

The district stance is that all students should ride their assigned bus to and from school.

*NOTE: In case of the need for an **emergency** bus change, a note from a parent must be submitted to the office for approval. **This does not guarantee that approval will be granted.** If approval is given, the student will receive a bus pass to give to the bus driver. Students must submit the note to the office first thing in the morning in order to arrange for this change.*

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Misbehaviors and interventions are categorized across four levels based on seriousness/frequency of occurrence.

Level I

Level I offenses include minor misbehaviors on the part of the student, which are disruptive and impede or interfere with the orderly and safe operation of the school bus. These misbehaviors are expected to be addressed by the bus driver who observes the incident, but may require the intervention of an administrator. An accurate record of the offense, corrective and intervention supports, and disciplinary action must be maintained by the bus driver. Repeated instances of Level I behavior, despite redirection or intervention, may constitute a violation at a higher level with referral to the appropriate building administrator.

Examples of Level I Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Disrespectful actions or language towards peers, adults, and/or property
- Inappropriate and/or profane language or gesture not directed at others
- Not following bus driver directions
- Inappropriate tone or volume when speaking on the bus (yelling and screaming)
- Standing up or moving seat-to-seat
- Unauthorized use of electronic devices
- Distracting loud music or noises
- Eating or drinking on the bus
- Leaving trash on the bus
- Students seated out of assigned area

Examples of Level I Consequences Including but not Limited to:

- Verbal redirection
- Special assigned seat
- Referral to building administration
- Timely parent notification
(by phone & documented in writing)
- Behavior contract

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Level II

Level II offenses are misbehaviors whose frequency or seriousness disrupt the safe operation of the school bus. These infractions can result from the continuation of Level I misbehaviors and/or include new offenses. The consequences are serious enough to require disciplinary action taken by administrative personnel.

Examples of Level II Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Repeated Level I Violations or Level I with aggravating circumstances
- Verbal/non-verbal flagrant disrespect toward bus drivers or other students
- Agitating/instigating comments between students
- Horseplay
- Use of obscene language/gestures toward others
- Pushing, shoving or tripping other students in line
- Intentionally distracting the bus driver
- Inappropriate misuse of technology (videotaping other students)
- Intentionally boarding an unassigned bus
- Exiting the bus at an unassigned stop

Examples of Level II Consequences Including but not Limited to:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbal redirection• Special assigned seat• Referral to building administration• Detention• In School Suspension• Out of School Suspension• 1-3 day Bus Suspension | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent notification and possible conference• Referral to SAP• Withdrawal of privileges and/or participation in school activities• Written reprimand• Behavior contract |
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Level III

Level III offenses are acts whose frequency or seriousness impact the safety of students and staff and are directed against persons or properties. These misbehaviors could endanger the health and safety the individual or other individuals.

Examples of Level III Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Repeated Level II Violations or Level II with aggravating circumstances
- Vandalism (Less than \$100) or Petty theft (less than \$100)
- Disorderly conduct
- Major disruption on the bus caused by the use of smoke/stink bombs, fireworks, etc.
- Fighting, harassment, threatening comments, simple assault, hazing
- Act or acts of discrimination and/or intimidating behaviors intended to demean another person
- Bullying/Cyber-bullying
- Sexual misconduct, indecent exposure
- Sexual harassment
- Possession of pornography or other illegal material, sexting
- Use/possession of drugs and or alcohol, look-alikes, and/or paraphernalia (non-distribution amount)
- Use/possession of tobacco and/or related products, look alike products (2nd offense)
- Throwing items out of the bus window
- Throwing items at other people on the bus
- Hanging out the bus window

Examples of Level III Consequences Including but not Limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to a 10 day bus suspension• Up to 10 day suspension• Law enforcement/charges• Due Process• Restitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referral to SAP• Parent Conference• Activity Restriction (examples include: school sponsored trips, dances, commencement exercises, etc.)
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Level IV

Level IV offenses pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of others. These criminal acts always require administrative actions and may require the removal of the student from district transportation and /or school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities and possible action by the West Allegheny School Board.

Examples of Level IV Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Repeated Level III Violations or Level III with aggravating circumstances
- Possession of a weapon or look-alike weapon of any kind on school property including school sponsored events and transportation to or from school
- Arson or attempted arson
- Tampering with security/safety equipment and/or driving instruments
- Terroristic threats or acts
- Commission of a criminal felony on the school bus
- Aggravated assault or sexual assault
- Distribution of pornography (including but not limited to child pornography)
- Distribution and/or intent to sell drugs, alcohol, paraphernalia, or look-alike substances
- Vandalism and/or theft over \$100
- Possession/use of explosive devices

Examples of Level IV Consequences Including but not Limited to:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removal from district transportation• Out of School Suspension• Alternative Education Placement• Restitution• Expulsion• Superintendent's hearing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Board of Directors' hearing• Involvement of law enforcement with potential for criminal charges• Applicable Level III consequences• Activity restriction (examples include: school sponsored trips, dances, commencement exercises, etc.) |
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