

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Lufkin Independent School District provides bus transportation to and from school as a **courtesy service** for eligible students residing in the District. The State of Texas prescribes the conditions governing school bus operations and funds the service by allotting the District a given amount for eligible students transported. As an independent school district, we determine other operational restrictive measures on how transportation is governed and regulated. They are herein outlined in this handbook for your information.

Regular Education Student Eligibility:

Home to school transportation is available for students who live two or more miles from their assigned campus. The distance a student lives from his or her assigned campus is determined by measuring from the curb at the front of the school to the curb in front of the home using the closest paved street. **Address eligibility is continually audited year around. When an address is found to be ineligible, notification will be made as soon as possible with a grace period allowed for parents to locate an alternate mode of transportation.**

The Lufkin Independent School District is pleased to provide transportation for its eligible students and request your assistance in helping create a **safe** and efficient operation. We ask for your cooperation with school personnel in developing proper behavior patterns for those students who ride LISD school buses. If you ever have any concerns about school bus safety, call the Lufkin I.S.D. Transportation Office at (936) 634-6516.

Requirements for Bus Service:

1. Must meet the two or more mile criteria from assigned school campus.
2. Must be a parent or guardian of the student for service.
3. Must provide proof of residency. Ex: Utility bill, lease agreement or other document proving residency.
4. Any bus sign up requests must be completed at the transportation department for verification of home address and emergency contact information.
5. Any address or phone number changes during the school year must be completed at the school of student attendance first, then at the transportation department in between the hours of **9:00am to 11:45am or after 5:00 pm with a scheduled appointment. The hours are set specifically scheduled so they do not interfere with bussing operations.**

Prohibited Items:

1. Any object (musical instrument, shop project, etc.) too large to be carried by student on to the school bus. Parent must provide transportation. For the object to be allowed, the object must:
 - be able to be placed in the student's lap,
 - not exceed the height of the seat, and
 - not obstruct the view of the driver.
2. Live animals or insects.

3. Any device that distracts the driver or disrupts transportation and/or creates an unsafe environment.
4. No skateboards.

Student Conduct on School Bus:

1. Observe same conduct rules as in the classroom.
2. Be Courteous. **NO** profane language.
3. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
4. Keep the bus clean. No trash or littering.
5. Cooperate and follow directions of Driver/Monitor.
6. Do not use tobacco products.
7. Do not be destructive of LISD bus property. Parents/Guardians will be responsible for payment if damages occur.
8. Stay in your assigned seat and clear of the aisle.
9. Keep head, hands, and feet inside bus.
10. No screaming or distracting noises.
11. No throwing of any objects on the school bus.
12. Cell phones/electronics are permitted for music or game play with the use of ear plugs or on silent if students do not have hearing devices. In case of an emergency students must get approval from the bus driver before being permitted to make a call. We expect students to use good judgement when using these devices. We strongly discourage the sharing of devices between students, which can lead to altercations.
13. Hoodies must be removed before entering the bus and not worn while on the bus.

Other punishable violations include; bullying, fighting, horseplay, disrespect to LISD Transportation Staff or any other behavior that compromises the safety of students or staff members on board the school bus. Students will also be held accountable on school board policy, dress code, and student code of conduct.

Discipline:

Students failing to obey **safety** procedures and conduct rules will be subjected to disciplinary action set forth by Transportation Administration. Student referral copies can be obtained at the transportation department office. Parents/Guardians will be notified by phone of any suspension periods. If we are unable to contact the parent suspension periods will still be enforced. We will document every attempt to reach the parent/guardian (time and date).

Disciplinary Steps all grade levels:

1st Referral	3 Day Suspension
2nd Referral	5 Day Suspension
3rd Referral	10 Day Suspension
4th Referral	15 Day Suspensions
5th Referral	Loss of riding privileges for the year.

NOTE: Transportation Administration reserves the right to skip steps and enforce penalties based on the severity of the infraction. Any disciplinary questions please contact the appropriate disciplinary personnel.

see you.

