



2024-2025

Bus Rider Handbook

Parents/Guardians and Student Bus Riders,

The Goal - This handbook is to assist you in helping us provide a safe and enjoyable experience for all children who ride the school bus. It is important that you understand how the Transportation Office views misconduct on the school bus as well. For those reasons, parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to read and discuss this handbook with their children.

Gladewater ISD is committed to providing safe transportation for its students. Proper behavior will be expected from all bus riders. Please note that transportation provided by GISD school buses is a privilege. Students who do not follow the rules set before them in this handbook and the GISD Student Code of Conduct, will be subject to disciplinary actions. The expectations of the students on the bus are the same as those in the classroom.

Bus View Card - Each student will be issued a Bus View bus card which is required to ride any GISD school bus. If a student does not have their bus card they will not be allowed to board the bus. If a card is lost or damaged, you will need to purchase a new card at the school campus your student attends. The cost to replace a bus card is \$5.00. Please see page 7 of this handbook for more information on the BusView Card system.

ED.CODE 37.126 - Please note that bus drivers and GISD employees are the only adults permitted on the school bus. Parents, guardians, relatives, family friends, etc., are not allowed to board the bus for any reason. Anyone (student, parent/guardian, etc.) that intentionally disrupts the operation of a school bus is in violation of ED.CODE 37.126 and is punishable by a \$500 fine.

Thank you for assisting us in helping provide a safe and enjoyable experience for all children who ride GISD school buses.

Sincerely,

Hunter Hopkins

Director of Transportation
Gladewater ISD
(903) 845-4356

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY RULES & EXPECTATIONS

- Obey the instructions of the bus driver at all times. At no point will the student be allowed to disrespect the bus driver with rude comments, refusing to cooperate, or addressing the driver in a rude manner.
- Students will respect everyone on the bus.
- The bus driver may assign seats as needed.
- When boarding the bus, promptly walk to your seat and sit down.
- Remain seated at all times.
- Eating and/or drinking on any GISD school bus is not permitted. Water is allowed only if it is in a resealable container, e.g. water bottle, etc. (Please refrain from using containers with straws, e.g. Stanley, etc.)
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Fighting, wrestling, or scuffling of any kind is not permitted.
- If the school bus is equipped with seatbelts, students are required by law to wear them.
- A student shall not refuse to sit in an assigned seat, or deny another student a place to sit.
- Keep the aisle clear at all times.
- Do not throw objects while on the bus, e.g. paper, pens, pencils, crayons, markers, erasers, books, backpacks, etc.
- Help keep the bus clean. Do not take things out of your backpack and throw them on the floor. Please place trash in the bin before exiting the bus. The bus driver is not responsible for lost documents, homework, or other items such as cell phones or ear buds.
- Do not lower/open the bus windows unless the driver gives permission. Keep all body parts inside the bus at all times.
- Do not yell, scream, or make loud noises on the bus that would distract the bus driver or bother other students.
- The use of obscene, vulgar, or profane language and gestures are forbidden.
- Do not vandalize the bus in any way, e.g. writing on the seat, windows or walls, poking holes or tearing the seat. Restitution for vandalism will be sought.
- Face forward at all times. You must be seated upright with your feet on the floor at all times.
- Oversized objects and/or large band instruments are not allowed on the bus. If a project or instrument does not fit in the student's lap, it must be transported to and from school by a parent/guardian.
- Use of cellphones is not permitted on the bus.
- Photography and/or recording of any kind, video or audio, is not permitted by any student on the bus.
- Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before standing to exit the bus.
- Do not open, touch, or tamper with any emergency exit. Students will use emergency exits and exit controls only during supervised drill or in the event of an actual emergency.

PROCEDURES FOR WAITING FOR THE BUS

- Be at your bus stop at least **five (5) minutes before** your scheduled pick-up. The driver is not required to honk or wait.
- Stand on the sidewalk, curb, or back away from the roadway while waiting on the bus to stop. Do not stand in the street. Stand clear of the bus until it comes to a complete stop.
- When the bus approaches, form a line and be prepared to board the bus immediately.
- If you miss the bus, go home immediately. The driver is not required to pass by a stop a second time to pick you up. **Do not chase the bus.**
- Parents should instruct their students on what to do if they miss the bus.

LOADING THE BUS

- Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and for the door to open.
- Do not push or shove while loading the bus.
- Use the handrail and walk up the steps properly.
- Scan your Bus View card and wait for the “beep” before walking towards your seat.
- Go directly to your seat after scanning your card, sit down, and face forward. Do not block the aisle.

