

# School Bus Safety Tips for Everyone!

## Bus Discipline

1. Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. Misconduct on the bus is a safety hazard and may result in a student losing that privilege.
2. Principals and his/her designees are authorized to suspend or terminate bus privileges depending on several factors:
  - a. the severity of the infraction
  - b. the age of the child
  - c. the number of existing infractions
3. If a child loses his/her bus riding privilege, the parents assume the responsibility for transportation to and from school.

**Parents and students should check and follow local school board policies pertaining to infractions and consequences on the school bus.**

*Stay Alert Near the Roadway!*

## On the Bus

- Follow the instructions of the driver at all times.
- Talk quietly and stay seated while the bus is in motion.
- Be courteous and respectful of others.
- No loud talking or shouting.
- Do not write on or damage the seats.
- Keep arms and head inside the windows.
- Ask permission to raise or lower windows.
- Be silent at railroad crossings.
- Keep books, backpacks, and other belongings out of the aisle.
- Sit only in your assigned seat.
- Do not use profanity or abusive language.
- Never throw objects inside the bus or out of the windows.
- Eating and drinking on the bus is prohibited.
- Do not leave paper or trash on the bus. Help keep the bus clean.

## Loading and Unloading

- Stand in a line 10 feet from roadway while waiting on the bus.
- Do not cross the roadway until the bus driver has given you permission to do so.
- Hold onto the handrail to prevent a slip or fall.
- Go directly to your assigned seat and sit down.
- Move away from the bus as soon as you exit.
- Before turning left or right after exiting the bus, take five giant steps straight away from the bus.
- Always cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus, keeping eye contact with the bus driver – wait for their 'all clear signal.'
- Look to the rear of the bus for oncoming vehicles as you exit the bus.
- Do not play in the loading/unloading zones.
- Never go back to retrieve anything you may have dropped or left behind.
- Never bend down near or under the bus.
- Watch for clothing or other articles that may become caught in the handrail or doorway.
- Check traffic (left, right, left) before crossing the roadway to board the bus or after unloading.

*Always Stay Where the  
Bus Driver Can See You —  
Think Before You Move!!!*

**For more information visit our Web site at  
[www.alsde.edu](http://www.alsde.edu)**

Joseph B. Morton, State Superintendent of Education, April 2005

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## School Bus Safety

The transporting of Alabama's schoolchildren must be held to the highest levels of safety. School buses are transporting Alabama's most precious cargo and its future. Children are safer on a school bus than any other mode of transportation. Nationwide and every year, approximately 440,000 public school buses travel an estimated 4.3 billion miles to transport 23.5 million children to and from school and school related activities. Each year on average, 11 passengers under the age of 19 die in school bus-related crashes as compared to 5,500 in other motor vehicles.

**School bus safety in Alabama is much higher than the national average. The following safety statistics support this fact:**

In Alabama, there are over 8,300 buses providing daily transportation for more than 357,000 schoolchildren. These buses travel an estimated 333,608 miles (one way). School bus-related fatalities are almost non-existent in Alabama. For example, *since 1969, only one student riding (inside) an Alabama school bus has been killed in a collision.* Even one death is too many, however, and that is why educating children, parents, teachers, and school bus drivers are of utmost importance to the Alabama Department of Education. This pamphlet offers safety tips for all

involved in order to prevent any school bus-related injuries and/or fatalities of our young children. The key is educating the public as well as the children, parents, drivers, and other school personnel.



## Safety Facts

- Most student fatalities occur outside the bus during loading/unloading.
- The younger the child, the more vulnerable to outside-the-bus fatality.
- Nationally, the afternoon trip home is twice as dangerous as the morning trip to school.
- The most common cause of the outside-the-bus fatality is due to a child bending down to retrieve a dropped item outside the view of the bus driver.

## For the Students

- Be at the bus stop five minutes before the scheduled arrival time of the bus.
- Use sidewalks and crosswalks when available. If sidewalks are not available, walk on the left side of the street.
- Do not run to or from the bus stop.
- Check traffic carefully before crossing the street and use crosswalks when available.
- Be alert for vehicles in driveways and parking lots.
- Line up away from the street with the first person no closer than six feet from the roadside.
- Refrain from horseplay while waiting on the bus.
- Do not move toward the bus until the driver has given you permission.

## For the Parents

Parents should read and discuss school bus riding policies with their children and explain that the rules are written for the safety of everyone on the bus.

Know the laws concerning stopping for school buses that are loading and unloading children.

## For the Driver

- Strictly enforce safe crossing procedures with all students at every stop. This includes eye contact, hand signals, student check of traffic, and prearranged horn signal for danger.
- Count and re-count children at every stop, every day.
- Assume the worst with approaching motorists.
- Resist distractions while driving, especially during loading and unloading.
- Remain alert for known danger zones on the route as well as variables such as child's age, weather, running children, and dropped items.
- Never back the bus unless absolutely necessary! Only do so when children are on the bus and proper backing procedures have been followed.
- Proper mirror adjustments are crucial. Check adjustments before every route or trip.
- Resist the temptation to rush
- Report unsafe loading/unloading areas or stops to your supervisor immediately.
- Be familiar with the use of all safety equipment.
- Complete a thorough pre-trip inspection and document prior to any and all trips.
- Go over rules and safety guidelines with all of the children.
- Always expect the unexpected from children.
- Listen to the children.
- Always perform a thorough post-trip inspection. Be certain no students are left on your bus.