6. Check both directions and walk directly to the bus.
7. Enter the bus one at a time with no pushing and go straight to your assigned seat.
8. If the student misses the bus **DO NOT** chase the bus. Parents **DO NOT** chase the bus in your vehicle or bring your child to another stop to catch the bus. Under these circumstances you will be required to take your child to school. These are serious **safety** violations.

Unloading Procedures:

***Students may only depart their assigned bus at their designated stop.**

1. Stay seated until the bus has come to a complete stop and the parking brake is set.
2. Wait for your turn to exit the bus do not push or shove.
3. Use the handrail and take one step at a time during exit. Do not jump down the stairs.
4. Once departed move away from the bus 12 to 15 feet so the driver can visually see that you are clear of any danger areas. **Do not touch the bus or walk close to the bus after exiting.**
5. If any article drops or rolls near or under the bus do not go after it or approach the bus. Signal the driver and wait for assistance.
6. Any student needing to cross a street will exit the bus and move to a point 12 to 15 feet in front of the right side bumper and wait for the driver to signal you that it is **safe** to cross.
7. Check in both directions and walk directly across the road.
8. Never cross the road behind the bus.

Caution! Be alert for vehicles that do not stop when the bus is loading and unloading. Loading and unloading is the most dangerous time for student safety and are when most fatalities occur. Please take extra precautions during these times.

Unloading Procedures continued: Parental requirements/Return Rule

A parent/Guardian, emergency contact designee or consenting adult **must** be at the stop for Pre-K through second grade. All designees must be listed in emergency contacts with updated phone numbers. If the parent or designee fails to be at the designated stop on time students will be returned to the following destinations. Pre-K students will be returned to their instructional campus. Kinder through second grade students will be returned to transportation located at 811 South Timberland. Upon the third return to transportation or their instructional campus riding privileges will be suspended for a period of 3 days. The returns are cumulative and will be recorded as follows; 4th return 5 days, 5th return 10 days, 6th return 15 days, 7th return riding privileges will be suspended for the remainder of the school year. Student returns causes our bus routes to run late.

Do not expect the drivers to know your car at the stop. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to be present at the bus stop to receive their child. We do have substitute drivers who will fill in absences of our regular drivers and they will not let your child off unless they can verify that you are the parent or guardian who can receive the student. They will not know what car you drive. If you choose not to come to the stop, you are taking a chance on having your child returned to the campus or transportation department and will be subjected to our student return rule.

Circumstances where a student appears nervous or unsure about getting off the bus or if the driver feels that there is a **safety** concern the driver will keep the student on the bus and return them to transportation (except for Pre-K they will be returned to their campus) and parents will be notified.

Accidents or Emergencies:

1. Stay calm and follow the directions of the Driver/Monitor.
2. Do not depart the bus for any reason other than an emergency evacuation situation deemed necessary by the driver. Remember to stay calm and remain in your seat.
3. EMS and police personnel will be notified immediately in the event any accident occurs.
4. Parents will be notified as soon as possible by transportation personnel.

Special Education Transportation Service:

LISD is pleased to provide quality educational services for your children. Our mission in Special needs Transportation is to ensure your child arrives to school and returns home safely with care and thought given to his/her individual needs.

To be eligible for special education transportation the student must be recommended by the ARD committee in order to receive special education transportation service. If the ARD committee does not recommend special education service the student will fall under the regular education transportation criteria.

For more information concerning special education transportation please contact our special needs coordinator.

Linda Cayton, Special needs coordinator, 630-4427

Frequently asked questions:

1. Why does it take up to three days to begin transportation service for my child?

When a new student is added to a driver's list, the time of pick-up and drop-off changes for all students assigned to their particular bus. Parents will need to be notified by Transportation Services so they have the opportunity to adjust to new pick-up and drop-off times. The driver also needs information about their children before transporting them. The three day lead between notice and start of transport allows for necessary information processing. Ex: adding a stop or having to readjust route path, and time adjustments. We will make every attempt to expedite the process as fast as possible.

