

BUS BEHAVIOR CODE

- I. Bus drivers are in complete charge of their vehicles and have supervisory responsibilities relative to riders in their buses. Drivers must follow procedures related to documentation of disciplinary incidents. The driver and/or monitor are responsible to provide a written referral to the principal or designee. The principal will determine what consequences are appropriate based on the infraction after the student receives due process.

The principal/director or their designee may consult with the bus company to ensure all information is reviewed. The actions that may be taken are:

- A. **Written Warning** issued to students.
- B. **Parent/Guardian** conference after notification to family/parents of infraction(s).
- C. **Saturday Community Service or Detention** after written notification to parents/guardians.
- D. **Suspension** of bus riding privileges by the principal/director after written notification to parents/guardians. Suspensions will not be effective until parents/guardians are notified.
- E. **Referral** of students to the Superintendent, who may take additional disciplinary action, including referral to the School Committee and/or assignment to alternate transportation.
- F. **Indefinite suspension** of bus riding privileges imposed by the School Committee upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, and with notice to parents of rights during School Committee proceedings.

APPEAL PROCESS

- I. Notification to parent/guardian of a disciplinary action will take place no later than two school days following the offense. Any appeal of a disciplinary action by a student (if 18 or older) or parent/guardian must be made within forty-eight (48) hours of the receipt of a conduct report and in accord with the District's Appeals Policy.

II. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

The following guidelines will ensure appropriate behavior, the efficiency of bus runs and safety for students. Students are required to follow the procedures and rules noted.

- A. Leave home early enough to arrive at the bus stop five minutes in advance of the scheduled pickup time.
- B. Remain off the roadway while waiting for the bus.
- C. Enter and leave the bus only when the door is fully open and never when the bus is in motion. Approach the bus only when it has come to a complete stop.
- D. Keep hands and feet to themselves when entering or leaving the bus. Take assigned seat promptly on entering the bus and remain in the seat until arrival at destination. No one is permitted to "save" seats and students must sit only in his/her assigned seat. The driver will assign seats at the start of the school year.
- E. Sit in the assigned seat to ensure safety and sound control practices including prevention of student-inflicted damage to the bus. Parents/Guardians of students damaging buses will be responsible for restitution. Bus riding privileges may be suspended if restitution is not made. The driver may reassign seats as necessary.
- F. Leave the bus promptly and in an orderly manner. Students should move away from the bus after being discharged. Students may not linger near the bus or try to hang on to the bus.
- G. Wait for permission by the bus driver to cross the highway and be sure to cross the highway at least ten feet in front of the bus, never behind it.
- H. Behave on the bus in a manner that is acceptable while in school. The bus driver is in charge of the bus and responsible for students. Students must obey the driver promptly and cooperatively in order to ensure the safety of all riders.

- I. Be respectful to the bus driver. Drivers have an important job to do and need student cooperation.
 - J. Keep hands, arms or other parts of the body inside the bus at all times.
 - K. Do not throw anything out of bus windows.
 - L. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
 - M. Lunchboxes, books and athletic equipment, etc., should be kept out of the aisle.
 - N. Do not light matches, possess/use/distribute alcohol or drugs, including marijuana and marijuana derivatives (i.e. edibles as well as synthetic substances), tobacco and tobacco-related products* and other controlled substances. Items will be seized and destroyed, unless said items are required as part of a police investigation. Items will not be returned.
 - O. Do not bring articles that could cause injury to other students, such as sticks, breakable containers, firearms, skateboards, etc. Other items not allowed are golf clubs/bags, oversized sports duffels, and large instruments such as French horns and tenor and baritone saxophones.
 - P. Do not bring animals, except for service animals.
 - Q. Do not fight or take part in the use of vulgar, crude or offensive language and loud, boisterous talk or other disruptive noises or actions that might distract the driver.
 - R. Keep the bus clean by not leaving waste paper or other items on the floor.
 - S. Do not ride an unassigned bus except in the event of an emergency. Written permission of parents/guardians and school authorities and a phone call from the parent/guardian to the bus company is required for a student to ride on a bus other than the one assigned.
 - T. Do not enter a bus once the doors have been closed and the buses begin to exit school property unless accompanied by a teacher. The third occurrence of tardiness will result in a disciplinary referral.
 - U. Cell phones may only be used when it is safe to do so. Cell phone use is a privilege and requires students to be aware of their surroundings, attentive to the safety of themselves and others, and follow directions. Cell phones are not to be used on the bus for photography or recording of a conversation or event.
- III. If, in the driver's opinion, student actions are detrimental to the safety of the trip, a driver may bring a bus back to the garage or stop the bus and radio the garage for directions. If a student is required to leave the bus under such circumstances, parents/guardians will be called to pick up the student at the bus terminal. If a parent/guardian is not available, police will be called. The appropriate provision under paragraphs IV or V will be administered.

IV. The following offenses will generate the disciplinary actions indicated:

CLASS I

- 1. Riding an unassigned bus without prior approval
- 2. Bringing animals and/or pets on the bus
- 3. Chewing gum, eating (including candy) or drinking on the bus
- 4. Distributing gum, candy, etc. to other students on the bus
- 5. Littering
- 6. Not sitting in assigned seat
- 7. Not sitting in the seat properly
- 8. Volume on headphones distracting to the driver
- 9. Bringing prohibited items, such as those listed in section II above (but not including firearms) on the bus.
- 10. Late arrival to the bus at dismissal time.

Discipline

First offense - warning

Second offense - warning and conference with a parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian does not respond within 3 school days, the student will serve Saturday community service **or** detention.

Third and subsequent offenses - Saturday community service **or** detention

NOTE: At the elementary level, Saturday community service **or** detention will be replaced by lunch detention.

