



Safe **R**ider Program Parent and Student Rider Agreement Form

All Statewide Riders Grades Pre-K-12+

INSTRUCTIONS

Please review this document with your child regarding the expectations of riding the school bus.

Sign and return Page 4 to your driver for each rider in your household within five (5) days of the first day of school.

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) Office of Statewide Efficiencies is providing you with information regarding student expectations as part of the Safe **R**ider Program. This program's purpose is to adopt a uniform approach to student expectations and incident response on our Statewide bus routes.

The safety of riders is our number one priority. The program includes a defined and tiered discipline plan, as needed, with the core of the program promoting personal accountability and empowering students to correct unsafe behaviors. The goal is to provide consistently safe and effective transportation services for all passengers.

Our Safe **R**ider Program aims to collaborate with parents, schools, and districts in reducing the number of incidents surrounding distracted driving, bullying, and overall bus-related disciplinary rates program-wide. This program aligns with local education agencies' (LEA) transportation and school codes of conduct, as transportation is an extension of the school day.

Unsafe behavior protocol:

- If unsafe behavior occurs *before* the bus leaves the school, the student will be provided with two options: (1) Correct the behavior and continue home (behavior documented), or (2) Be removed from the bus and stay at the school with staff supervision until a parent or guardian can pick up the student (behavior documented).
- If unsafe behavior occurs *after* the bus leaves the school, the driver will pull over, secure the bus and contact their supervisor. Their supervisor will then assess the situation with the Statewide office and if necessary, call for emergency assistance. Guardians will be immediately notified if this occurs.
- If either of the above instances occurs, the tiered discipline plan will be in effect.

To achieve success with making the Statewide Transportation Program buses safer, please frequently review the safety expectations with your rider. We thank you for your continued support.



Statewide Transportation Program Protocols¹

Table 1: Behavior Expectations

EXPECTATION	WHILE ON THE BUS	LOADING AND UNLOADING
“BE SAFE”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay seated Backpack on your lap Body parts & objects must always remain inside the bus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remain six (6) giant steps away from the bus when waiting at the bus stop Wait for the driver’s signal before crossing the street & loading the bus Put your electronics away Always walk & use the handrail
“BE RESPONSIBLE”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place all items in a backpack & out of the aisle Refrain from eating and drinking on the bus for safety & cleanliness Report any inappropriate or illegal behaviors to the driver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get on & off the bus at your assigned stop Arrive ten (10) minutes early to your assigned bus stop When boarding the bus, go directly to your assigned seat When exiting the bus, go directly to your home
“BE RESPECTFUL”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep all body parts & other objects to yourself Respect the bus by keeping it clean and free from damage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the bus stop clean Board the bus one-at-a-time Respect others around you, including others property
“BE PEACEFUL”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refrain from fighting, and play fighting Speak in a calm, soft voice, & refrain inappropriate gestures & language, threats, & bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait quietly and respectfully for the bus to arrive Keep your body parts & other objects to yourself

¹For students needing transportation as a related service in their individualized education program (IEP), the statewide transportation protocols and tiered discipline plan will be implemented as provided for in their IEP.



Table 2: Tiered Discipline Plan for All Statewide Riders

Incident Management Plan Examples	
1st OFFENSE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/guardian notified • Teacher/Administrator notified • Bus incident form filed; incident notes entered in the management system • Document in IMS • Re-assigned seat when applicable • A student & school leadership conference held to discuss the incident & infractions
2nd OFFENSE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A student, school & transportation leadership conference held to discuss the incident & infractions • Parent/guardian notified • Student on probation and reassigned to the front of the bus for one week
3rd OFFENSE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus incident form filed, incident notes entered in the management system • Conference with student, school & transportation leadership • Parent/guardian contacted • 1-day bus suspension • Upon return, the student placed on probation & reassigned to the front of the bus for one week
4th OFFENSE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus incident form filed, incident notes entered in the management system • Conference with student, school & transportation leadership – develop student bus behavior contract • Parent/guardian contacted • 3-day bus suspension • Upon return, the student placed on probation & reassigned to the front of the bus for two weeks • Student Bus Behavior Contract signed
5th OFFENSE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus incident form filed, incident notes entered in the management system • Conference with parent/guardian, student, school & transportation leadership, to discuss bus suspension for the remainder of the school year • 5-day bus suspension • Upon return, student placed on probation and reassigned to the front of the bus for the remainder of the school year
6th & FINAL or SEVERE OFFENSE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus incident form filed, incident notes entered in the management system • Will vary based on LEA policies • Incidents involving weapons, fighting, bullying, etc. may automatically result in final tier response to a severe offense as referral & as outlined by school administrators • Bus suspension for the remainder of the school year



Statewide Transportation Safe Rider Acknowledgement Form

Please return this page to your school bus driver acknowledging the Safe Rider policy within five (5) days of the first day of school. A completed and signed form is required for each rider in your household.

Below, please indicate anything you would like your bus driver and transportation department to know about your rider:

We have read the *Safe Rider Program Policies and Protocols*. We understand and agree to abide by all bus safety rules, and that failure to comply may result in bus suspension and loss of riding privilege if not corrected. We understand that this agreement applies for all extracurricular or additional bus activity trips.

Parent/Guardian (Please Print)

Parent/Guardian (Signature)

Date

Student Name (Please Print)

Student Signature (Signature)

Date