2. What if I want my child to get off the bus at another address other than my designated stop?

In accordance with the Texas Education Agency Transportation Guidelines as well as the Student Handbook, "Transfers to a location other than a student's designated stop are not permitted except that a parent may designate a child-care facility or grandparent's residence as the regular pickup and drop-off location for his or her child. The designated facility or residence must be a district approved stop on a district approved route that meets the two or more mile requirements from student's instructional campus and within the school's attendance zone to maintain routing efficiency. **Aunt, uncle, brother, sister, friend, place of business will not qualify as a designated stop.**

3. Who should I call if the bus does not arrive to pick up my child on time?

Your child should be at their designated bus stop ten (10) minutes before the scheduled arrive time. If the bus has not arrived fifteen (15) minutes after your scheduled route time, call the Transportation Department at **(936) 634-6516**. Please have your child's bus number, the school of attendance, child's name and stop location. Route times may fluctuate during the first few weeks of school, so please be patient with us during this time.

Other related events such as weather, traffic, road construction, driver absenteeism, maintenance difficulties and unforeseen incidents can be responsible for delays in the arrival of school buses in the morning and afternoon.

4. Can my child ride home on another bus?

No. We discourage this from happening because all buses have established seating assignments and additional students riding on the bus that they are not assigned causes disturbances in seat assignments and may create overcrowding issues.

5. Who handles discipline on the school bus?

The driver is the primary authority figure and is responsible for enforcing the safety rules onboard the school bus. Some buses will have rotating bus monitors to help assist the driver with establishing proper behavior patterns. The school bus safety handbook is provided at the Transportation Services department and available to view on the District's website. Riding the bus is a "privilege" not a right. Students who misbehave jeopardize their own personal safety as well as the safety of others on board. This is why we have little tolerance for misbehavior on the bus. The driver can handle minor disciplinary problems speaking to students or reassigning seats. More serious violations will be addressed by Transportation Administrative staff, which can lead to warning, or removal from the bus. If your child is experiencing any issues on the school bus they are strongly encouraged to speak to the driver so we have an opportunity to address and resolve the situation before it escalates.

6. Why did you suspend my child from riding the school bus?

Behavioral expectations on the school bus are much like those in the classroom. Then, factor in the mobility of that "classroom" and traffic, added noise, and the size of the "classroom"; and

you have a potential catastrophe if there are not clear behavioral expectations and enforcement. The behavioral expectations revolve around the individual safety rights of every person on the bus. Anything that jeopardizes the safety of individuals on the bus will be viewed as serious and appropriate action will be taken.

7. The bus goes right down my street. Why can't the bus stop at my house?

Bus stops are centrally located for all students who live in a specific area. In most cases we try to set our stops at intersections, which are easy to locate and where motorists are more alert to pedestrians. The district attempts to minimize the number of stops so we can reduce student ride times. Stopping at driveways inconveniences the motoring public causing them to become impatient trying to get around the bus and compromising safety.

8. How do I update information or add someone to my emergency contacts?

If you need to add additional contacts who are authorized to receive your child, you must make the changes at the school your child attends so it can be uploaded in skyward (This is the school's data system that has student/parent information). Transportation cannot make changes in the skyward system we can only view. Please communicate any changes with Transportation so we can make a notation of the change in case the information has not been updated. We will verify with the school that a request has been made.

9. Why do I have to come to Transportation to register my child for bus service?

We require this annually to verify that addresses are eligible and to process necessary paperwork. Many of our students are transitioning to other schools, which can change bussing assignments and times. We build our routes annually based on each eligible request so that we are running efficient routes and assign students on specific buses to avoid overcrowding. We are continually looking for ways to run our transportation service as efficient and economical as possible and some routes may be deleted or added, which can change bus numbers and route path from the previous year.

10. Why does my child have an assigned seat?

We utilize this strategy to cut down on confusion and gain familiarity with the students. We are able to appropriately manage discipline when the drivers know where students are assigned and are easy to identify if a behavioral conflict occurs. At no time are Males and females authorized to sit in the same seat.