EXITING THE BUS

- Stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Once the bus stops, form a line in the aisle. Do not shove or push while lining up.
- Scan your Bus View card and wait for the “beep” before exiting the bus.
- Use the handrails and watch your step while walking down the stairs. Do not jump from the steps.
- Once you have exited the bus, continue to your house. Do not walk to the rear of the bus. Do not stop at the mailbox. Do not grab your trash can. Once the driver is sure that the student is clear of the bus (approx. 10 giant steps from the bus), the driver will continue on their route.
- Once you’ve exited the bus, if anything rolls under it, **do not retrieve it**. First, notify the driver and allow the bus to pull forward. If needed, the driver will retrieve the item or instruct you on what to do. Failure to notify the driver is very dangerous as there are many blind spots around the bus in which it is difficult for the driver to see.
- Students are only allowed to be dropped off at one of three (3) prior approved places; their home, their grandparents home; or a licensed day care. Riding with a friend, or place of business is not allowed.
- Students must have prior written approval from their principal to get off at a stop other than their own.

EXITING THE BUS AND CROSSING THE STREET

- Students that must cross the road or highway shall exit the bus, take 10 steps in front of the bus, and wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross.
- Once the driver gives the signal to cross the road, immediately proceed across the street. Do not stop walking until you are at least 10 steps on the other side of the roadway.
- Never cross behind the bus. Do not stop to check the mailbox or to retrieve the trash can.
- Be alert while crossing the street for other vehicles that may not stop for the bus while loading or unloading.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

- Follow all of the driver's instructions.
- If you are asked to exit the bus, leave your backpack and belongings.
- Stay in a group. Do not leave the group for any reason.
- The following procedure will be used for evacuation in an emergency:
 - The student nearest the emergency exit will open the door and exit first.
 - If possible, the first student will hold the door open for the rest of the students.
 - Leave the bus in a single file as quickly as possible. Please do not push or shove as this could slow the process.
 - Evacuation will start with the seat closest to the emergency door.
 - Once outside the bus, follow all of the driver's instructions.

PROHIBITED ITEMS - WHAT NOT TO BRING ON THE BUS

- Weapons, explosive devices, fireworks, or harmful chemicals of any kind
- Tobacco of any kind
- Vapes, vaping products, or e-cigarettes of any kind
- Alcoholic beverages
- Illegal drugs
- Matches or cigarette lighters
- Laser pointer of any kind
- Animals or insects
- Glass containers
- Video game consoles or handhelds
- Please keep cellphones in your backpack or pocket

DISCIPLINE

All GISD policies that apply to student conduct and other related activities also apply on the school bus. Think of the bus as a classroom on wheels. If you cannot do it in the classroom, you cannot do it on the bus. The bus driver will report all violations to the Director of Transportation.

A GISD Administrator or the Director of Transportation, along with the bus driver, may call a parent/guardian conference at any time should serious misconduct occur. Every school bus is equipped with cameras that also record audio. The camera footage and audio may be assessed in determining the outcome of a student's suspension. When deemed necessary, a parent/guardian conference may be required before a suspended student's privileges are reinstated. **The Director of Transportation has the authority to skip steps or enhance penalties for serious violations.** Violations involving vandalism will require the student to provide restitution for repairs that are necessary to the equipment, or require that the student spend time cleaning the bus to remove graffiti, etc.

A suspension of bus privileges means that a student is suspended from all GISD buses. Students found riding any GISD school bus during suspension periods will have suspension periods increased potentially resulting in suspension for the remainder of the school year.

The Transportation Office has broken down misconduct into minor and major offenses. The list is as follows:

Minor Offenses	Major Offenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disrespecting the bus driver or another student ● Failure to keep your hands and feet to yourself (horse playing) ● Eating or drinking on the school bus ● Failure to sit in a seat correctly ● Failure to sit in an assigned seat (when applicable) ● Failing to keep the aisle clear ● Public display of affection ● Throwing items such as paper, pencils, pens, crayons, markers, erasers ● Vandalism ● Opening the bus window (Unless given permission by the bus driver) ● Throwing items out of the bus window ● Loud noises, screaming, or yelling ● The use of obscene, vulgar, or profane language (including racial slurs) or gestures ● Taking photos or videos of bus riders or driver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fighting ● Bullying ● Harassment of any kind ● Inappropriate actions/touching ● Over-the-top cursing/foul language ● Excessive movements ● Vaping or the use of vaping products or e-cigarettes of any kind ● The use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs of any kind ● Throwing items such as books, backpacks, music instruments, sports equipment, and/or other items that can injure a person ● The use of matches or lighters ● The use of fireworks of any kind ● Using an electronic device to view, watch, or send obscene, vulgar, or other inappropriate content ● Intentionally tampering with emergency exits ● Possessing a weapon or an item resembling a weapon of any kind

NOTE: Although the list above describes misconduct categories, it is not exhaustive. Misconduct not categorized above will be assessed by the Director of Transportation and other GISD Administrators if needed.