CLASS II

1. Getting on/off at a stop other than the student's assigned stop (without prior approval)
2. Crossing behind the bus or refusing to wait for the driver's instruction to cross
3. Failing to follow directions from a driver or monitor
4. Obstructing safe passage down the aisle
5. Refusing to identify oneself to the driver when asked
6. Extending head, hands or feet out of bus window
7. Propelling or throwing any object inside the bus, out the window, or at the bus.
8. Spraying perfumes, deodorants, etc. on the bus
9. Wrestling and/or horseplay
10. Creating disruptive noise levels
11. Acting disrespectful to the driver, aide, or monitor, or another student
12. Moving out of the assigned seat while the bus is in motion, which includes climbing over or under bus seats at any time during the route
13. Stealing
14. Using obscenities (language, gestures) or sexual comments.
15. Vandalism to the bus
16. Obtaining late bus passes after leaving campus or presenting forged or stolen passes
17. Overt display of affection (kissing, fondling, etc.)
18. Destruction of property belonging to another person
19. Use of laptop or other computing devices on the bus.
20. Use of phone that does not meet the criteria of section II U including but not limited to taking pictures and recording video.

Discipline

First offense - Saturday community service or detention

Second offense - Two-day suspension from school bus transportation

Third and subsequent offenses - Five-day suspension from school bus transportation; possible referral to the Superintendent.

NOTE: At the elementary level, Saturday community service or detention will be replaced by lunch detention.

CLASS III

1. Possession of unsafe items, including, but not limited to, matches, lighters, bullets
2. Possession of tobacco and tobacco-related products*
3. Verbal assault directed at the school bus driver, aide, or monitor
4. Sexual harassment (see Chariho policy for definitions), including exposure
5. Behavior that jeopardizes the safe operation of the bus
6. Boarding a bus during suspension from bus-riding privileges
7. Spitting, or other purposeful behavior that exposes others to bodily fluid
8. Bullying (see Chariho policy for definitions)
9. Making racial slurs or other bias-based infractions (see Chariho policy for definitions)
10. Hitting, pushing, tripping, biting, pinching, or pulling the hair of another student
11. Verbal or non-verbal threat to do bodily harm

Discipline

Minimum five (5) day suspension from school bus transportation; application of school discipline in accord with the appropriate Behavior Code; possible referral to the Superintendent.

CLASS IV

1. Opening or exiting through any emergency exit of the school bus (i.e., rear door, side door, emergency windows)
2. Substance abuse on the school bus (use and/or distribution of tobacco and tobacco-related products*, possession, use, and/or distribution of alcohol, drugs, and other controlled substances)
3. Physical assault of another student on the school bus
4. Fighting (or instigating a fight even if a fight does not result) including videoing or photographing a fight (if the fighting occurs while a bus is on school grounds, school staff will be called and the student will be subject to the school behavior code.
5. A second Class III infraction in the same school year

Discipline

Minimum five (5) day suspension from school bus transportation; application of school discipline in accord with the appropriate Behavior Code; referral to the Superintendent.

CLASS V

1. Possession or use of a weapon, including replicas, on the school bus
2. Physical assault on the school bus driver or monitor
3. A second Class IV infraction in the same school year

Discipline

Minimum ten (10) day suspension from school bus transportation; application of school discipline in accord with the appropriate Behavior Code; referral to Superintendent and/or School Committee for additional discipline, which may include an alternate placement.

V. General Information

All infractions of Classes II-V will be reported by the transportation company to the school principal/director and the Superintendent of Schools. Class III-V violations, in addition to consequences imposed under the Bus Behavior code and dependent upon the severity of the offense, one or more of the following may be imposed: 1-3 O.D.; 1-3 E.S.D.; 1-5 I.S.S.; 3-10 hours of community service; Restitution; Police Contact; Referral to Superintendent and/or School Committee for additional discipline and intervention which may include Suspension from School for up to and including the Remainder of the School Year or Assignment to an Alternate Placement including, but not limited to, a Program of Tutoring. Multiple violations or a serious violation may result in assignment to a mini-bus where closer supervision is possible (see Chariho policy for definitions).

Failure to serve a Saturday community service or detention without a medical excuse or religious exemption will result in an assignment of one Extended School Day. If a student is ill, a parent/guardian must notify the community service or detention supervisor by telephone during the time when the Saturday community service or detention is scheduled to be served.

Restitution will be required for intentional damage to buses.

All students attending Chariho schools and riding Chariho buses are subject to this policy.

- VI. The Bus Behavior Code will be provided to each parent/guardian at the beginning of each school year. If revisions are made and effective during the school year, a revised edition shall immediately be distributed to each parent/guardian, by the school district, which will indicate the effective date of the change(s).

*) "Tobacco Product(s)" means any product containing and made, or derived from, tobacco or nicotine that is intended for human consumption including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, pipe tobacco, spitting tobacco, chewing tobacco, dipping tobacco, powdered tobacco, loose tobacco, snus, pouches, pellets, nicotine toothpicks, nicotine orbs, nicotine gel or lotion, or electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes, or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, or bidi cigarettes which can be used for, but whose use is not limited to, smoking, sniffing, chewing, vaporizing, inhaling, absorbing, dissolving, or spitting and ingestion by any other means of the product. "Tobacco Product(s)" does not include any product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for sale as a tobacco cessation product and is being marketed and sold solely for the approved purpose.

Revised 11-13-07, 4-6-10, 4-26-11, 3-26-13, 3-24-15, 8-18-15, 4-12-16, 6-22-21; 8-10-21

Effective: 7-1-13, 7-1-14, 7-1-15, 8-18-15, 7-1-16, 7-1-21; 9-1-21