Bus Discipline Suspensions

All school board policies that apply to student conduct and other student related activities apply to the school bus. Students will observe the same conduct as in the classroom. The bus driver will report all violations to the respective school Principal and/or Transportation Director. Steps and consequences for improper conduct on the school bus include the following:

1st offense: Conduct Report issued - Written Warning

2nd offense: Conduct Report issued - 4 day bus suspension

3rd offense: Conduct Report issued - 8 day bus suspension

4th offense: Conduct Report issued - Bus Suspension determined by Transportation Director

The Transportation Director reserves the right to enhance a conduct report at any time, given the seriousness of the conduct.

Parents will be notified via phone call or letter regarding their student's behavior and the consequence assigned. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child(ren) are familiar with the bus rules and district policies.

Any student that is suspended from a Gladewater ISD school bus is NOT permitted to ride another GISD bus during the length of their suspension, except to and from extracurricular & co-curricular activities.

Parents may request to meet with the Director of Transportation to file a grievance.

GISD Bus Rider Registration

New students enrolling at GISD will be subject to a 3-day waiting period after submitting a request for transportation. The Transportation Secretary will inform the campus of the bus number and start date.

Current GISD students who move within the district will be subject to a 3-day waiting period after proof of residence has been supplied to the campus and/or Transportation Department. The Transportation Secretary will inform the campus of the bus number and start date once all paperwork has been received.

Parents are welcome to contact the Transportation Department to gain access to bus stop locations and pick-up/drop-off times.

GISD BusView Card Policy

GISD has elected to use the BusView Transportation System. We believe the money spent on this product helps ensure the safety of our students while they are being transported to and from school. BusView allows us to provide important transportation information to parents/guardians of students. This is done via an RFID card. Each student will be given an updated card at the beginning of each school year. Once a student has received the current year's bus card, they must use it each time they ride the school bus.

- A student cannot ride a GISD school bus without a BusView card. Bus drivers may refuse a student from boarding the bus if they do not have a bus card.
 - The student's parent/guardian is responsible for transporting their student if they do not have a bus card or they are refused entry on the bus.
- Every student is required to scan their card as soon as they board the bus.
- Each student will also be required to scan their card before exiting the bus.
 - Scanning on and off the bus notifies the transportation system when and where the student boarded the bus, as well as exited the bus.
- When a student loses their BusView card, there is a \$5 replacement fee.
 - A replacement card can be purchased at the school the student attends.
- A student is allowed a 1-time grace period for losing their card.
 - **REMINDER:** A student cannot ride if they do not have a bus card.
- If the student's card will not scan for any reason, they will be allowed on the bus. However, the student will be required to purchase a new card the following day when they get to school. The driver will not transport a student with a damaged or nonworking card.
- At no point are students allowed to use a previous year's card.
- At no point are students allowed to use another student's card. Using another student's card may result in disciplinary action.

ParentView App

The BusView Transportation System also gives parents/guardians access to their child's transportation information via the ParentView app. This is a FREE app parents can download on their iPhone or Android phone. If you have notifications enabled on the app, you will receive a notification anytime your student scans their card on a GISD school bus. The Transportation Office will also use this app to inform you of important information regarding bus routes, school closures, late starts, reminders, etc.

Note: You will need specific information about your student to finish creating your ParentView account and accessing the app. The school office or Transportation Office can provide that information to you.

Please complete and return this page to your bus driver.

Student's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Campus: _____ Grade: _____

Student's Address: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Cell #: _____ Parent/Guardian Work #: _____

Emergency Contact Name & Number: _____

Student Health Concerns: _____



Student: I have received a copy of the Bus Rider Handbook. I agree to abide by the guidelines in the handbook for the safety of all riders and drivers of my bus.

Student: _____
Printed Name Signature Date



Parent/Guardian: I have received a copy of the Bus Rider Handbook and certify that all information provided above is accurate. I certify that I have read all the contents of this handbook to my child and they understand all guidelines addressed in this handbook.

Parent/Guardian: _____
Printed Name Signature Date